

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post-Office, March 1, 1899, by Frank Tousey.

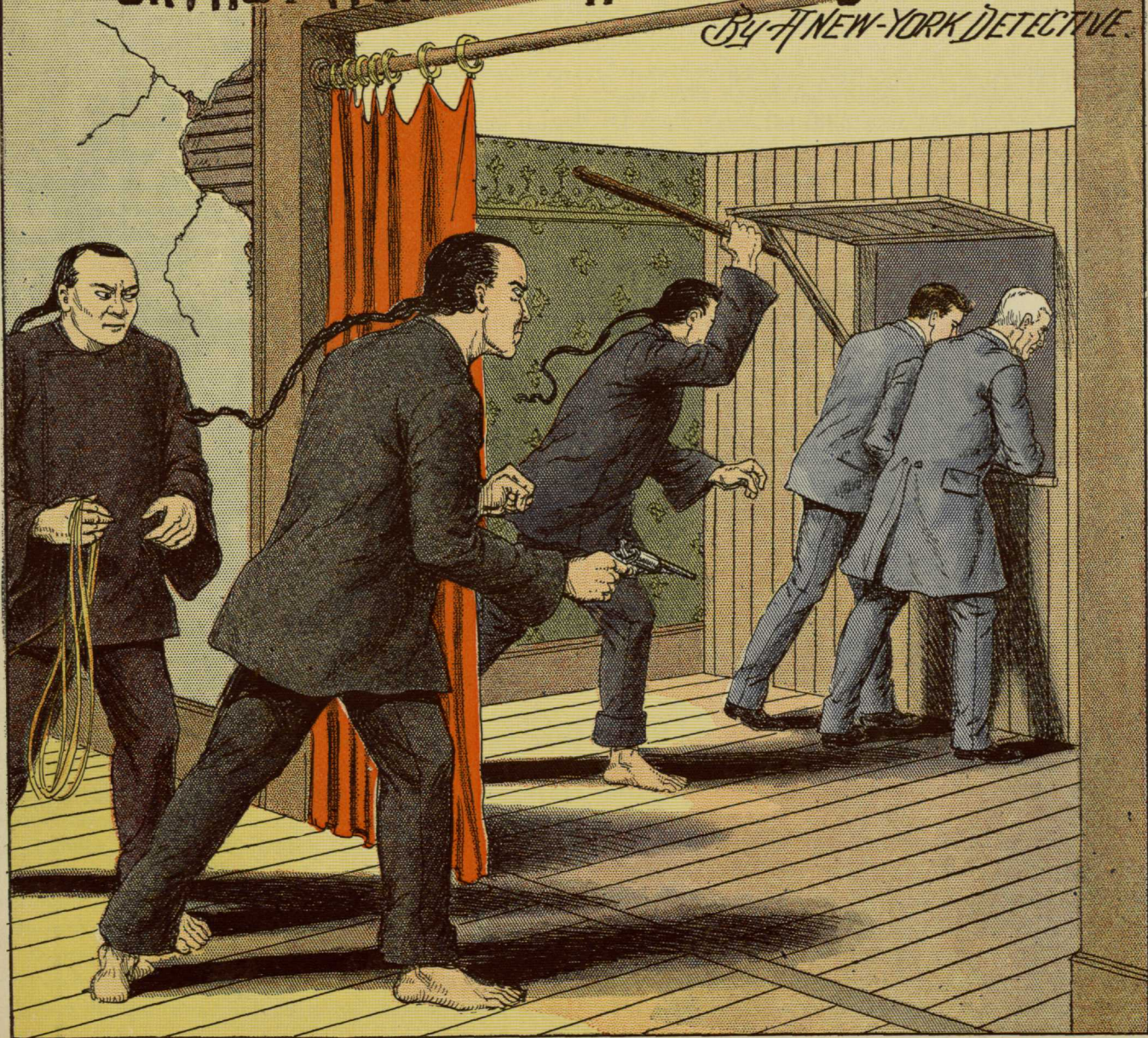
No. 409.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 23, 1906.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND THE HIP SING TONG; OR, HOT WORK ON A HIGHBINDER CASE.

By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.



On crept the three Chinks in their bare feet. One carried a club; the big fellow drew a revolver, while the man in the rear held a rope. The Bradys at the little window stood oblivious, so deeply was their attention engaged.

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38.08	66.38	51.06	43.30	56.36	71.60	61.70	29.73	51.57	20.54	41.22	61.70	83.77	93.53	71.06	51.57	30.77	30.77	72.58	71.60	41.22	55.65	41.22	81.35	51.57	51.57								
12.09	13.22	0.38	16.52	12.84	30.70	27.54	28.47	43.00	-0.02	-0.03	-0.04	-0.04	-0.05	-0.04	-0.03	-0.02	25.74	-28.17	12.45	17.95	-41.52	50.85	-4.13	48.98	-21.72								
14.39	17.14	-22.06	21.46	-25.29	1.17	58.23	-51.99	14.75	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.06	-0.06	-0.05	0.04	0.03	-23.38	58.61	66.58	43.16	33.73	25.86	79.25	-15.96	-26.63								
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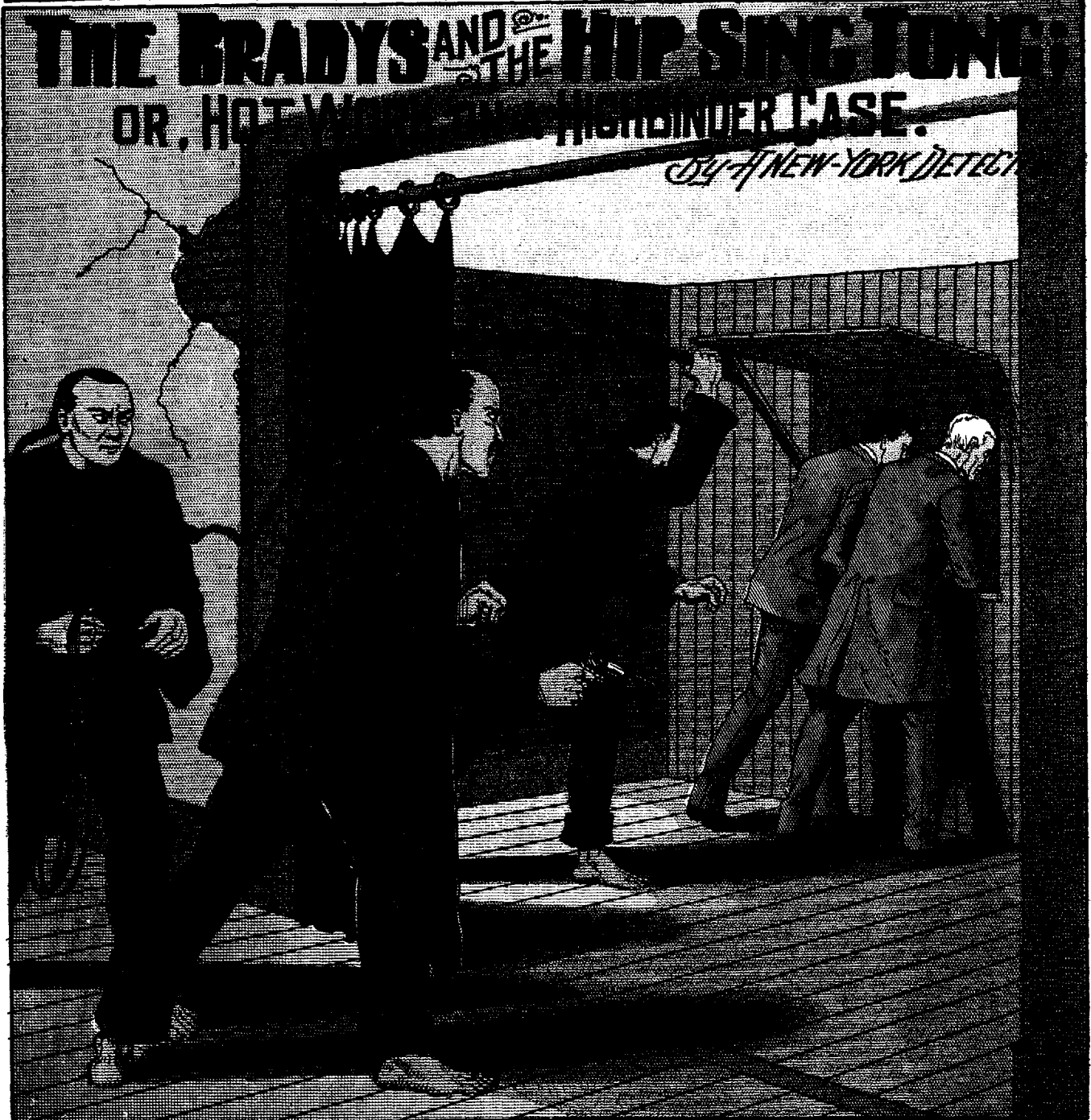
Don Williams

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CHAPTER I.

THE TROUBLES OF THE FULLERTON FAMILY.

"Why don't she come! Oh, why don't she come!" exclaimed Mrs. Fullerton for the fortieth time at least.

"Patience," said Mr. Fullerton, looking up from his paper. "No doubt she will be here in a few minutes now."

"New York is getting to be such a terrible place," remarked Aunt Effie. "It isn't as it used to be in my time. Even with an escort, it is positively dangerous to be on the street after dark."

"It is those wretched Chinamen. You can't tell me!" chimed in Sister Kate. "Since Alice began teaching in the mission she has kept all sorts of hours. This is their praise-meeting night. The thing ought to be stopped, even if we have to lock her up. It is just perfectly dreadful and some dreadful end will come of it. Don't tell me!"

What it was that Sister Kate did not want to be told scarcely appeared.

Indeed it is doubtful if the girl knew what she was saying, so great was the anxiety of the Fullerton family that wild December night.

An easterly storm was sweeping over New York.

The rain was falling in a blinding sheet, driven by a fierce wind which seemed each moment increasing in fury.

Had the youngest daughter of the household been at home the Fullertons might have enjoyed a social evening for once in their lives, in spite of the storm.

For once Mr. Fullerton had remained home from his club.

For once madam had cut out her "bridge," to which game she had become a fierce devotee.

Even Sister Kate had no gentleman callers, and poor old Aunt Effie, who was usually alone of an evening, could scarcely realize that for once the family had gathered about the cheerful open fire in the library.

It might, we repeat, have been a social evening, in spite of the storm, but for the fact that it was now nine o'clock and pretty Alice Fullerton, the youngest of the millionaire banker's two daughters, had not returned.

According to the butler, Miss Alice had gone out on foot at four o'clock without taking the trouble to mention whither she was bound nor when she might be expected to return.

Naturally the family were growing worried.

As the moments passed Mamma Fullerton began to show signs of hysterics.

Papa Fullerton would have sneaked out to his club to return when it was all over if he had dared.

Sister Kate continued to scold about Alice's odd ways, when there suddenly came a sharp ring of the electric bell.

"At last!" cried Mrs. Fullerton.

"You want to give the girl a good talking to," put in papa. "This is entirely too strenuous. It mustn't occur again."

"A good whipping is what she needs," snapped Kate.

Aunt Effie sighed and crossed her hands.

"I don't blame the child a bit for wanting to get away from this dismal house," the good lady muttered under her breath. "I'd run away myself if there was any place to go."

But was it the missing Alice?

It was not.

They listened in vain for her footsteps, and instead heard only the butler's heavy tread.

Then came the knock on the door and the pompous fellow entered.

"Mr. Joe, sir," he said. "I acted on your orders and left him at the door."

"Joe! How does he dare!" cried Mrs. Fullerton. "Send him away at once!"

She alone said it.

Sister Kate was silent.

Aunt Effie, who, by the way, was Mr. Fullerton's sister, arose and left the room, dreading the coming storm.

"You might at least have asked the boy to step into the hall," said Mr. Fullerton, throwing down his paper. "Did he say what he wanted, James?"

"To see you, sir."

"Send him away!" shrilled Mrs. Fullerton. "I insist upon it. He has disgraced us. Send him away!"

Mr. Fullerton arose with a determined look upon his face.

"Show my nephew into the library, James," he said.

Then came the explosion.

Mrs. Fullerton felt that she had things to say, and she said them.

Kate stopped her ears with her fingers.

James stood, uncertain, at the door.

Then for once the banker actually asserted himself in his own house.

"Show him in here!" he shouted. "Kate, go upstairs."

Mrs. Fullerton, if you don't care to be present while I hear what my sister's son has to say to me, you go, too."

Kate departed.

So did James.

Mrs. Fullerton sank back in her chair in a state of collapse.

Even the unexplained absence of her youngest daughter shrank into nothingness beside this matter of family pride.

But Banker Fullerton occasionally made himself master of his own house, and this was one of the occasions.

James departed and in a moment returned, ushering in a big, handsome young fellow of twenty-two or three, who was pretty well drenched with the rain.

Sister Kate had departed, but Mrs. Fullerton remained and sat glaring at the intruder.

"Good evening, Uncle George," said young Joe Bradley, with a heartiness of manner which was entirely natural to him. "Good evening, Aunt. I am sorry to intrude upon you, but this is a case of must."

"Be seated," said the banker, loftily. Mrs. Fullerton said nothing at all.

"Thanks, no," was the reply. "I am very wet and my damp clothing might spoil Aunt Cordelia's chairs. I——"

"Wait!" broke in the banker. "You say this a case of must. By that I presume you mean that you have reached the end of your rope and have chosen this occasion to ask for a loan. Be good enough to name the amount."

"Pardon me, Uncle George," returned the young man, haughtily, "but you are jumping at conclusions. My business here to-night is not to borrow money. When I get to the end of my rope I trust I shall know how to take care of myself without asking you for help. Has Alice returned home yet?"

The banker started.

Mrs. Fullerton drew herself up in her chair.

"She has not. What have you got to say about her?" demanded Mr. Fullerton.

"I should prefer to say it to you alone, Uncle George."

"Step this way."

"No," screamed Mrs. Fullerton. "Say your say, Joe Bradley! If there is trouble in store for me I want to know the worst at once."

"Speak!" cried the banker. "Don't waste words in trying to let us down easy. Out with it, Joe."

"Very well, then," replied Bradley. "As I was standing on the corner of Fourth avenue and Fourteenth street about an hour ago I saw Alice pass in a cab and with her was a Chinaman. They were bound south and were evidently heading for Chinatown. It was impossible for me to stop them, and by the time I could get a cab, for I did try to follow them, it was too late. I thought you ought to know about it, Uncle George, so here I am. If I can be of any assistance say the word."

Young Bradley finished his speech amid the piercing screams of Mrs. Fullerton.

The banker paid no other attention to his wife than to

pull the bell and summon a maid into whose charge he put her when the girl came.

"Follow me, Joe," he said then, and he drew his nephew into the dining-room and closed the door.

