

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

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NEW YORK, JUNE 19, 1908.

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THE BRADYS AND THE QUEEN OF PELL STREET; OR, THE HIDDEN HUT IN CHINATOWN. BY A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.



It was the Chink at the window who gave the alarm Old King Brady fired into the air, and as he did so the woman flung open a door The masks made a rush for the hidden hut

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PRICE FIVE CENTS.

CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE CHINESE CASE.

Old King Brady, the world-famous detective, was playing chess with his partner when the telephone rang.

"Check!" exclaimed Old King Brady, moving his bishop.

"Just answer that infernal machine, Harry, will you?"

Harry went to the telephone.

Old King Brady listened to Harry's talk. Harry paused after a while and beckoned the old detective. "We are wanted on the waterfront, it appears," said Old King Brady.

"Yes," replied Harry. "Remember Long Dong, the Chink we saved from the Highbinders, two years ago and smuggled out of Chinatown?"

"Perfectly. But he went back to China. You know we had a letter from him from Shanghai."

"I know. He has returned, it seems. He is now dying on the tramp steamer Woolwich Castle, lying at the Liberty Stores, over in Brooklyn. The master, a Captain Schackleton, is at the 'phone. Long Dong wants to see us. He wants Alice. He wants us to come right away. Will you talk with the captain?"

"Oh, I suppose so!" grunted Old King Brady.

He went to the telephone and the result of the talk was his consent to wait on the dying Long Dong.

"So we go?" remarked Harry, as the old detective turned away from the telephone.

"Yes; I cannot refuse the man. He did us good service once, as you know," was the reply. "Call up Alice and tell her to get ready. Then call up the livery stable. Tell them to send a closed carriage. Be quick! Captain Schackleton says the man is very low."

Once more Harry "worked the wire."

Soon after the carriage was reported at the door by Julius, the Bradys' faithful colored man.

The detectives entered it and were driven around the corner to a house on Waverly place, where Alice had a suite of rooms.

Miss Montgomery was all ready and a few minutes later the whole party were on their way to Brooklyn.

"So Long Dong has turned up again, has he?" remarked Alice. "I thought he intended to stay in China, from what he said."

"He particularly asked for you."

"I don't know why he should want to see me," mused Alice. "He speaks English well enough."

"His English may be slipping away from him in his dying moments," replied Old King Brady. "At all events, you are the one wanted. It is only to be hoped that we may be able to reach the steamer before he gives up the ghost."

Instead of taking to the Bridge, the Bradys ordered their driver to take them to the Fulton Ferry.

Here they were fortunate enough to catch a boat just leaving, and a few minutes later the carriage turned up gloomy Furman street and drove on to the entrance to the Liberty Stores.

This was cut off by a huge wooden gate.

Harry jumped out to reconnoitre.

"There seems to be nobody behind the gate," said the driver. "Am I expected to go inside, or what?"

"To go inside, of course, if we can get the gate open," was the reply. "There must be somebody around."

Harry looked about and found a bellpull.

In answer to his vigorous ring a watchman put in an appearance behind the gate.

"What's wanted?" he demanded. "This place is closed for the night."

"We are here at the request of Captain Schackleton of the Woolwich Castle," replied Harry. "Did he leave no word?"

Instead of answering, the watchman, whose idea appeared to be to treat everybody as a thief, unlocked the gate.

"Can we drive right in?" demanded Harry.

"Of course," replied the watchman, sourly. "What else did I open the gate for?"

They passed through a gloomy tunnel beneath the big building, crossed an open wharf and once there went in under a covered pier.

Another watchman came forward and civilly opened the carriage door.

"You are, I presume, wanting the Woolwich Castle," he said. "This way, please."

He led them to an open door on the right, where there was a gangplank leading up to the steamer's deck.

"Visitors for Captain Schackleton!" he shouted.

A sailor dressed in a suit of oilskins came forward and met the detectives at the head of the gangplank.

"Is this Old King Brady?" he asked.

"That's right," replied the old detective. "Is the captain aboard?"

"He is. Step down into the cabin, please."

The man led them to the companionway. At the same time he pressed an electric button.

"You will find the captain in the cabin, gentlemen and miss," he said. "Walk right down."

The cabin was but dimly lighted and there was nobody to be seen.

The captain came out of a stateroom in a minute, however, and introduced himself.

"Are we in time?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Yes," was the reply. "The man is very low."

"Are any of his countrymen with him?"

"No; he is alone. It is his desire. He seems to be perfectly resigned to death, and he particularly requested me to see that none of his people came near him. He has even declined to see our Chinese steward, a man who has been very attentive to him during the voyage."

"Where is he?" demanded Old King Brady.

"In the stateroom you just saw me come out of," was the reply. "I have scarcely left him since I telephoned to you. As I understand it, you know the man well."

"I know a Chinaman named Long Dong—yes."

"Will you step in? Do you prefer to see him alone first?"

"It may be as well."

The captain led Old King Brady to the stateroom.

There, lying in the lower berth was a Chinaman in the last stages of emaciation.

He looked up as the old detective entered and held out his hand.

"How do, Mr. Brady?" he said, faintly. "Missy Alice, she come?"

"She is here," replied the old detective. "Do you want to see her now, or have you something to say to me first?"

"Alice!" gasped the man.

He seemed incapable of uttering another word.

Indeed, he appeared to be so near death that Old King Brady hurriedly stepped back into the cabin.

"Your job, Alice," he said. "You better be quick about it. The man is in the jaws of death even now!"

CHAPTER II.

THE BRADYS TAKE A CASE FOR A DEAD MAN.

Alice entered the stateroom and closed the door.

"Is it safe for her to be in there alone?" demanded Young King Brady.

"Safe enough," replied the captain. "The man is so weak that he cannot raise his hand."

"He has his certificate all right?" asked Old King Brady. "You need not be afraid to tell us. We never interfere in matters with which we have no concern. I only ask in reference to his burial."

"Yes, he has it," replied the captain. "He came aboard at Shanghai. Seemed to think that the long sea voyage might do him good. As he had plenty of money, I raised no objection. I would not have consented if I had supposed he was a dying man. Is he as rich as they say?"

"He has that reputation. But who says it, may I ask?"

"Fen Low, my Chinese steward, is my informant."

"Has Long Dong been intimate with Fen Low?"

"Scarcely. He seemed rather to avoid him. In my presence he never talked Chinese with the steward, but I understand they occasionally met at night on deck and had talks in their own language."

"So? Did Long Dong smoke opium at all?"

"If he did I don't