"Are you going to make capital out of this, Joe Bradley?" he demanded fiercely. "Are you going to report it for your infernal journal? Say!"

"You have a very low opinion of me, Uncle George. It should not be necessary for me to say it, but I will assure you that I propose to do nothing of the sort, and you ought to be thoroughly ashamed of yourself for suggesting such a thing."

"And what do you suggest? Something must be done. The police should be informed——"

"Don't think of it. Do you want every reporter in town flocking to this house and the morning papers filled with accounts of your daughter's elopement with a Chinaman?"

"I most certainly do not."

"Then steer clear of the police. If you want my advice——"

"I do; I do, Joe. Bless my soul, something must be done. Never in my life did I feel so helpless. Speak, boy. You know the inside working of things in this town better than I do. Try and forget any feeling you may have against us and tell me what to do."

"I have no feeling, Uncle George. When I quit this house and started out to earn my own living it was because I did not choose to be dependent upon you any longer; that was all. If you want my advice, why then, I say get the Brady detectives without an instant's delay if they can be had. If they cannot rescue Alice then nobody can."

"You are right. Where can they be found?"

"If they are in town, at their house on Washington Square, I suppose."

"They must have a telephone. Will you call them up and ascertain if they can receive us or if they will come here?"

"In your name?"

"Certainly! Certainly!"

"All right."

They returned to the library and Joe Bradley gave the call.

"Old King Brady is at home. He will see us," he said.

"Did you ask him to come here?"

"Yes, and he declined. Old King Brady is a very independent man."

"I have heard so. I suppose I shall have to go to him. Can you come with me? I suppose you have engagements——"

"As it happens, I have none. Yes, I can go with you if you wish."

"Do, my boy," replied the banker, brokenly. "I—I always depended so upon you, Joe. It broke my heart when you went away from us. I—I——"

"Say no more, Uncle George. I assure you that I have

not the least feeling against you, but this house got too hot to hold me, and, well——”

“And you quit it. I wish I could!” groaned the banker, for his wife had gone upstairs.

“This comes of that infernal settlement work,” he added. “First it was the Eastsiders who had to be converted, and then it was the Chinamen. I suppose by this time I have a Chinese son-in-law. Bless my soul, it is awful to contemplate. What I shall ever do with your aunt, heaven knows. Of course, between ourselves, Alice isn’t much more than half-witted, but—Great Scott, Joe, listen to that. Only the beginning, boy. Only the beginning! Talk about money bringing happiness, I can assure you it has brought none to me.”

Piercing screams were heard on the floor above.

They grew louder and louder.

Now they were on the stairs, now in the hall.

“Meet it like a man, Uncle George!” said Bradley.

The banker, trembling with nervousness, threw open the door.

Mrs. Fullerton, screaming like a mad woman, came rushing in.

“My diamonds!” she cried. “My diamonds! I have been robbed, George Fullerton! The safe has been opened. All my diamonds are gone!”

“Great heavens!” gasped the banker, reeling. “Do you mean to say you found the safe open, Dell?”

“No, no! It was locked!”

“Locked?”

“Yes, locked, I tell you. Alice had the combination. This is her work!”

The banker pulled himself together.

“How came you to be looking for your diamonds at such a time?” he demanded.

“Why shouldn’t I look at them?” was the reply. “It always quiets me to look at my diamonds. Heaven knows I have enough to bear. Will you send for the police?”

“No, and if you do I will sue for a divorce!” roared Mr. Fullerton.

“Come along, Joe,” he added. “We’ll go for the Bradys. They are the only proper persons to handle this case.”

CHAPTER II.

PUTTING IT UP TO THE KING OF THE HIGHBINDERS.

It was too stormy a night to take out the automobile, so Banker Fullerton and his nephew went downtown in a cab summoned from the nearest livery stable.

Arriving at Washington Square, west, where, in an old-fashioned brownstone house, the Bradys, America’s best known detectives, have kept bachelors’ hall for several years, they left their cab, found their number and rang the bell.

It was now about half-past ten o’clock and it seemed to the banker almost a hopeless case to suppose that the detectives could be induced to go out on business on such a night.

A colored man answered the ring and ushered the visitors into a comfortably furnished library.

Here they were received by a tall, elderly man of striking appearance and some peculiarity of dress, such as a long blue coat with brass buttons, an old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar.

When not in disguise Old King Brady always dresses in this odd fashion and wears, in addition, a big white felt hat, with an extraordinarily broad brim.

“You, I take it, are Mr. Fullerton,” said the detective, rising. “I am Old King Brady.”

They shook hands.

“My nephew, Mr. Bradley, reporter on the Evening Universe,” said the banker, introducing Joe.

Old King Brady shook hands with young Bradley and placed chairs for his guests.

“I am in great trouble, Mr. Brady,” began the banker. “If you can help me out you may name your own compensation, but, above all things, I must insist upon absolute secrecy being observed.”

“I can tell better what I shall do after I have heard what you have to tell me,” replied the old detective. “As for the compensation, that is a matter for after consideration. Proceed, please.”

“But it will be in confidence?”

“My dear sir, all my cases are received in confidence. If you are not satisfied of that neither of us had better waste our time.”

“Go on, uncle,” said Joe. “Fire away; you can depend upon Mr. Brady every time.”

The banker told his story.

Old King Brady at once started up his question mill.

“How old is your daughter, Mr. Fullerton?” he began.

“A little over nineteen.”

“What mission is it that she has been working in?”

Mr. Fullerton named it.

“And her hobby has been to teach the Chinese?”

“Yes. It should not be allowed. I say that——”

“Wait, please. Let us stick to business. Of course it is most unwise, but the missions will encourage it and we can’t help that. What grounds have you for connecting this safe robbery with your daughter?”

“She knew the combination.”

“Anybody else besides your wife?”

“My other daughter. The girls had jewelry of their own. It was kept in a common safe.”

“Do you know the value of the missing diamonds?”

“I do not, really. It must be very great. I have given my wife an immense amount of jewelry in the last twenty years and she has bought much herself.”

“For a guess, how much?”

“It would not surprise me if it ran up to a hundred thousand.”

“Pardon the suggestion, but did your daughter ever steal anything before?”

“Mr. Brady! I——”

"Now, now! A physician probes the wound before he proceeds to dress it. I must get at facts."

"You are right. I'll be frank with you. On one occasion about a year ago, when my daughter was working in an East Side mission, she took money from my desk and gave it to those in charge of the place."

"Much?"

"Three thousand."

"Is your daughter well balanced mentally?"

"I am afraid not. After this I shall have her mental condition carefully looked into."

"You have no knowledge of any particular Chinaman in whom she was interested at the mission?"

"No."

"Nor any further points which you can give me?"

"None."

"And now it is your turn, young man," said Old King Brady, turning to Joe. "How distinctly did you see this Chinaman in the cab?"

"As plain as I see you now," replied Joe. "They passed directly under the electric light."

"Was he in American or native dress?"

"American dress."

"I hardly suppose you noticed anything peculiar about him?"

"I can't say that I did. I was too much excited. I saw and recognized my cousin. I stood still like a fool. It seemed as if I could not move. Then I went for a cab and tried to follow them, but it was no use."

"How far did you go?"

"I went to Chinatown, but I could see nothing of the cab. Of course it was like looking for a needle in a haystack."

"And then?"

"Then I took the subway to Forty-second street and got up to Mr. Fullerton's as soon as I could."

"That is all," said Old King Brady. "Mr. Fullerton, I will take your case and try to find your daughter, but we must wait——"

"Don't say that you must wait until to-morrow," interposed the banker. "It is an awful night, I know, but I will pay——"

"Stop! You misunderstand me. I have not the slightest intention of waiting until to-morrow. To-night is the time to act."

"But you said——"

"I was about to say that I must wait for my partner's return."

"Oh!"

"I prefer to have him with me. He is young and his wits are keen, while I am getting to be somewhat behind the age."

"When do you expect him in?"

"At any moment now."

"Will it be necessary for me to go over the ground again? Do I have to wait?"

"You will not have to go over the ground again, but I should prefer to have you wait."

Some general talk followed.

At a quarter past eleven they heard someone enter the front door by a latch key.

Instead of coming directly in the person passed through the hall and entered Old King Brady's little reception-room, where for purposes of his own the old detective sometimes keeps people waiting.

Mr. Fullerton and Joe Bradley heard a heavy step pass through the hall, but neither of them observed the lighter step which followed.

Old King Brady did, however, and, excusing himself, he immediately arose and left the room.

He was back in a minute, followed by a good-looking young fellow, whom he introduced as his partner.

"I have taken up with Mr. Fullerton's case, Harry," said Old King Brady. "It may be well enough for you to hear the facts in a general way."

"You had better be quick," was the reply.

The banker seemed rather surprised by the abruptness of the remark.

Not so Old King Brady.

He rattled off the main points of the case in short order.

"I think we can find that girl to-night," Harry quietly said.

"Have you a clew to her whereabouts?" demanded Joe Bradley. "You speak very positively."

"Yes, I have a clew."

"Good enough! You see I was right, uncle. The Bradys are our men."

"I'm sure of it," said the banker. "Now let us be getting back."

"I don't go back," replied Joe. "I go with the Bradys if they will let me."

"No objection in the world," said Harry. "But wait a minute, Mr. Fullerton."

He arose, and, stepping into the hall, said:

"You will come in here, please."

A young girl, with white, scared face and drenched with rain, stepped into the room.

"Alice!" gasped Mr. Fullerton.

"Hooray!" shouted Joe. "Three cheers for the Bradys! Here's prompt work."

The girl burst into a flood of tears.

But there was no clasping his "long lost daughter to his breast" for the banker.

The Fullertons were not that sort.

"What does this mean?" he demanded, drawing himself up sternly. "What have you to say for yourself, girl?"

"Hush!" said Old King Brady. "Can't you see that she is frightened almost out of her senses? You will have a maniac to deal with if you don't take care. Speak gently to the girl and take her home."

Alice had dropped upon a lounge, and with her face buried in her hands was sobbing bitterly.

"But you want to get her story," the banker said.

"My partner has already had it from her."

"But the diamonds? I must know——"

"Do you care more for the diamonds than you do for your daughter, Mr. Fullerton?"

"No; but——"

"The diamonds are still missing. We will do our best to recover them. Now take your daughter home."

The banker obeyed.

Joe Bradley would have spoken to the weeping girl, but Old King Brady checked him.

The pair departed then, Harry seeing them safely started in the cab.

At the request of Old King Brady, Joe Bradley remained.

"By Jove! that was quick work, Mr. Brady," the reporter exclaimed when he found himself alone with the old detective.

"Mere accident," was the reply. "Your uncle may congratulate himself upon the strange turn his case has taken."

"Indeed, yes! I'm dying with curiosity to know how it all came about."

"Simple. My partner met the girl here in the square. She was looking for our house."

"It beats the band. But then Alice was always queer."

Harry returned just then.

"Now tell us the facts about this girl," Old King Brady said.

He produced a box of cigars, and having passed the weeds around, seated himself in his big easy chair and prepared to listen.

"Why, there is really very little to tell," began Young King Brady. "I was coming across Washington Square and headed for the house when I happened to see that young woman in front of me. She was crying and had no umbrella. I saw that she was drenched and apparently in trouble, so I asked her what the matter was."

"She did not seem to want to answer at first. She said she was looking for Old King Brady's house."

"I then told her who I was and she brightened up and seemed more inclined to talk. In a few moments I had drawn the whole story from her."

"That's Alice!" muttered Joe. "She is fool enough to take up with any stranger, I do believe."

"She told me that she was a teacher in the Chinese mission," continued Harry. "She said that one of her pupils, whose name was Wing Moy, had told her that his wife was very sick and asked her to pay her a visit. At first she refused and the next time Wing Moy came to the mission he brought her a box of candy and she ate some of it."

"The stuff, she claimed, gave her a peculiar feeling in the head and she felt that she simply must do whatever Wing Moy told her to do. The Chinaman walked part

the way home with her and got her to talking about her mother's diamonds. He then expressed a great desire to see them, saying that in his dreary life in Chinatown he never saw anything pretty. She consented to bring them to the mission and show them to him, which she did to-night."

"Oh, oh, oh! What a fool!" groaned Joe. "But that's Alice. I don't believe any drugged candy was necessary; I suppose she claims that it was drugged?"

"She thinks so now," replied Harry. "But just the same, she ate some more of it this evening and it had the same results."

"Did she actually take her mother's diamonds out of the safe and take them to the mission to show to that wretched Chink?" demanded Joe.

"That's what she did. Of course he admired them and begged her to accompany him to Chinatown and show them to his sick wife, assuring her that he would bring her right away in the cab and that the diamonds need not leave her hands."

"Poor soul!" said Old King Brady.

"She is away off," added Joe. "I suppose she ate more candy and then felt that it was her duty to go?"

"Just what she said," replied Harry. "She was on her way there when you saw her."

"And how did it end?"

"Wing Moy took her into a house; she does not know whether it was on Mott or Pell streets, and led her upstairs."

"And then?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Could there be but one ending? It was in a dark passage that he snatched away her handbag in which she had the diamonds and dusted. He struck her between the eyes and that dazed her. She don't know whether he went upstairs or down."

"And what did the poor thing do?"

"Got out the best way she could. Her money was all gone. She did not even have carfare. She was afraid to go home, and, well—she seems to have heard of the Bradys, so she looked us up in a directory and started for the house prepared to throw herself on our mercy. That's about all there is to her remarkable tale."

"That's the last of Aunt Cordelia's diamonds!" cried Joe, emphatically. "I don't suppose you intend wasting any time on the matter now, gentlemen. Probably the Chink is on the way to 'Frisco by this."

"I don't know about that," replied Old King Brady. "Harry, out with the rest."

"I see you read my thoughts," replied Young King Brady. "Yes, I got a very accurate description of the Chink."

"Know him?" asked the old detective.

"I think so. I should say there was no doubt that he was Wing Moy Dock."

"Hello!" cried Joe. "The fellow they call the King of the Highbinders here in New York. So you have put it up to him?"

CHAPTER III.

SHADOWED TO CHINATOWN.

"So you know of this Wing Moy Dock?" Old King Brady asked.

"Sure," said Joe. "I interviewed him only the other day. It was after the last Tong war down in Chinkville. I can take you right to his place; that is, if he is still there, which I doubt."

"It is more than doubtful," said the old detective; "but let me ask you, Mr. Bradley, how a man with your social connections comes to be a reporter on the Universe, which, as I understand it, pays next to nothing for its reportorial work?"

"You understand it dead right, then," laughed Joe. "We are a lot of bums down there, but as I don't drink and am somewhat of a hustler I have managed to make both ends meet. It is a blamed sight better than living on my Uncle George."

"Which you did before?" inquired the old detective.

"Yes. I was taken by him after my mother's death. He educated me—sent me to college, in fact. I know I haven't been altogether grateful, but the truth is I just could not stand it. My uncle would not let me go into business after I graduated. Everything I proposed he opposed. He insisted upon me joining clubs and going in for society life generally, and it was one perpetual growl about money and yet he would not let me get out and earn my own living—see?"

"What was his idea?"

"Wanted to marry me off to an heiress. I didn't see it. At home it was simply terrible. Constant quarrels and—oh, well, at last I just skinned out and wrote him a letter telling him that in the future I intended to look out for myself. Society makes me tired, and I'm glad I am not of it. Uncle George has never forgiven me, though."

"You seemed to be on good enough terms to-night, then."

"Oh, that was just a patched-up peace for the time being. He forbade me the house and you can just bet I won't go there unless I am specially invited. That is about all there is to it. Now you know how I am fixed."

"And I must say that I admire your independence," replied Old King Brady; "but now, boys, we must get busy if we expect to win out on this case."

"Do you propose to tackle it to-night, then?" inquired Harry.

"I certainly do," replied the old detective. "I have no idea that this Highbinder has already left New York, but there is no telling what he may do to-morrow. To-night is our time. Let us get down to Chinatown right now."

"Any objection to me going with you?" demanded Joe.

"Not the least if you have nothing better to do."

"No; I have no assignment for to-night. I would like to go."

"Then come along by all means, and our first visit will

be to the room where you interviewed the King of the Highbinders at the time of the last Tong war."

Old King Brady then went upstairs and Harry followed him.

"What makes you so sure that the thief was Wing Moy Dock?" Old King Brady asked when they found themselves alone.

"The girl called him Wing Moy."

"That is a reason for doubting it, Harry."

"She said that he had lost part of the left ear."

"Come, that is almost conclusive. Wing Moy Dock is certainly so fixed."

"That's what he is."

"We will proceed on those lines anyhow. Lucky thing that girl took it into her head to steer for us. It is a wonder the poor creature did not go crazy."

Within ten minutes the Bradys and Joe Bradley started downtown.

Chinatown, New York, is passing.

The constant warfare between the Hip Sing Tong, or "Highbinders' Society," as the police style it, and the On Leong, with its many shootings and stabbings, is rapidly driving the more respectable Celestials to seek other and more peaceful quarters.

They are flocking to Williamsburg, Hoboken and other places.

Competent judges are of the opinion that within a short time the Highbinders will have old Chinatown to themselves.

The Bradys and Joe Bradley were discussing this matter as they rode downtown.

From the remarks of the young reporter the Bradys saw that all Chinks were alike to him.

"If you will allow me to say so, Mr. Bradley, you don't understand Chinatown politics at all," the old detective said.

"How is that?"

"Why, you seem to regard all Chinamen as murderers and thieves."

"And so I do, and so they are."

"You are miles away from the truth. By far the great majority of them are as honest as the sun, industrious and saving. Such are the On Leong."

"But they are always fighting?"

"Merely defending themselves from the Hip Sing Tong, which is an organized band of murderers and thieves. The On Leong is a sort of merchants' protective association, nothing more."

"The Chinese are a strange people. With them murder and robbery seem to be a recognized trade."

"It is so, but do they differ from us in that respect?"

"Why, certainly."

"I fail to see it. Look at our political organizations. Look at our Wall Street gangs, most thoroughly organized for plundering the people."

"I see a difference."

"Well, the only difference I see is that we cover our

organizations with a veil of hypocrisy, while John Chinaman comes out boldly and says what he is."

Harry laughed.

"You will never convert the public to your views in regard to the Chinks, Governor," he said.

"Just the same, I hold my views," replied Old King Brady. "Look here, Mr. Bradley, I will bet you that if these diamonds are ever recovered, it will be through a Chinaman, and in no other way."

They had now reached Worth street, and, leaving the car, crossed over to Chatham Square.

"It is around on Pell street where I saw the King of the Highbinders," said Joe. "Follow me."

He led the way to a dilapidated tenement, with a Chinese grocery on the ground floor.

"Upstairs here?" questioned Harry.

"Yes," replied Joe. "Top floor, front room."

"Under what circumstances did you get an interview with this man?" asked Old King Brady.

"The ward detective arranged it for me," was the reply.

"Then let me assure you that it is very doubtful if you ever saw the genuine Wing Moy Dock."

"Oh, don't you fool yourself."

"I'd like to bet that the ward detective fooled you. Those things are done every day. The newspapers never get the truth about this place or its people. But come upstairs."

Joe felt rather called down.

He led the way through the dark halls.

Many of the rooms were vacant and their doors stood wide open.

"This house is all but deserted," remarked Old King Brady.

They reached the top floor and Joe pointed out the room.

Harry's knock on the door brought no response.

"No one there," said the old detective. "Try the door."

Harry did so and found the door unfastened.

The room was vacant, as Old King Brady had predicted.

"Now we see," said the old detective. "How much did you give your wardman for introducing you to the King of the Highbinders?"

"Ten dollars."

"The room and the man were fixed up for the occasion."

"I begin to believe it."

"Never mind. We all get fooled once in a while. Now let us think what we had better do."

They stepped into the room and Old King Brady closed the door.

"It is a puzzle to know where to begin," he remarked.

"Is it worth while to see Quong Lee?" questioned Harry.

The allusion was to the keeper of an opium joint on Chatham Square, who, feeling himself under great obliga-

tions to Old King Brady, has often assisted him in his New York Chinese cases.

"I don't see how he could help us any," replied the old detective. "This is a matter into which even Quong's sharp eyes could not see. As a matter of fact, having failed here, I don't see what more we can do to-night."

Harry knew what this meant.

Old King Brady proposed to get rid of Joe Bradley.

He said nothing, and the old detective resumed:

"I think we may as well quit. We will take this matter up in the morning, Mr. Bradley, and if you will call at our office later we may have something to tell.

"Hark!" said Harry. "There is someone on the stairs."

Old King Brady moved to the door, but did not open it.

"There is no doubt that we have been followed," he whispered. "Wait."

Joe could hear nobody, but then his was not the trained ear of the detectives.

Harry distinctly heard stealthy footsteps advance to the door and stop.

Suddenly Old King Brady flung open the door.

Quick as his action was, he was not quick enough for the person outside.

A Chinaman sprang away and darted like a deer up a flight of stairs leading to the bulkhead on the roof.

"Halt, there!" cried the old detective, drawing his revolver and springing after him.

Harry and Joe followed with all speed.

When they reached the roof they found the detective there alone.

"What became of him?" demanded Harry.

Old King Brady pointed to the roof of the adjoining building some ten feet below.

"He went down there before I could touch him," he said. "He is lost in the shuffle by this time. No earthly use to follow him up."

"We have been watched," said Harry.

"It is the girl," replied Old King Brady. "Unquestionably she was shadowed by the Chinks. They saw her come to our house and then the shadowers took us in hand."

"By Jove, you are right!" cried Joe. "There was a Chink in the car which brought us downtown. What does it mean?"

"It means that there is some deeper motive involved in the stealing of these diamonds than appears on the surface," replied Old King Brady; "but we can go no further in the matter to-night. Let us cry quits and go home."

CHAPTER IV.

THE BRADYS TWICE SURPRISED.

The Brays disposed of Joe Bradley at the corner of Pell street and the Bowery and started uptown.

They went no further than Bayard street, however, and there, turning, made their way to the Elizabeth street police station.

Here, as he expected; Old King Brady found Wardman

Gallagher, whose knowledge of the night side of Chinatown is supposed to be second to none.

"We want to find Wing Moy Dock, Gallagher," said Old King Brady. "Can you help us at all?"

The answer was precisely what the old detective anticipated.

"Perhaps I can and perhaps I can't. That all depends."

"Upon what we put up?"

"Partly that; not altogether, though."

"What do you mean?"

"Why," said Gallagher, coolly. "I don't want Wing Moy arrested."

"No?"

"Decidedly no. We have entirely too much business together. What's the word?"

He is supposed to be mixed up in a diamond robbery. We want to get the goods back."

"That might be fixed."

"Is he in town?"

"I guess he is. He was the other day."

"Will you see him and let us know what can be done?"

"Yes."

"Thanks," replied Old King Brady, and with Harry he immediately left the station.

"Think he will make good?" inquired Harry. "Seems to me you took rather a foolish course."

"And why?"

"Won't he tip Wing Moy Dock off and send him flying?"

"No. I begin to seriously doubt if Wing Moy had anything to do with the matter."

"The girl described him accurately."

"What about the Chink Joe Bradley saw? Would not the description fit him equally well?"

"I suppose it would."

"And there you are. We might dodge about in the dark here for weeks and accomplish nothing. We have been shadowed. For Gallagher to approach Wing Moy will not post him on the fact that we are on his trail any better than he is already posted if he is the thief. If not we may win his help, which would be the next thing to assuring success."

Harry raised no further argument.

Old King Brady never permits one to go beyond a certain point.

The detective now returned home and the case rested for the night.

The next development occurred at the breakfast table next morning when Old King Brady took up the paper.

"Why, look here!" he exclaimed. "There was a burglary committed at Mr. Fullerton's house last night, or rather an attempt at one. This is very strange."

"What happened?" demanded Harry.

"Madam's safe was blown in the room next to the one in which she slept. It is the safe in which she kept her diamonds. Shall I read you the account?"

"I wish you would."

Old King Brady read as follows:

"BURGLARS AT BANKER FULLERTON'S.

"Some time between midnight and two o'clock a bold attempt was made to steal the diamond jewelry of Mrs. George Fullerton, wife of the well-known Wall Street banker, whose residence is No. 4 East 6—th street. street.

"The burglars must have entered by way of the yard of the house connecting on Fifth avenue, climbing fences until they reached the yard of Mr. Fullerton's house.

"Here in some mysterious way they managed to attach a rope ladder provided with two peculiar hooks to the windowsill of the rear room on the story above the parlor floor.

"This room, used by Mrs. Fullerton as a boudoir and sitting-room, contains the lady's safe in which she kept the diamond jewelry so well known to New York society.

"The Fullertons were not disturbed during the night, but upon entering the room at a little after two Mrs. Fullerton, who found herself wakeful at that hour, discovered to her astonishment that the safe had been blown.

"Calling her husband, the servants were aroused and further examination was made.

"The rope ladder was discovered in place at the window and burglars' tools and heavy blankets in which the safe had been wrapped were scattered about the floor.

"Another and singular find was made in the back yard.

"This was a felt slipper such as Chinamen wear.

"Mrs. Fullerton heard no noise during the night, but it is supposed that the noise she made moving about her room served to scare the burglars off.

"The loss is comparatively insignificant, as Mrs. Fullerton's diamond jewelry had all been removed from the safe and all that was in it were a few pieces belonging to Miss Fullerton and her sister, Miss Alice. These, valued at something over \$3,000, were taken.

"The police were at once notified by Mr. Fullerton over the telephone.

"It is believed by them that the burglar wore the Chinese slippers for the purpose of deadening his footfalls. They scout the idea that a Chinaman may have been concerned in the job."

"Wonderful!" cried Harry. "There is an inside history to that business, sure."

"There certainly is, and, what is more, there were two sets of Chinks after Mrs. Fullerton's diamonds. One got them, the other got left."

"You don't think that the money value of the stones was the sole motive then?"

"I am certain that it was not, Harry. We have stumbled upon a very mysterious case."

"One thing we must give Fullerton credit for, he seems to have managed to keep the fact that his wife's diamonds had already been stolen concealed from the police."

"I wish he need not have lugged the police into the business at all."

"And so do I; but I daresay his wife would hear to nothing else."

The detectives discussed the case further and then went to their little office on Park Row.

Now thus far this had been decidedly a case of surprises.

Here the detectives found another surprise awaiting them.

"There's a Chink now," said Harry as they approached the office; "don't you see him standing in our doorway? Can he be waiting for us?"

"It looks very much like it," replied the old detective; "but I must say I can't exactly comprehend what it means."

With their eyes taking in the fellow for all he was worth, the Bradys advanced.

"Great Scott, that is Wing Moy Dock, Governor!" Harry exclaimed.

It must be understood that this so-called King of the Highbinders was a well known character in Chinatown.

Old King Brady, as it happened, had only seen him once, however, but Harry had seen him several times.

"You are sure?" questioned the old detective.

"Absolutely certain."

"Strange. Gallagher may have sent him to us, Governor."

They pushed on to the entrance, and just as they reached it the Chinaman turned and saw them.

His stolid countenance lit up slightly.

The man was in American dress—very stylish, too.

But his English was not as much up to date as his clothes.

"Good morning," he said, extending his hand. "Nice morning."

"It is all right, Mr. Wing Moy Dock," replied Old King Brady, shaking hands.

"I can see you a few minutes? Yes?"

"Certainly. Step upstairs."

Old King Brady led the way and opened up the office.

Harry brought up the rear with a sharp eye on the Chinaman.

If a treacherous attack was contemplated there would have been little chance for it, with Harry close behind.

He shut the door and placed a chair for the Chink alongside of Old King Brady's desk.

"Now, then, what is it?" demanded the old detective "Tell your story, Wing Moy Dock."

"You know me?"

"Yes, I know you."

"I president of the Hip Sing Tong."

"Otherwise the Highbinders."

"Yair. Say, you big detective. Will you takee case for me? Hip Sing Tong good for pay."

"Perhaps. Let us hear about it. But first, who sent you here?"

"Nobody. I just come."

"Didn't your friend Gallagher send you?"

"No, no. I no have seen Gallagher dhis week."

This was said with every appearance of honesty.

But that Old King Brady took no stock whatever in the man's statements need scarcely be said.

"Let us hear about your case," he added.

"You lead papers dhis morning? You lead about big dliamond stealing uptown?"

"Where?"

"Mlister Fullerton's."

"What paper did you read it in?"

Wing Moy named one of the journals.

"You have that paper?" Old King Brady asked.

"Yair," replied the Chinaman, and he produced it.

"Let me read this story," said Old King Brady. "Keep quiet now until I am through."

The account was, as might have been expected, unblushing in its falsity.

It deliberately asserted that the burglars had secured all of Mrs. Fullerton's diamonds, although the falsity of this must have been known.

There were pictures of diamonds as big as the Kohinoor surrounding portraits supposed to represent Banker Fullerton and his wife.

The main picture Old King Brady easily identified as that of a well-known New York politician; the woman's he was unable to verify, of course.

So this was the Chinaman's source of information.

Old King Brady did not attempt to enlighten him, but, laying down the paper, said:

"Well? What do you want us to do?"

"Now, lookee here, Mr. Blady," said the Chinaman, giving his chair a hitch, "mebbe you t'ink you know a whole lot about the Hip Sing Tong."

"I know you are a lot of blame thieves."

"Sure, Mike. So some you Melicans is a lot of blame t'ieves, only you no say so; we do."

"Exactly. Well?"

"You likee find those dliamonds and gettee big reward?"

"Perhaps."

"Den me give you tip. You go ahead and work up you case. Den when you gettee dliamonds you lettee me see. I want one—only one—see? You keepee all de rest and get big reward."

"That won't work, Wing Moy. I must know more."

"What more?"

"Why you want the one?"

"Sure Mike. I no can refuse you dlat. You biggest detective in New York. So I go Gallagher he want de whole t'ing. Mebbe he 'lest me anyhow. I don't want nothing to do with de p'lice in dhis business; only you."

"All that sounds well, but you haven't told me about the one."

Wing Moy Dock gave his chair another hitch.

"It is so hard to make you Melican man lunderstand," he said.

"Try it on, man; try it on," replied Old King Brady. "I'm no such big fool as you take me for."

"Belly well. Now, see here, so some Chinaman go into you Catholic church and steal one of you idols, so you call dem, how you likee dlat?"

"But we don't have idols, as you call them, in the Catholic Church."

"You know what I mean?"

"Statues?"

"Yair. Allee same you go Chinee joss house you callee dem idols."

"Oh, get ahead. Has anybody been stealing a Highbinder idol, with diamond eyes?"

"Yair. Dlat it. In Canton fifty year ago dley pull out one eye, and steal it. We gottee dlat idol down Mott street. He bring good luck to my kind of Hip Sing Tong. Dere was two kind, Blady—see? Other kind so they can keep us from getting dlat dliamond, dley will—see?"

"And Mrs. Fullerton had that diamond?"

"Yair."

"And the other fellows have got it?"

"Yair. So we t'ink. P'haps so, mebbe so. Dunno for sure, but so dley have den we wantee dlat dliamond, and we pay big money to get."

"How big?"

"Thousand dollar."

"Not near enough to get me."

No Chinaman ever names the price either for buying or selling that he really means.

Old King Brady, whose interest in all this was growing, was curious to see how high a bid the Highbinder would actually make.

"Two thousand," said Wing Moy Dock, twisting up his face.

Old King Brady shook his head.

"How muchee you take?"

"Oh, you name your price."

"T'ree thousand."

"Five thousand."

"Flive thousand?"

"Yes."

"Belly much."

"No less."

"Belly well. We give him."

"You must want that diamond pretty bad."

"Yair."

"Is it a big one?"

"Not so big. It have big flaw in it. You no could sell it for one thousand dollar."

"No?"

"No, siree."

"How do you know that Mrs. Fullerton had this diamond?"

"Me see it."

"You?"

"Yair. Me butler at hotel out in California. She comee dere last year. Me see it den."

"How is it set?"

"She wear it over her hair along with whole big bunch other dliamonds."

"In a coronet?"

"Yair."

"So that's your proposition?"

"Yair; dlat my proposition. You gettee you money sure."

"But can you put me next to these thieves?"

"You bet. You come Chinatown my place ddis afternoon. Me do just dlat. Den you do the rest."

"Do you want them arrested?"

"Me no care."

"How many are there of them?"

"T'ree."

"Where is your place?"

"You come?"

"Yes."

"Allee light. Den you gettee busy by t'ree o'clock. Come dere."

Wing Moy Dock produced an engraved card, if you please.

It read: "Wing Moy Dock, Expert Chinese Butler, P. S.—Can cook everything Chinese."

The address was a number on Pell street, but not that of the house to which the Bradys and Joe Bradley had gone the night before.

CHAPTER V.

THE BRADYS WAIT ON THE HIGHBINDER KING.

Having delivered his card and made his appointment, Wing Moy Dock took himself off as quick as he possibly could.

"Most remarkable!" exclaimed Harry as soon as the last echo of his retreating footsteps had died away on the stairs.

"This has been a case of surprises from start to date," Old King Brady replied.

"A trap, of course."

"For us?"

"Yes; don't you think so?"

"Frankly, Harry, I don't, and yet it may be so."

"Can a Highbinder be trusted to tell the truth?"

"Yes; if it serves his purpose he will tell it just the same as any other criminal. I believe this is a case of jealousy between two lodges of Highbinders. The one which has the idol which brings luck naturally wants to restore the eye, which, in their estimation, no doubt, will restore its lucky powers. The rival lodge, not wanting them to have luck, naturally fight the thing."

"Still I don't see the case clear."

"I do."

"Well?"

"Wing Moy Dock's gang robbed the girl Alice, but failed to get the diamond."

"And the other bunch robbed the house?"

"As I read the riddle."

"How on earth did they get up to the windows?"

"Pshaw, Harry! To climb up by the ladder would be nothing for an expert Chinese juggler who can go up an inch rope."

"We can talk all day and you will find an answer for everything. Do you really propose to keep your appointment?"

"Yes, I do."

"Settled. I bet you it is just a trap to put us out of business. Remember, we were shadowed by Chinks last night."

"All the same I shall make the call."

This settled it.

The old detective was opening his morning mail when Mr. Fullerton came bustling in.

"Good morning, gentlemen. Good morning!" he exclaimed. "You have read the papers this morning, I suppose?"

"Yes, we have read of the robbery at your house," replied Old King Brady. "Two accounts, in fact; one gives the burglars all your wife's diamonds, the other only the jewelry belonging to your daughter."

"This latter is the truth, of course."

"As we supposed. The diamonds have not been returned."

"Indeed, no. This is very singular. Did you read about the Chinese shoe which I found in the yard?"

"Yes."

"The police paid little heed to it. I said nothing about the other business, of course, and was lucky enough to prevail upon Mrs. Fullerton to keep a still tongue. Do you see any connection between my daughter's case and this?"

"I most certainly do,"

"Ha! I supposed you would say so. What can it all mean?"

"In my judgment it means that Mrs. Fullerton possessed some particular diamond which for some mysterious reason is wanted by these Chinese."

"I can't imagine that."

"Let us look into it for a moment. I——"

"Just a second. Have you done anything on the case?"

"Oh, yes. I have obtained information which may prove to be an important clew."

"Glad to know it. If I had had my way I should not have reported the case to the police at all, but my wife simply insisted upon it. Go on."

"Did Mrs. Fullerton possess a diamond coronet with a large flawed diamond set as the central stone?"

"She did."

"Did she wear it at a hotel in California a year ago where there was a Chinese butler, manager or steward, or whatever he called himself?"

"She did. The hotel Mojave, near San Diego. How did you get onto this?"

"We can't give details, Mr. Fullerton. It is against our rule while we are working up a case."

"Oh, very well."

"About this coronet, how long had your wife owned it?"

"She bought it in San Francisco that trip. It was not of great value. All the stones which were genuine were flawed and some of them were false."

"So? Was the coronet among the things your daughter took from the safe?"

"You excite my curiosity, Mr. Brady. It was not. The fact is, Mrs. Fullerton owns two coronets; the other is of value and very much resembles the one in question. Alice left the flawed one behind her and took the good one. The other was stolen last night."

"Indeed! Why did Mrs. Fullerton buy this inferior coronet?"

"I can't say. She took a fancy to it. It was cheap. There is no accounting for a woman's whims."

"That is all I wish to know unless you can describe that central stone."

"As it happens I can. It was a very singular diamond. Its size was about as big as an old-fashioned silver half-dime and it was very deeply cut and was of the purest water except for a strange brown spot in the centre which strongly resembled the pupil of an eye."

"I see."

"Does the description help you out any?"

"Oh, yes, a lot."

"I am glad. Now here is something I have brought you. The police refused it, much to my relief, for it enabled me to keep it. Here it is."

Thus saying, Mr. Fullerton laid down a small package which he had been carrying.

"The Chinese shoe!" exclaimed Old King Brady.

"That is it."

"Good!"

He opened the package and looked over the shoe.

"Its only peculiarity lies in the fact that it has a couple of Chinese letters inside," he said. "They may lead to something. I shall keep this. If the police inquire for it refer them to me."

"Do you propose to consult with them?"

"Unless they come after me, certainly not."

"Very well. That is all I have to say. I wish you good luck."

Mr. Fullerton left then, and Old King Brady, handing the shoe to Harry, told him to take it up to Quong Lee and find out what the characters on the inside meant.

Harry accordingly hustled up to Chatham Square.

It was rather early to expect to find the old divekeeper out of bed, for his business as an opium joint keeper required him to remain up until all hours of the night.

And it so proved that Quong Lee was invisible.

Harry saw his assistant, however.

"Dlat a name of a man," he said.

"How does it read?" Young King Brady inquired.

"Gee Wang."

"You know such a person?"

"Yair."

"Where does he live?"

"Around Mott street."

The number was given.

"Is he a Highbinder?" Harry then asked.

"Yair," replied the Chinaman. "He belly bad man, Gee Wang."

"Does he ever come here?"

"Yair."

"Was he here last night?"

"Nope."

This was as far as Harry could go.

He took a turn around on to Mott street, however, and had a look at the residence of Mr. Gee Wang.

There was a fan-tan joint in the basement and lodging rooms on the floors above.

Young King Brady returned to the office and reported.

"That number is directly in the rear of the number on Pell street which Wing Moy gave me," remarked Old King Brady.

"I noticed that."

"Did you go around on Pell street to make sure?"

"Yes."

"It may have some significance. Although I never heard before of a Chink writing his name in his shoe, I am very much inclined to think that in Gee Wang we have this second-story thief."

There was nothing further doing in the case until the time came for the Bradys' appointment with Wing Moy Dock.

The house on Pell street was several doors west of the half-deserted tenement.

It was a typical Pell street structure of the better sort.

On the ground floor was a store devoted to the sale of Chinese bric-a-brac.

Old King Brady ascended to the top floor and knocked on the door of the front room, as the Highbinder had directed.

It was immediately opened and the detectives entered a room well furnished after the Chinese style.

Wing Moy Dock received them.

Besides the King of the Highbinders, there were four other Chinks in the room.

They sat around with their hats on and were a particularly villainous looking lot, all wearing Chinese dress.

They stared in grim silence as Wing Moy shook hands with the detectives and closed the door.

"So you come," said the Highbinder.

"We are here," the old detective replied.

"Dlat be good. Now I tellee you more."

"Well?"

"Dlese gemplen allee light; my good friends. You no mind dem?"

"Not at all; go on."

"We know who stealee Mrs. Fullerton's diamonds last night."

"Perhaps I do, too."

"You?"

"Yes."

"How you can?"

"Shall I tell the name of one of the thieves?"

"Sure Mike, so you can."

"Gee Wang."

Wing Moy started.

Immediately the Chinks on the chairs began gabbling among themselves.

Old King Brady almost regretted having said a word about Gee Wang.

The effect on the Chinamen worried him.

For as much as ten minutes the talk continued, Wing Moy Dock joining with the rest.

"Come," said the old detective at last. "Speak up, Wing Moy, and tell what it is you want us to do."

The talk instantly ceased.

The Chinks on the chairs suddenly grew as grave as owls.

"Allee light, Mlister Blady," replied Wing Moy Dock with a bland smile, "me tell. Come longa me. Now we shiddoo."

CHAPTER VI.

THE BRADYS GET A BAD SETBACK.

It cannot be said that the Bradys care much for Chinese cases.

While the element of mystery which they always contain is attractive, the personal danger involved is great.

Thus, as they left the Highbinders' assemblage, both the Bradys were fully on the alert and held themselves ready to pounce upon Wing Moy Dock at any time.

But there seemed no need.

The Chinaman led the way downstairs and out on to Pell street.

Then he led them to the house which they had entered the night before.

As they passed into the hall alongside the grocery store Old King Brady called a halt.

"Hold on, Wing Moy. There are very few people living upstairs here," he said. "How do I know but what you are leading us into some trap?"

"No, no, no!" cried Wing Moy, greatly troubled. "No tlap. I swear straight goods. Honest Injun! No, no!"

"But how can I tell? Explain yourself. We know that Gee Wang stole the diamonds. Do you want us to arrest him? Are you taking us where he is?"

"Yair. Me gettee him to come to you upstairs—see? Den you jump him—see? Scare de life out of him—see? Makee him tellee where he hid dlose diamonds—see? After me gettee diamonds me no care what you do with Gee Wang."

Old King Brady was worse puzzled than ever to know what to do.

The risk was great.

But by assuming it he stood a chance of recovering all the stolen jewelry.

On the other hand, if he shied at the risk, the only way was to arrest the so-called King of the Hip Sing Tong then and there.

That this would amount to but little was almost certain.

There is no dumber creature on earth than a Chinaman in the hands of the police.

Harry knew just how it would be.

"The Governor will balk, but he will bust ahead in the end," Harry said to himself.

And so it proved.

"Go on," said Old King Brady. "If you play us foul, look out for yourself, Wing Moy Duck."

"No, no," said the Chinaman. "Me stlaight goods. You shall see."

They ascended the stairs and entered a room on the top floor.

It was the one next to the room the Bradys had visited the night before.

Opening from it was still another room, much smaller.

This was separated from the first by a heavy portierre.

Both rooms were scantily furnished in Chinese style.

Wing Moy passed into the little room and pulled open a sort of panel in the wall.

It raised on hinges and he fastened it up with a stick.

"Lookee here," he said. "See dlat roof down here?"

It was the roof upon which the man had jumped the night before.

"Well," said Old King Brady, glancing down.

"Me go dere," continued Wing Moy Dock. "Down dere Gee Wang he libs. Me bring him up by sleklet stairs—see?"

He went back into the other room and pulled up a panel in the floor.

Here there was a very narrow stairway built in close to the chimney breast.

"You watch out of window. You see me bling Gee Wang up," the Highbinder said. "Me come light back—see?"

"All right; go ahead," said Old King Brady. "Don't be long."

The Chinaman immediately started downstairs.

"By Jove, Governor, we are running a big risk," said Harry.

"We must take it," was the reply. "See if he locked that door."

"No, it is open," replied Harry.

"It gives us a way to make a quick retreat."

Old King Brady stepped to the panel window and looked out, Harry joining him.

"There he comes!" the latter exclaimed.

Wing Moy Dock had suddenly appeared on the roof.

He walked along to the bulkhead and disappeared inside.

The Bradys, craning their necks out of the window, had been watching all this.

It would have served them better if they had kept a watch at the door.

For they were not alone in these apparently deserted apartments, as they supposed.

At that very moment three Chinamen, and one a particularly large one, were taking them in from the other room.

There they stood in absolute silence.

In a moment they started forward.

The Bradys, with their backs turned, were still watching for the reappearance of Wing Moy Dock.

On crept the three Chinks in their bare feet.

One carried a club, the big fellow drew a revolver, while the man in the rear held a rope.

The Bradys at the little window stood oblivious, so deeply was their attention engaged.

Just then they saw Wing Moy Dock emerge from the bulkhead, followed by another Chinaman.

"There they come," remarked Harry.

There was something coming!

Suddenly the foremost Chinaman brought his club down upon Harry with terrible force.

The young detective dropped like a stone, while Old King Brady turned to face his foes.

It was too late.

The big Chinaman thrust the revolver into his face.

At the same instant the third man threw the rope around his neck.

There was no standing up against it.

Old King Brady went down under a blow with the club and was dragged from the room.

Harry lay unconscious, and in a minute Wing Moy Dock and his companions came up the secret stairs.

Harry did not see them.

He knew nothing for some time after that.

In fact, night had nearly fallen before he revived to find himself lying on the floor in a pool of blood.

His head was aching horribly, his mind was so confused that he could scarcely remember where he was or how he came there.

In the dusk he could barely see.

"Knocked out, by thunder!" he muttered. "They thought they had done me up for good, I guess. But what about the Governor? Have they killed him?"

Over in the corner he could just discern the body of a man lying face downward upon the floor.

With considerable difficulty Young King Brady got on his feet.

He walked over to the body, for the moment thinking that it was his chief.

But no!

The man was smaller and of different build.

Harry bent down and rolled him over.

He knew now that he was handling a corpse, for the body was stiff and cold.

"A Chink!" muttered Harry.

He felt for his dark lantern and found it in place.

Flashing the light upon the face of the Chinaman, he saw that it was Wing Moy Dock.

Harry was in despair.

He put his hand to his own head.

His hair was stiff with coagulated blood.

As the little shutter was low, the Bradys had removed their hats in order to stand under it.

Harry's hat lay on the floor where he had placed it. Old King Brady's was gone.

"I've got a bad knock," thought Young King Brady, "and it ought to be attended to at once. Let me think."

For the moment he was on the point of hurrying around to the Elizabeth street police station and reporting Old King Brady missing.

But this he hesitated to do, well knowing that Old King Brady, above all things, desires to keep his private affairs secret from the police.

"Not yet," Harry said to himself. "They thought they had killed me, and if they intended to kill the Governor I am sure they would have made a clean job of it here. I'll wait."

He returned to Wing Moy Dock.

The floor all around the dead man was bathed in blood.

Flashing his lantern down, Harry saw that the wretched Chinaman had been stabbed in the back and the knife pulled from the wound.

"I may as well get whatever papers he has about him," Young King Brady said to himself.

He went through the dead man's pockets hastily, but could find nothing.

"Whoever killed him has overhauled his pockets," thought Harry, and he examined his own.

Strangely enough, they had not been disturbed.

Even a considerable sum of money which he happened to have about him, amounting to something over a hundred dollars, remained undisturbed.

"I must get out of this," thought Harry, and he started for the door.

At the same instant he heard soft footsteps ascending the stairs.

"By Jove, more Chinks coming," muttered Harry.

He made a dart for the secret stairs, hoping to escape to the roof of the other building.

The opening had been closed up, however, and in his confusion of mind and the excitement of the moment he could not see how the spring worked.

"I must face the music," thought Young King Brady, and he drew his revolver.

On came the stealthy footsteps.

In a second a young Chinaman looked in at the door.

He was in American dress, and as his eyes fell upon the body of Wing Dock he gave an excited exclamation.

Harry, who flashed his lantern upon him and covered

him with his revolver, recognized one of the men he had seen in Wing Moy Dock's room.

"Don't shoot!" cried the Chink in perfect English. "What has happened? Who killed Wing Dock? Speak!"

"Are you here as my friend or my enemy?" demanded Harry. "I've had a dose of this myself, and I don't propose to stand any nonsense. I want you to understand that."

"I'm your friend, sure," was the calm reply, "unless you killed that man. Then I am your deadly enemy; but I don't believe you did kill him."

"I certainly did not."

"Where is Old King Brady?"

"I don't know. We were attacked by Chinamen, High-binders I suppose. They knocked me out and nearly killed me. I don't know what happened to Old King Brady. When I got it over the head with a big club I fell."

"Was he shot or stabbed?"

"Stabbed."

"It's a bad job; but put down your revolver. There must be no quarrel between us. You Bradys have failed to make good. It is too bad, but it can't be helped."

"Who are you?"

"You can call me Charley Lee. That's the best you can make out of my Chinese name."

"You speak good English."

"Yes; I am a halfbreed. My mother was an American woman. Tell me all that happened here."

Apparently there was nothing to fear.

Harry put up his revolver and told what had occurred. "I can't blame you and the old man," said Charley, "except that I think on your own account you ought to have kept a sharper watch out."

"I think so, too. We have certainly been to blame."

"What are you going to do? Tell the police? Report a murder, set all Chinatown talking, or what?"

"I don't want to do that. My idea is that Old King Brady is not dead. I had rather not drag the police into this if it can be helped."

"And I am very sure he is not dead. I have good reasons for thinking so. As for this corpse, the Hip Sing Tong will take care of that if you will only keep your mouth shut."

"I'll do it if you will help me and Old King Brady."

"That is just what I will do—what I want to do."

"Then it is a bargain."

"Have you been through his pockets?"

"Yes; everything is gone."

"All right. Come on."

"Where?"

"To report this thing to Wing Moy Dock's friends."

"Do I have to go? I want to get over to the Hudson Street Hospital and have this wound dressed. I have got work to do."

"And you look so white and sick that you are hardly able to go alone. I'll go with you after I have reported this."

And indeed Harry felt so faint that he was only too glad to accept this suggestion.

"We will go downstairs. I will wait in the street," he said. "I can't see any use in me going with you."

"All right," replied the Chinaman.

They descended to Pell street and Harry waited.

It was some minutes before Charley Lee returned.

"The Hip Sing Tong will look after everything," he said. "I will go with you."

They then went down to Worth street and started across town.

CHAPTER VII.

HELD A PRISONER BY THE HIP SING TONG.

Old King Brady was not so hard hit as Harry.

The idea in his case seemed only to be to reduce him to subjection; not to injure him in any way.

As soon as they had him in the hall the Chinamen lifted the old detective to his feet.

The big fellow got him by the right arm and the man with the rope caught him by the left.

Here they stood as if waiting for something.

Was it for the coming of Gee Wang?

Old King Brady thought so.

In a moment he heard the Chinaman enter the other room.

Then all in an instant there was a sharp cry and the sound of a heavy fall.

The Chinks began gabbling excitedly among themselves.

The man with the club looked into the room, where more talk was heard.

In a few moments he came out again, and, having made a few remarks, Old King Brady was dragged back into the first room and down the secret stairs.

The old detective only caught a glimpse of Harry as he passed.

He saw nothing of Wing Moy Dock nor of Gee Wang.

They came out upon the roof and passed into the bulkhead.

Then it was downstairs into the other house.

They wound up in a room on the second floor which was fully furnished in Chinese style.

Here there was another secret panel alongside the chimney, as in the other house.

It stood open, and one of the Chinamen, removing the rope from about the old detective's neck, ordered him to enter and pass down the stairs.

In cases like these Old King Brady always adopts one course.

Where protest is useless he never makes it, but always does in silence exactly as he is told.

Thus he entered through the secret panel and descended the stairs.

A Chinaman stood behind him with a cocked revolver.

"Go on! Open the door at the end of the stairs and enter!" he called in broken English, adding:

"If you stop I will shoot!"

Needless to say Old King Brady went on.

"What of Harry?" he asked himself.

But there was nothing to be done, so he dismissed the thought from his mind and continued to the foot of the stairs.

Here there was a door, which he opened.

He found himself looking into a small room with stone walls on all sides.

It was evidently a sub-cellar.

There was a bamboo couch, a table and a few chairs.

Standing by the table was the Chinaman whom Old King Brady had seen on the roof with Wing Moy Dock.

He took him to be Gee Wang.

"Come in," said the man.

Old King Brady entered and the door closed behind him.

"You open dlat door. You go out so you can," the Chinaman said.

"I'll not turn my back on you, my friend," replied the old detective calmly, "but I will do as you tell me if you will stand by the door."

The Chinaman moved to the door.

Old King Brady then tried to open it.

There was nothing doing. The door was as firm as a rock.

"You see?" said the Chink. "You t'inkee you get out so easy. You no can."

"I see. I am a prisoner here."

"Yair. Now you turn your back."

"No!"

"You turn quick."

He whipped out a big Highbinder revolver.

Old King Brady was helpless.

Although we neglected to mention it, he had been searched by the Chinamen while standing in the hall and his own revolver taken away.

True he had another in his secret pocket, but as he stood he could not well get at this.

"You mean to kill me?" he asked.

"No; me no killee," was the reply. "Me plomise. Me no killee so you turn you back. Me shootee you dead so you no do."

Old King Brady turned his back and stood motionless.

He could not hear a sound for several minutes.

Then a voice suddenly spoke behind him, saying:

"Hello, Old King Brady, Esquire, detective! You can look around now!"

Old King Brady turned to find himself facing a man once his most bitter enemy.

His heart sank.

The man who had mysteriously taken Gee Wang's place he knew to be an unprincipled scoundrel, an ex-convict, an opium fiend, a villain of the worst description.

There he stood dressed in a well-worn cheap business suit, his hair snow white, his face yellow from the effects of opium.

There was a hard, cruel look in his eyes.

"You know me?" he asked.

"I certainly do," replied Old King Brady, summoning all his self-restraint. "You are Terry McGraw."

"All there is left of him."

"Well?"

"Well, old man, you see that at last the tables have turned and you find yourself in the power of the man you helped to break and send to Sing Sing. There is something like restitution in this."

Old King Brady sat down at the table and leaned his head wearily upon his hand.

The outlook was anything but pleasant.

This Terry McGraw had once been a wardman whose beat covered Chinatown.

He had become, through long association with the Chinese, an inveterate opium fiend.

It is said that all who habitually use opium become thieves.

Be this as it may, Terry McGraw certainly became one.

Old King Brady some fifteen years before, having undertaken a burglary case, traced it home to the man before him.

It ruined McGraw and he went up the river on a long sentence.

This had been partially commuted owing to his broken health.

Old King Brady knew this.

He had seen McGraw several times since he regained his freedom.

The wretch had whiningly asked him for money and Old King Brady had been liberal with him.

He regarded him in the light of a shuffling tramp, one of the kind which crawl around the Bowery late at night.

Needless to say, he was the last person he dreamed of seeing now.

"Why don't you answer?" demanded the ex-wardman. "What do you sit there moping for? What do you suppose I am going to do to you?"

"Blest if I know," replied the old detective. "Ask me something easy. Do you live with the Hip Sing Tong now?"

"Right here with the Highbinders. I have been with them a year now. I can even talk Chinese. They are my best friends."

"Let me see, you were pretty good at blowing a safe once. Did you do the safe blowing at Fullerton's the other night?"

"Did I? You used to pride yourself upon being able to tell one cracksman's job from another. Do you think that job looked like my work?"

"Didn't see it."

"You didn't, hey? I know better."

"Have it your own way, Terry."

"Oh, I believe you. Well, draw your own conclusions. Now to business. Know why I am here?"

"No."

"You think it is to kill you?"

"Oh, bite it off, McGraw. I don't think anything except that I want to know the worst."

"Well, then you shall. I've got nothing so much against you as you may imagine."

"But you just said——"

"Oh, then I was only doing a little chuckling. I suppose that is my privilege. You nipped me in the line of your business. I should have done the same if I was in your place. This is another deal."

"Will you ever explain?"

"I'm going to right now, Brady," replied McGraw, flinging himself into a chair. "I've been sent by the Chinks to do the chin-chin act with you because I can talk better English than they can and are thus better able to make you understand—see?"

"Go ahead."

"There have been two Fullerton diamond robberies."

"Well?"

"The first was committed by a man who is now dead."

"Well?"

"His name was Wing Moy Dock. Ha, old man! Are you surprised? Are you surprised?"

"Don't make a fool of yourself by trying to be dramatic. Have the Highbinders killed Wing Moy Dock, then?"

"They have."

"And my partner?"

"Little Harry is dead, too, rest his dear little soul."

Old King Brady restrained himself.

He saw that the fellow was trying to torture him.

Whether to believe him or not he could not tell.

"Go on, go on!" he said. "We'll admit that everybody is dead but you and me. In that case what is the word?"

"Explanations are now in order," replied McGraw, having lighted a villainously bad-smelling cigarette. "You are a prisoner among the Highbinders."

"Yes, yes."

"Don't get impatient. These Highbinders have a dinky little wall-eyed idol which they set a heap of store by. Years ago out in China some fellow swiped one of the eyes of said idol and pawned it or sold it, or something or other—see?"

"I follow you. I know all about it. The idol's eye was a diamond. Wing Moy saw it on Mrs. Fullerton. Hence the robbery from Mrs. Fullerton's daughter. All this is perfectly well known to me."

"You are better posted than I thought you were. Well, Wing Moy didn't get the eye, but he got a bully good lot of diamonds, which he ought to have turned over to the Hip Sing Tong, but didn't. Instead of that, he hid 'em somewhere, and we, I mean me and these here Highbinders, naturally want them."

"Yes, yes."

"That's part of the story. Now for the other part, which I bet you a dollar you haven't heard."

"Get ahead."

"Oh, I'm getting. The other bunch—there are two

sets of them—with the help of an expert cracksman, finding that Wing Moy Dock had failed on the eye and wasn't giving up the diamonds for a little bit, did what they meant to do in the first place and that's the cracking of the safe. They did get the eye. They brought it here, and, by Jove, they managed to lose it in their dinky little joss house, which you will see by and by."

"And what have I to do with all this?"

"Lots. These Chinks are queer people, Brady. They don't do business on our lines, not for a little bit. Before either of these here jobs was pulled off they had some kind of a chin-chin one night with their idol, and he, she or it told 'em—at least they think it did—that the missing eye would only be restored through a man with a long blue coat and a big white hat. They came to me and asked if I knew such a person.

"Why, sure I do," says I, and then I adds, 'it's Old King Brady.'"

"And you sent them to me?"

"Didn't. I told 'em where you were. They started to go for you. I work for the opposition bunch, you see—and what do they discover but that Wing Moy Dock had sneaked in ahead of them. Well, now! Say, that settled his case. They watched. Result: There's a dead Chink to-night in Chinkville, and we have corralled the notorious—excuse me, I mean noted—Old King Brady here."

"And for what? What am I expected to do?"

"Blest if I know. That is for the dinky little idol to decide; whatever he, she or it says, that these Hip Sing Tongers will surely do."

Old King Brady made no remark, but sat motionless.

"Any comments or criticisms on my little chin-chin?" McGraw asked.

"I have none to make," was the quiet reply, "except that I wish you would honestly tell me if Harry is really dead."

"My dear man, I don't actually know whether he is or not. The Chinks told me so, and I tell what I have told you."

"One thing further, what becomes of me after I make good the idol's prophecy if I am that lucky?"

"Blest if I know."

"It will help matters for you to be frank, McGraw."

Just then there came a peculiar whistle.

"Turn your back!" cried the ex-wardman. "Turn your back unless you want to die!"

Old King Brady was getting used to this sort of thing. He turned in his chair.

Then he heard McGraw move across the floor.

A slight click followed.

It could not have been the door, for Old King Brady was facing that.

He turned around then and found himself alone.

"Anyway my life is safe while I can make the Hip Sing Tong believe that there is a chance of me being able to restore their idol's diamond eye," the old detective said to himself as he arose and began to pace the floor.

CHAPTER VIII.

GROPING ABOUT UNDERGROUND.

Harry went over to the Hudson Street Hospital with Charley Lee and had his head dressed.

The operation was painful, for the wound covered considerable space.

It was, however, only an abrasion of the scalp and had not in any way affected the skull.

Charley Lee stood by him and they left the hospital together.

"What will you do now?" he asked.

"I am ready for business again," replied Harry. "If Old King Brady lives he must be found."

"That is what he must. So must the diamonds which Wing Moy Dock got away from that girl."

"Tell me what brought you into that room?" demanded Harry, turning suddenly upon the Chinaman.

"Why, I was looking for Wing Moy," was the reply. "He did not come back, so I started out to find him."

"Didn't you know where he had gone?"

"No."

"Didn't any of them know who we saw in that room?"

"No; he didn't tell us."

"Are you working on your own account or on theirs?"

Charley Lee gave Harry a peculiar look.

"Well, what about that?" he asked.

"I want to know."

"Say, Brady?"

"Well, say it."

"Them diamonds what Wing Moy got from the girl represent big value."

"I know they do."

"Are you dead stuck on finding Old King Brady?"

Harry saw at once what was coming.

"It will be a lot easier to deal with one Chinaman than a dozen," he said to himself. "I must humor this fellow and find out what he is driving at, anyway."

"What do you mean?" he demanded. "Come out flat-footed, so we can get it straight."

"I was only thinking that if you wasn't and we could pick up those diamonds ourselves, and——"

"And divide?"

"Yes."

Charley shot another inquiring look at Young King Brady.

"I'll go you," replied Harry, quietly.

And to himself he added:

"Now we shall get the truth."

And he did.

The story which the rascally young half-breed whispered in Harry's ear was substantially that told to Old King Brady by Terry McGraw.

Harry questioned him closely and gained a knowledge of all the details he could.

"Do you believe in this idol?" he finally asked.

"Well, I do."

"You think they will take Old King Brady before the idol to-night?"

"I am dead sure they will."

"Won't your bunch of Highbinders be there?"

"Yes, but not until later."

"Why?"

"Because the two kinds never consult the idol together. One kind go on certain nights, the other kind on certain other nights. This isn't our night."

"I see. Then there is no danger of Wing Moy's bunch going into the secret joss house to-night?"

"They would not dare, but that won't hinder them from laying for the other fellows to-night and attempting to revenge Wing Moy's death."

"And to take the diamonds from the others in case they get them?"

"That's right."

"Then you think there is likely to be a fight?"

"I am blame sure of it, and somebody is going to get killed. What do you propose?"

"Then come along and we'll see if we can't get into the joss house ahead of either bunch. Mebbe we could find the diamonds ourselves."

"Now?"

"Yes, right now."

"But won't the Gee Wangers be there? I call them that for the want of a better name."

"Not until midnight. We have got hours to work in yet."

"All right. I'll do just whatever you say," replied Harry meekly.

"If I play with this fellow it will be about the surest way to connect with the Governor," he thought. "I have no doubt that he knows where he is."

But Charley Lee did not know.

He was only a half-breed and had not been initiated into all the secrets of the Highbinders by any means.

Charley was now in high feather.

He wanted Harry's idea of what the diamonds stolen from Alice Fullerton were probably worth.

He wanted Harry to go and have a drink, and when that was refused he persisted in dragging him into a store and buying expensive cigars.

At last they got back to Chinatown.

"Now," said Charley, "I'm going to take you to see a girl."

"What's that for?" demanded Young King Brady. "I thought we were gunning for diamonds."

"So we are. But I can't get down into the joss house. I don't know the way. This girl is married to one of the big Highbinders and she may. I think I can persuade her to tell me if she does."

"Were you never there?"

"Sure; I've been there lots of times, but I was always taken in blindfolded."

"I see. Well, lead on to your girl. Who is her husband?"

"Gee Wang."

Harry gave a whistle.

"Look here, that is running pretty close to the danger mark, isn't it?" he said.

"Don't you fret. I have reason to believe that old Wang won't be home to-night. Mollie dresses up pretty good if we are able to catch her. She'll help us if we promise her part of the swag, which, of course, she won't get once our hands are on the diamonds."

There seemed to be no better way than to allow Charley to carry out his villainous plans to a finish.

Young King Brady therefore raised no objections and in due time they turned up at the number on Mott street which had been written in the Chinese shoe found in Mr. Fullerton's back yard.

Charley led the way to the top floor.

"Now you stand back," he said. "I'll knock at the door and see if Mollie is in and Wang with her. If I don't come out right away you light out and I'll meet you around on the square as soon as I can. You will know by that that Wang is in."

He knocked on the door twice before getting any response.

Harry saw a slatternly looking white woman appear to greet him.

The talk was in Chinese and Charley slipped inside.

He was out again in a few minutes.

"Come in, Bill," he called. "I want to introduce you to my friend, Mrs. Wang."

The conditions in the Wang apartments were just what Charley had hoped for.

Not only was Gee Wang out, but Mrs. Wang was decidedly nervous.

"This is my friend, Mrs. Wang," said Charley, introducing with a flourish. "What about filling the can?"

"I'll stand the price," replied Harry, "and I'll rush the growler, too, if you say so."

"G'wan," said Charley, and Harry seized the can and departed.

He found Charley talking confidentially to Mrs. Wang upon his return, and he received a wink which seemed to say that everything was going right.

Charley got away with pretty much the whole contents of the can.

"An' so youse want me to give away me husband's secrets?" the woman said at last. "If I was sure of getting a bunch of them sparklers what you tell about I wouldn't mind showin' youse how to get down to the little joss house; that's all I kin do anyhow."

"You do that much, Mollie, and you won't regret it," Charlie said.

"Well, I dunno," replied the woman, suddenly shifting. "Wang will sure kill me if he ketches me; that's no dream."

"He'll not be back before two o'clock. I know that."

"I think it meself, for this is his night to the lodge,

which means the joss house just the same; but there is the chance."

"Let us go a little way and see."

"Sure, if you get them diamonds youse will give me the slip."

"No, we won't."

"Do you think they are hidden down there, Mrs. Wang?" asked Harry, butting in for the first time.

"Ah, how should I know?" retorted the woman. "Do youse t'ink I am after prying into me husband's business? I'm not that kind. Charley Lee comes to me with a yarn about diamonds. Mebbe it's true and mebbe it isn't. I don't mind tryin' it on, but if we are ketched it spells death to all t'ree, so it does."

"Come!" said Charley. "We are losing time. Wang might come home. Now is the time to make the try if it is to be made at all."

Mollie arose.

It was easy to see that her head was much befuddled by nervousness.

"Come on," she said. "I'll show youse the road. As I said before, it is all I kin do."

They went downstairs to the basement hall.

"Keep quiet now," whispered the woman. "They are playing fan-tan inside there. It's all well enough for you and me, Charley Lee, but if they see a strange white man here there'll be the deuce to pay."

She walked to a door which led down into the cellar and cautiously opened it.

"Youse go first," she said. "I'll have to take me time."

Charley heading, they descended into the dark cellar, Mollie coming down the stairs behind them.

"Sure we kin do nothing in the dark," she said. "It's a light we are after wanting now."

Harry produced his electric flash lantern.

The cellar was pretty well choked with old boxes, barrels and other rubbish.

Mrs. Wang looked around helplessly.

"Sure there's a passage underground troo to Pell street," she said, "if a body could only find it. Dey only use it wunst in a while. It's meant for a way to escape in case de cops gets after dem."

"Is it a trap door or a hole in the wall?" asked Harry.

"A trap door in the floor. It's under some of dese blame boxes."

"Whereabouts? Have you ever seen it open?"

"Wunst. Wang showed it to me. He towld me that if ever de cops came after him dat's de way he should go."

"Then you must know in what part of the cellar it is."

"Sure, it's over dere in dat far corner."

It was in "dat far corner" that the boxes and barrels were thickest.

"We have to get busy," said Harry. "It is the only way."

He and Charley began moving the boxes and barrels, making as little noise as possible.

Luck was with them, and in a few minutes they came upon a small trap door set in the cellar floor.

Young King Brady caught hold of the ring and pulled up the trap, revealing a ladder below.

"Now I'll go no further," said Mollie, adding:

"All I've got to say is if you go back on me, Charley Lee, it will be a bad day for you, for I'll fix up a story what will set Gee Wang at yer heels for fair."

With this, the woman turned and went stumbling up the cellar stairs.

"Gee! I'm afraid I've stirred up a bad one," growled Charley. "It's 'Frisco for mine if we win out."

"Which we haven't yet, so let's get ahead," replied Harry, and he started down the ladder.

It landed him in a narrow vault, where there was a sheet iron door.

This proved to be locked, and Charley Lee was in despair.

"Now don't you worry about that," said Harry. "I have no doubt I can open the thing."

He produced his skeleton keys, tackled the door and in a few minutes was able to swing it back.

A narrow passage enclosed with rough boards led off in the direction of Pell street.

"Shall I shut the door?" demanded Charley.

"Do so. Did you close the trap?"

"Yes."

"Come on then. We must see this thing through."

They passed the length of the two yards and came to another door.

"We are now under the house on Pell street where the Highbinders' lodge is," declared Charley.

And the secret joss house is under that?"

"Yes."

"Then we are close upon it?"

"Sure. It may be right behind this door."

Harry put his ear to the keyhole and listened, but he could not hear a sound.

"We'll tackle the door," he said, and out came his skeleton keys again.

In a minute he had it open and they entered another vault.

Here there were two doors besides the one through which they had entered.

Behind one of these doors the hum of voices could be distinctly heard.

"Chinks in there," breathed Charley. "That must be the joss house."

"You were never here before?"

"No."

The second door opened right alongside the first.

"We will try this," said Harry.

He got out his skeleton keys still again and opened the door.

It led into a little box of a place which contained nothing but two stools.

Light streamed in overhead through two holes in the partition.

Harry got up on one of the stools and peered through the hole.

"This is what we want," he whispered, bending down. "Come up here, Charley Lee."

CHAPTER IX.

OLD KING BRADY IN THE SECRET JOSS HOUSE.

It is well known to the initiated that Chinatown is riddled with secret vaults and underground passages.

The Bradys had both struck into the secret den of the Hip Sing Tong, thanks to this factional quarrel which had sprung up between the Highbinders themselves.

For a long time Old King Brady remained alone in his vault.

He was not tied up, but his dark lantern had been taken from him in the search, along with his revolver and other things.

Thus he found himself quite helpless to do anything after the grimy lamp which lighted the vault burned itself out, as it did a few minutes after the disappearance of Terry McGraw.

Old King Brady watched its last flickers in despair, for he was then in the act of trying to find the secret door.

"Nothing doing now," he said to himself as he placed it on the table. "I can only wait."

And that wait was one of the most tedious experiences Old King Brady had ever put in.

At last he dozed off for a moment, sitting there by the table with his head resting on his hand.

He was rudely aroused by feeling a hand upon his shoulder, and a voice said:

"You come now, Brady. The Highbinders are ready for you."

"Terry McGraw!" gasped the old detective, springing up.

"Yes, Terry McGraw. Keep your shirt on. Don't make a fuss. I'd like to see you safe out of this snap if I can, and for you to keep perfectly quiet is the only way to bring that about."

Meanwhile the ex-wardman was lighting the lamp.

"That thing is burned out," said Old King Brady. "Do you think I was sitting here in the dark on purpose?"

"I see it is. I'll have to take it and get more oil. Don't you move now. There is a Chink who speaks no English watching us with a blame big revolver cocked and ready. I don't doubt that you looked for the secret door, old man. If you had found it and tried to explore these vaults it would have spelled death."

"All right, I'll be good," replied the old detective.

"Oh, say," exclaimed Terry, "I want to tell you something. Conditions have changed a bit since we talked last—see?"

"All right. Go ahead."

"It's like this. Wing Moy Dock robbed the Fullerton gal."

"Yes, yes."

"The goods he got from her were great and worth a lot, but he didn't get the idol's eye."

"You told me all that before."

"I know. Now, listen: Because Wing Moy hid the goods his fellow Highbinders knifed him."

"Well?"

"Gee Wang handled the other job—see?"

"Yes, yes. Come to the point."

"Gee Wang claimed that he did not get the eye either, but I know a blame sight better."

"And so do I."

"How?"

"He got the diamond tiara and in it was the eye."

"That's right. When I seen the thing it was perfect. When Gee Wang showed it to the Hip Sing Tong the centre stone was missing. That was the eye. If he didn't take it out I'll eat my head."

"You will have no occasion to make such an unsatisfactory meal. From what you tell me I have no doubt he did take it out."

"Yes, but he denies it. The Hip Sing Tong has got together. What they are all gunning for now are the diamonds Wing Moy hid—see?"

"Yes."

"Incidentally all hope that the eye may be found among them, and that thus the prophecy of the dinky little idol may be fulfilled."

"All but Gee Wang."

"Yes. I believe he has got the eye. I merely tip you off, Brady. I—that is—well, no matter! You was always pretty blamed skillful in finding secret doors, panels and the like, and I look to see you succeed in this case. The whole push of the Tongers will be where you are going. Now you know all I know, so look out for yourself, old man. Now I'm off for the oil."

Old King Brady waited patiently.

In a few moments he heard McGraw in the room again.

"I'm back, Brady," said the convict. "Now for a light."

He lighted the lamp and placed it on the table.

"You are now to go with me to the joss house," he said, "and I shall have to blindfold you. Hope you don't object?"

"I'm in the hands of the Hip Sing Tong. Get ahead with your work and let us see the finish of this thing," Old King Brady replied.

McGraw then tied a handkerchief over the detective's eyes and took his hand.

"Follow me," he said. "It is all on a level. There are no steps, so you need not be afraid."

The old detective was thus led forward for a considerable distance.

"Halt!" cried McGraw.

Old King Brady stopped.

Immediately the blinder was removed.

Old King Brady found himself in a larger room than the one he had left.

It was packed with Chinamen.

There were as many as fifteen present.

All were in full Chinese costume.

There were no chairs nor seats of any sort in the room, which was brilliantly illuminated by a large Chinese lantern that hung suspended from the ceiling.

The only furnishing was an altar at one end, upon which, raised on three steps, was the "dinky little idol."

This was made of gilded wood.

It represented a squat little man with his toes turned out and his head set deep between a high pair of shoulders.

The mouth was wide open and the tongue lolled out.

The ears were as big as muffins; there was little in the shape of a nose.

Originally there had been two brilliant eyes.

The one still in place was a badly flawed diamond about as big as a marble.

The other showed an empty socket, with the wood around the rim somewhat broken away.

Taken altogether, the image was about as ugly a looking specimen of a heathen god as Old King Brady had ever seen.

Upon the altar, in addition to the idol, were the usual bunches of paper flowers, little gilded images and the boxes of joss sticks.

The Chinamen stood about in silence, with their hands thrust into the ample sleeves of their blouses.

Among them was Gee Wang and several who Old King Brady recognized as men he had seen in the room with Wing Moy Dock.

"Here he is, Gee Wang!" cried Terry McGraw. "Now go ahead with your business and see if your wooden god tells the truth."

"No," said Gee Wang, stolidly. "No go ahead now alleddy yet. No."

There was a murmur of assent from the other Chinamen.

Old King Brady thought they all eyed the ex-wardman strangely.

"What's the hitch, I wonder?" he asked himself.

It soon appeared.

McGraw tried the usual tactics of his class when dealing with the Chinese.

He roughly demanded what the matter was.

Gee Wang pointed to the idol.

"He say you no stay here, so you go," he said.

McGraw broke out with a torrent of foul abuse.

He had done all the dirty work for the Tongers. He had protected them from the police and had been paid nothing for it. They couldn't talk to Old King Brady and he could. He could railroad Gee Wang to Sing Sing, et cetera, et cetera. He would be blamed if he would go.

Just the same he went.

No answer was made to his tirade.

One of the Chinks opened a door, and then half a dozen setting upon the ex-wardman, they thrust him from the room.

Two went along with him and the rest returned.

That these two ran McGraw to the street Old King Brady felt was probable, for they returned in a few minutes looking pretty well satisfied with themselves.

Meanwhile all stood in silence and the old detective, with his back to the idol, looked from one grim face to the other, wondering what was to be his fate.

Again and again he thought of Terry's tip.

It came to him during those minutes that he ought to make use of it.

"If Gee Wang has got the eye about him these Chinks won't do a thing to him," he said to himself. "Anyhow it will square accounts for what they did to poor Harry and Wing Moy Dock."

But now the time had come for business.

A small, boyish-looking fellow stepped forward and placed himself in front of the detective.

His first words showed that the Hip Sing Tong had no need for Terry McGraw's services as an interpreter.

"Now, Mr. Brady, we must explain this situation to you," began the Chinaman. "I suppose you may think that you are not particularly well known among the people of my race in New York, but permit me to assure you that such is not the case. Your skill is perfectly known to us all, and as we have need of it to-night you are here."

"You certainly speak well," replied the old detective. "If you are as skillful in everything as you seem to be in your handling of English you must be a very smart young man."

"Thanks for your good opinion, but you will gain nothing by trying to flatter me. As it happens, I was educated at the University of California, so there is no reason why I should not speak good English. You understand why you are here?"

"I do."

"State the case, please, so that I may be sure."

"I am here for a double purpose. First, to find diamond jewelry stolen by Wing Moy Dock and supposed to be hidden somewhere in the joss house; second, to find the missing eye of that idol, which Gee Wang stole from Mr. Fullerton's house up town."

Immediately there was a great gabbling among the Chinks.

Gee Wang sprang forward, white with rage.

For the moment Old King Brady thought he was going to draw a knife.

"It one big lie!" he shouted. "Me no gittee dlat diamond eye!"

Then he checked himself, and, drawing back, added:

"Wing Moy Dock, he gettee eye! He hid him along with odder diamonds. You so shall see."

Old King Brady, acting upon Terry McGraw's tip, had started the ball rolling.

The next ten minutes was taken up in talk which the old detective could not understand.

Such another wagging of Chinese tongues he had never heard.

At last the crisis came.

Suddenly revolvers and knives were drawn.

A fight to a finish seemed to be imminent.

And it was this precise moment that Harry, looking in through the peephole, saw the scene which we have described.

CHAPTER X.

HOT WORK AMONG THE HIGHBINDERS.

Old King Brady himself put an end to the mix-up.

"Put up your guns and don't be fools!" he shouted.

"Put them up or I will do nothing to help you, even if you kill me for refusing."

Some understood, while others probably did not, but the old detective's words carried weight.

The young man who had been talking also added something in Chinese.

The result was a patched-up peace.

Revolvers and knives vanished.

Again the Young Chinaman turned to Old King Brady, but his face wore a peculiar look which had not been there before.

"He wonders if I really know anything," thought Old King Brady, "and I am wondering if he is a friend of the Wing Moy Dockers or the Gee Wangers—everything depends upon that."

"We want to get to work if we are ever going to," he said aloud. "I don't know just where I came in on this deal, but I want to get there wherever it is."

"We shall settle that now," said the Chink. "Who hired you to come in on this deal?"

"Wing Moy Dock."

"Just so; and what did Wing Moy Dock tell you should be your reward?"

"Five thousand dollars."

"You get it if you find the diamonds he hid and the eye."

"All right. Then I am ready to go to work. Let me ask you a question first."

"Ask it."

"What reason have you for believing that Wing Moy Dock hid the diamonds in this place?"

"The very best. He had charge of this joss house. He knew all its secrets, and they are many—see?"

"I see. I shall now begin work. First let us examine that god of yours."

"No need. It has already been done thoroughly."

"Very well. I will rest on your assurance."

Old King Brady now went to work in his usual style in such cases.

Taking his stand in the middle of the floor, the detective ordered the Chinamen to line up close to the altar.

He then took each of the walls in turn and went over them from floor to ceiling.

At first all hands kept a close watch upon him, but as the search continued they paid less attention and began talking among themselves.

Old King Brady began to make discoveries at the very start.

We cannot detail all the movements of his search.

The first important discovery he made was the two peepholes high up against the ceiling.

It was rather startling when he came upon them to discover that behind each peephole was a human eye looking in at him.

But Old King Brady showed his surprise by no sign.

"These yellow rascals have a couple of spies watching me," he thought.

His interest would have been a little greater could he have guessed that one of those eyes belonged to Harry.

As for Young King Brady, he would have called softly through the hole to his partner, but there was Charley Lee standing on the stool at his side.

Charley was disquieted.

After watching Old King Brady's movements for a few minutes he got down off of his stool and pulled Harry after him and over into one corner.

"This is a bad job," he whispered.

"It would seem to knock us out," was the reply.

"He is looking for the diamonds."

"Evidently, but he may not find them."

"If he can't find them, how can you hope to?"

"I might have better luck. We had better watch this show through to the end."

"In the meantime the risk we run is awful. If we are caught spying here we are dead ones sure."

"Shall we get out, then?"

"No; I don't say that. I don't know what to do."

"Then let's do nothing but wait and see which way the cat jumps."

"We will wait a little while anyhow; but just think! I'm sure Old King Brady must have seen me when he looked through the hole."

"Same with me."

"Think he knew you?"

"I don't see how he could. All he saw of me was my eye."

"Suppose he gives it away to the Highbinders that there is someone watching here?"

"He won't be likely to do that."

"If we can trust him!"

"I am sure you can. What he probably thinks is that they have put spies on him."

Charley shuddered.

"I have almost a mind to give it up and light out," he said, "and yet if we could succeed it would be a big thing."

"Let's get back to business," replied Harry. "Old King Brady may have found the diamonds by this time."

But he had not.
And yet when Harry again put his eye to the peephole the old detective was just making a big discovery.

This was a secret panel close down by the floor behind the altar.

Here there was just enough space for one to crawl between the altar and the wall.

The Chinks were all in front and their discussions were again getting pretty hot, it would seem.

Old King Brady, having spied the secret spring which controlled the panel, pressed it and a strip of the wall which, he it understood, was of pine boards, flew noiselessly out.

Here was a hole big enough for a man to crawl through, and there appeared to be an opening beyond.

Nor was this all.

Old King Brady felt that he had discovered the diamonds.

For there, hanging to a nail upon the inside of the panel, was a lady's handbag.

Was this Alice Fullerton's bag?

Were the diamonds in it?

If so, then these Chinamen could not know of the existence of the panel which Wing Moy Dock certainly must have known.

Where did the opening lead to?

He turned and looked cautiously around.

The Highbinders were chattering on the other side of the altar like so many monkeys.

Not one of them was looking his way.

What troubled him was the peepholes.

They commanded the space behind the altar.

Had he been spied upon?

If so, unless he at once proclaimed his discovery he was lost, it seemed to him.

Just at that moment a loud shout rang out in front of the altar.

Old King Brady stepped around where he could see.

At the same instant there was a rush and the revolvers and knives were drawn again.

And this time it meant business.

Several set upon Gee Wang.

Others lined up with him.

Bang! bang! bang!

Shots were flying, the joss house was thick with smoke.

Gee Wang went down first of all.

A Tonger jumped on him and buried a knife in him.

It was hot work among the Highbinders then, for the two factions of the Hip Sing Tong seemed determined to annihilate each other.

Old King Brady's mind was instantly made up.

"If I stay here I'm a dead one, that's certain," he said to himself. "It's any port in a storm."

Now it has taken many words to describe this sudden turn of affairs.

Actually it was all the work of a moment.

The next and Old King Brady had vanished.

He opened the panel, and, crawling through, pulled the singular door shut behind him.

And now was the time the old detective missed his dark lantern.

Practically he was helpless for the want of it.

Old King Brady was in the dark.

Not so Harry, however.

He was at his peephole taking in the hot fight of the Hip Sing Tong.

But he was alone.

At the very instant the firing began Charley Lee clutched his arm.

"Too hot for me!" he whispered. "I'm off!"

"Hold on," said Harry; "let's see the end of this."

But Charley Lee was waiting for nothing.

He crept from the room and vanished on the instant.

Then Harry saw Old King Brady's movement.

"Good for the Governor!" he muttered. "The diamonds are in the handbag sure, but where does that passage lead to? That's the question?"

He stuck to his post.

The fight was still on.

Five Chinks lay stretched upon the floor.

They were dead, too.

What the bullet did not do was completed by the knife.

Had the Wing Moy Docks or the Gee Wangers won out, when at the throwing up of hands on the part of a number of combatants the firing ceased.

Then it was gabble, gabble, gabble!

The Highbinders who remained alive now seemed to come to an understanding.

The young man who had talked so well to Old King Brady bent down over the dead body of Gee Wang.

What followed could scarcely be called a search.

The Highbinder literally tore the clothes off of the dead man.

Every inch of his apparel was gone over, the others watching the operation in silence.

At last the young Chinaman sprang to his feet and held up in triumph a badly flawed diamond about as big as a marble.

A wild shout went up.

Suddenly everybody began to look at everybody else and to run about the joss house in a confused way.

To Young King Brady it was like looking at a series of moving pictures.

"They have just missed the Governor," he said to himself. "They can't know of the existence of the panel, if they did they would have found the handbag."

A more astonished, not to say frightened, lot of Chinamen was never seen.

At last the young man shouted out something, and all hands but him fell on their knees before the altar.

The young man then climbed the steps and put the diamond into the eye socket.

Then he also fell on his knees on the top step of the altar.

For fully ten minutes all hands remained in this position and in absolute silence.

Then they arose, the young man getting up first.

All called out the same words in unison.

Three times they bowed before the idol, each time touching the floor with their heads.

The young man then advanced to the door, opened it and passed out, the others following him in single file, the last man extinguishing the lantern.

Harry dropped from his stool, drew his revolver and prepared for the worst.

He fully expected that somebody would enter the room and that he was going to be called upon to defend himself.

Nobody came.

"By Jove, I've got the place to myself, thought Young King Brady, but what is going to become of those dead Chinks?"

This was Harry's first thought, but the real question was what had become of Old King Brady?

This his young partner now started out to ascertain.

CHAPTER XI.

AT THE MERCY OF THE FIENDS.

Harry cautiously opened the door and listened.

Not a sound could he hear.

He strode to the adjoining door and tried it.

The door was not locked, as he had expected to find it.

Putting his dark lantern into commission, Young King Brady crept into the joss house among the dead High-binders.

And dead they were, every man of them.

He went around behind the altar.

Of course he knew just where the secret panel was, but it was some minutes before he could find the spring.

But at last he mastered it and the panel flew open.

"Governor!" called Harry. "Governor, are you there?"

There was no answer.

The handbag was gone from the nail, however.

Old King Brady had evidently been at work.

"He has gone," he said to himself, "and the only thing is for me to go after him. I wonder where this infernal passage leads to?"

It was a mere burrow in the earth.

Harry carefully closed the panel, and, flashing his dark lantern ahead of him, crawled on.

It was not possible to stand upright.

The passage was altogether too low for that.

It was also very narrow.

In some places the earth had so caved in as to render it almost impassable.

Everywhere Old King Brady had left his trail behind him.

Presently the passage came to a sudden end up against what Harry at first took to be the brick foundation wall of some house.

"Can I have crossed Pell street?" he asked himself.

"It does not seem to me that I have gone far enough for that yet."

He flashed his lantern about and came to the conclusion that it must be the Pell street sewer that he had run up against.

Here the earth had been cleared away for a considerable space.

Looking along, Harry saw that the bricks had been removed at one point.

There was a hole in the sewer wall big enough for an ordinary man to pass through.

He listened at the opening.

The low gurgle of running water could be heard.

"It's the sewer," Harry assured himself. "The Governor must have gone through this opening. Not a very pleasant prospect, but if he did it I must, that's all."

He examined his ground and then crept in through the hole feet first.

It was simply horrible.

Now Young King Brady found himself almost suffocated.

"He never could have gone this way," he said aloud, "and yet—ha, I see!"

It was an opening in the other wall of the sewer which Harry had discovered.

It was not directly opposite the one he had come through, but a little further down.

The break was made in the same way by carefully removing the bricks.

Young King Brady lost no time in crawling through, glad to get out of the noisome place.

It was just a continuation of the passage.

Flashing his light upon the earth, Harry distinctly saw footprints.

Their size corresponded with Old King Brady's shoe.

He had not far to go now before coming to the end of this underground trail.

In a moment he came upon a ladder leading up to a trap door.

Beyond this the passage did not extend.

Climbing the ladder, Harry pushed up the trap door easily, for it was not fastened.

Here he struck another sub-cellar vault.

There was a second ladder and trap which brought him, not into the open cellar of some house on the north side of Pell street, as he expected, but instead it was a small enclosure surrounded by solid brick walls on all four sides.

But there was an opening above and a standing ladder fastened against the wall leading up.

And now Harry began to smell smoke.

It came down through the opening in little whiffs.

Clearly there was something on fire upstairs.

Harry ran up the ladder as fast as possible.

It ended abruptly on what he took to be the third-story and up against the chimney breast.

The place was so full of smoke now that Young King Brady could hardly breath.

The house was on fire.

This he knew before he reached the end of the ladder, for dull sounds, shouts and people running reached his ears.

Harry flashed his lantern upon the wall in front of the ladder.

He could see no break nor anything like a secret spring. He struck upon the partition.

It was as firm as a rock, but from behind it came a dull cry.

It sounded to Young King Brady like:

"Help! Help! Help!"

Leaving Harry for the moment, we must return to the old detective.

Old King Brady, by the aid of matches, had indeed traveled the same road taken by Harry.

When he reached the top of the last ladder there was no smoke, and, looking over the wall with eyes more experienced than those of his partner, Old King Brady readily discovered a secret spring.

This he operated, and a narrow panel opening outward the old detective stepped into rather a sizable room.

It was scantily furnished with bed, table and chairs, a cook stove and the like.

A man's hat and a few odds and ends of clothes hung about.

There was nothing to indicate that it was the home of a Chinaman—rather the reverse.

And the place was deserted.

He arose, walked to the window and looked out.

It was Pell street that he found himself looking down upon.

Striking his last match, a whole boxful having been consumed in his underground journey, he lighted a grimy lamp.

He went to the door and tried it.

The door was not fastened; indeed, it had no lock, but only an old-fashioned latch.

"I guess I am safe here for a few minutes," thought the old detective, and he proceeded to open the handbag.

It was as he had supposed.

He had recovered some of the pieces of the Fullerton diamond jewelry, if not all.

From the bag he took a wonderful necklace, which flashed and glittered in the light.

Sunburst pins, earrings, brooches, stick pins and other pieces were brought to light.

Old King Brady saw that his find was of immense value.

Hastily running the articles over, he stowed them away in his pockets, and then raising the window, tossed the bag out into Pell street.

"I fancy I have succeeded in my end of the search," he muttered; "if the police do as well with theirs the Fullertons are in luck. But now to get out of this and learn what has become of poor Harry if I can."

He started for the door, but before he had taken two

steps it was flung open and Terry McGraw entered the room.

The ex-wardman gave a startled cry.

"You here!" he exclaimed.

"As you see," replied Old King Brady, who had halted by the table.

"Bad luck," he said inwardly. "If I had only gone straight away out of this place!"

"Good! Good enough!" cried McGraw, with a heartiness which Old King Brady felt was assumed. "But what brought you here? What do you want with me? How did you manage to get away from the Chinks? They meant to kill you—I know."

"Easy, easy," said Old King Brady. "One thing at a time. You claimed to know all about the secret joss house of the Hip Sing Tong; did you happen to know, then, that there was a secret passage leading out of it which ends in your room here?"

"No, by thunder; I didn't know anything of that sort," he exclaimed.

"And yet such is the fact. I have just come through it."

"Where does it open? Show me."

Old King Brady was inclined to temporize with the ex-wardman.

He saw that his pockets were bulging and he had his suspicions.

So he opened the secret panel and showed McGraw the hidden way to the vaults below.

"It beats the band!" cried Terry. "Wing Moy Dock must have known."

"Did Wing Moy Dock know that you occupied this room?"

"Did he know it? Why, man, it was he who put me here. As I told you, I have been working for the Highbinders one way and another for the last few months. But, tell me how you got away?"

"Oh, the Chinks got into a quarrel among themselves. Meanwhile I had discovered the secret passage and I quietly slipped out."

"Didn't they know about the secret passage?"

"Don't know. Can't say. I don't believe they did. Still they might."

"Brady?"

"Well, McGraw?"

"Did you find the diamonds?"

"Now, look here, what time did I have to find the diamonds? From the time you were thrown out up to the time I left the Highbinders did little but quarrel among themselves. It wound up in a regular free fight and Gee Wang and others were killed."

"Killed! Gee Wang dead!"

The look of relief which came over Terry McGraw's face gave Old King Brady further assurance that his suspicions were correct.

"McGraw," he said sternly, at the same time fixing his eyes upon the man.

"Hello! What's the matter with you, Brady?"

"Nothing is the matter with me, but the matter with you is that you have just come from Gee Wang's rooms. You have been through the place and have your pockets stuffed with the swag of the Fullerton robbery!"

As he spoke Old King Brady whipped out a small revolver, which, concealed in one of his secret pockets, had escaped the Highbinders' search.

He expected no trouble in capturing Terry McGraw.

And that is just where he missed it.

Quick as lightning, McGraw threw himself upon Old King Brady and struck the revolver to the floor.

Then followed a desperate struggle.

Clearly McGraw had been trained as a wrestler.

He bested the old detective at every turn.

Such a contest could last but a moment.

It ended when McGraw got a grip on Old King Brady's throat.

Choked almost to the point of strangulation, Old King Brady sank senseless to the floor.

In delaying his retreat the old detective had made a terrible mistake.

He now lay upon the floor tied hand and foot with strong cords.

McGraw stood by the table upon which lay the Fullerton diamonds.

He had been through Old King Brady's pockets and this was the result.

The ex-wardman looked down upon him.

"Ha, you old fiend, so you are not dead, after all!" he cried, fixing upon Old King Brady eyes filled with malignant hate.

Old King Brady remained silent.

He saw that he was at the mercy of a black-hearted fiend and he trembled for the result.

McGraw now began pocketing the diamonds.

"You were right," he said. "Your shrewdness can't be discounted, of course. I did go through Gee Wang's place. They had better have let me stop in the joss house. I got the goods at one end while you were getting them at the other, and now I've got them all, yes, all."

Having finished stowing away the diamonds, McGraw set to work in a way which made Old King Brady's blood run cold.

Tearing the sheets from the dirty bed, he ripped open the mattress, exposing the excelsior within.

Then he piled the chairs on top of the bed and distributed the bedclothes over them.

On top of this he put the table and added the clothing which hung on the nails and other combustible things.

"McGraw!" cried the old detective.

"Well? I hear, Brady. What do you want?"

"Don't do it."

"Don't do it! I will do it. Man, if you only knew how I hate you! If you only knew how I lived hating you all through those long, lonely days I put in up the

river, you would waste no breath in making that appeal. Can't you see that this is the hour of my revenge?"

Old King Brady saw that the case was hopeless.

Among other things, McGraw informed him that there was no other tenant on the floor but himself.

He struck a match, dropped it in among the excelsior and fled from the room.

And Old King Brady gave himself up as lost, for in an instant the whole mass burst into flames.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Old King Brady had been at the mercy of a fiend whose black heart was utterly incapable of showing mercy, and the worst had come.

A thick suffocating smoke filled the room.

From under the pile of furniture and clothing red flames were shooting forth.

Then, in the vain hope that someone might hear him, Old King Brady gave that agonized cry, made what he himself believed to be a vain appeal for help.

In an instant it seemed that appeal was answered.

Through the thickening smoke rushed a manly form.

"Harry, Harry!" gasped the old detective.

Harry wasted no time in talk.

A few quick strokes of the knife did the business.

He pulled his partner to his feet and they went stumbling out of the room together, almost blinded by the smoke.

Then it was downstairs and out into the street.

The Chinese on the lower floors had already swarmed out of the burning building.

Just as they gained the street the engines came tearing up.

"Let us slide, Harry," breathed the old detective, clutching his partner's arm. "This is no place for us, and the sooner we are out of it the better."

Harry said nothing.

Excitement and mental fatigue had almost overcome him.

All Chinatown was up in arms over the fire, and Old King Brady, seeing his partner's condition, braced up and led the way to the Bowery.

"Pull yourself together," he said. "There is nothing the matter with me except that I am half dead with joy to find that you are still living, for I firmly believed you to be dead.

"Dead! Not a bit of it!" laughed Harry, half hysterically. "Why, Governor, I saw everything that happened in the secret joss house of the Hip Sing Tong, and what is more you saw me."

"Ha! Is it so? Then yours must have been the eye which looked at me through that hole in the wall?"

"Mine was one of them."

"And the other?"

"A half-breed Chink whom I picked up and who deserted me in the end."

"So? This has been a strange case."

"I should say as much. But did you get the diamonds?"

"Got 'em and lost 'em again, worse luck."

"Lost them to who? How?"

"Terry McGraw."

"Don't know him. Who is Terry?"

"Unfortunately for me I have the best of reasons for knowing him. But here we are on the Bowery. Now let's walk slowly and I'll tell you all."

A comparison of notes followed.

By the time they reached Great Jones street the Bradys had their case up to date.

"It is the most exasperating thing that ever happened to us, it seems to me," declared Harry. "I don't suppose we shall ever see the diamonds again now."

But Old King Brady took a much more hopeful view of the situation.

"Oh, I don't see it in that light at all," he said. "McGraw is well known to the police. A general alarm ought to unearth him, and I think we had better start that going now."

"But suppose he jumps the town?"

"He'll jump Chinatown for a day or two, but never New York."

"Why do you say that so positively?"

"Because the man is an opium fiend. It isn't so easy to get the hop everywhere; it is easy to get it in New York. Take my word for it, Terry McGraw will stay right here; indeed, it would not surprise me if he had already begun an opium debauch."

They had turned now and were walking slowly down the Bowery.

"Yes," continued Old King Brady. "I think we had better go over to police headquarters and start the ball rolling. We are both tired out and need rest. To-morrow we can take hold with a fresh and stronger hand."

"What do you suppose ever could have been Wing Moy Dock's real motive for engaging us, Governor?" Harry asked.

"Now, look here, ask me something easy. When you start to look for a Chinaman's real motive, you have got a contract on your hands which is pretty difficult to carry out."

"Do you think he meant to do us?"

"In the end, yes, very likely, but in the meantime I believe that he thought we would be able to work the diamond eye out of Gee Wang and so gain credit for him with the Hip Sing Tong."

"I wish now I had brought the eye along."

"Well, I hardly blame you for leaving it behind. It was in its place, and you recognized that, I think—Hello, young man! What are you doing on the Bowery at this time of night?"

It was Joe Bradley.

He came rushing up to the Bradys with extended hands.

"So glad I've found you!" he exclaimed. "What brings me here? Why, I've been hunting for you everywhere.

You didn't keep your appointment at four o'clock at the office, and——"

"Couldn't."

"Have you got any clew to the diamonds?"

"Clew! Why, we have had bushels of clews. We have even had the diamonds, but unfortunately we lost them. Listen and we will tell you just what he have been about."

Then he went over the whole train of adventures through which he and Harry had passed.

"By Jove, you certainly have had hot work on your Highbinder clew," declared Bradley, "but look here, I believe that this meeting is almost providential. I am inclined to think that I am just the very man you want to see."

"How do you figure that out?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Easily," was the reply. "I believe I must have seen that man McGraw after he deserted you in the burning room."

"Hello! Where?"

"In a big saloon on the other side of the Bowery near Bayard street, where there was the toughest lot of beggars and bums that you ever laid eyes on. I went in there thinking that I might find you."

"Panhandlers' Hall. I know the place. Go on."

"I was standing at the bar drinking seltzer when just such a man as you describe came in and braced the bartender for a loan on a diamond. It was real, too, and after some haggling, the bartender let him have fifty dollars on it."

"Describe the man as accurately as you can," said Old King Brady.

Joe Brady entered into the most minute description, adding that he afterward shadowed the man.

"And where did you see the last of him?"

"He was going into a house in East Fourth street. I can show you the place if you come with me."

"That is just where we will go, and right now."

They turned again and went around on Fourth street. The house which Joe Bradley pointed out was an old-fashioned three-story brick.

It certainly bore all the earmarks of crookedness.

The blinds were tightly closed and not a ray of light could be seen through the windows.

But upon the fanlight over the door was the number painted in figures unusually large and a red light burned behind it.

They walked on.

"Aren't you going in?" demanded Joe.

"To give him a chance to escape by the back way? Hardly. I am too anxious to snare my bird to begin by giving him the scare. Let us see what the policeman on the beat has to say about the place, if we can find him."

They were fortunate enough to encounter a policeman on the Bowery, and, still better, he proved to be a roundsman whom Old King Brady knew. The detective questioned him about the house.

"It's a hot joint," the roundsman said. "Prince Karl is running it. Do you know him?"

"I have heard of him. His place was pulled in Forty-sixth street a year or so ago."

"Yes. Well, I'll help you, Mr. Brady. You can count on me," he said. "Of course, I don't want to make any trouble. I'll call up the station. Come on."

They went to the nearest patrol box and the roundsman gave the call.

Old King Brady then sent Harry back to Fourth street to watch in front while he and Joe Bradley remained with the roundsman until the arrival of four policemen relieved the situation.

"Two of you fellows get around into Great Jones street and pass through into the yard in the rear of Prince Karl's place," ordered the roundsman.

Two of the men silently withdrew. Old King Brady then told the roundsman that he was not needed.

Then they went around to Fourth street, where they joined Harry.

Leaving the policemen, the Bradys and Joe Bradley ascended the steps, the old detective giving the bell a strenuous pull. There was no answer.

He rang the bell again and again—just kept right on ringing until the door was opened and a frightened looking Chinaman appeared.

The Bradys flashed their shields and pushed past him into the hall.

"Shut the door," ordered the old detective.

A man now appeared at the parlor door.

He was a slim, nervous-looking foreigner, with a big diamond blazing in his shirt front.

Evidently this was the proprietor, "Prince Karl."

"Vat you vant?" he demanded as the detectives again showed their shields.

The Chinaman said something unintelligible except for two words—"cops outside."

"Yes, the cops are outside," added Old King Brady, "and what is more, they won't come inside if you do as you are told, Karl."

"Vat?"

"We go through your place. There is a man here we want."

"Come ahead."

Prince Karl threw back the door.

The Bradys and Joe Bradley passed into the opium joint.

It was arranged in the usual style of the higher class hop joints in New York, and contained the usual quota of people under the influence of the drug.

"Lead the way to the private rooms upstairs," demanded the old detective of Karl.

"But dere no vas private rooms. I life upstairs mit my families."

With out replying, Old King Brady opened the back parlor door and passed out into the hall.

He had scarcely reached it when a voice was heard screaming from above.

"Karl! Karl! For heaven sake! Quick! Send for a doctor. I made a mistake! My hand slipped. I've taken an overdose."

Old King Brady went bounding up the stairs.

He had recognized the voice of Terry McGraw.

"You, Old King Brady!" gasped the trembling wretch, who stood at the head of the stairs in his underclothes. "Great heavens, man, you have your revenge now!"

The words came thickly.

The man's eyes were half-closed. He swayed and fell prostrate upon the floor.

Perhaps the nervous shock of seeing Old King Brady affected a weak heart—the doctor who subsequently examined the wretch thought so—perhaps the laudanum which he had drunk was responsible for it all.

Be this as it may, from that swoon the ex-wardman never revived, and Old King Brady's precaution in calling the police went for naught.

Thus died Terry McGraw, and the world was better for his sudden taking off.

The diamonds were found in the clothes which lay over a chair in one of the hall bedrooms.

Not a stone was missing save the one put away with the bartender of Panhandlers' Hall, and the diamond eye of the idol of the Hip Sing Tong.

The former the Bradys recovered, as it was worth fully a thousand dollars, but concerning the latter they made no report to Mr. Fullerton, to whom the jewelry was next day restored.

Nor did the Bradys report their adventures to the police.

They never heard of the bodies of the dead Highbinders being found.

Mr. Fullerton was liberal and a large reward came the detectives' way.

Alice was sent abroad with a governess and shortly after entered a convent.

Joe Bradley became reconciled with his uncle and aunt, through the favorable outcome of the remarkable case of "The Bradys and the Hip Sing Tong."

THE END.

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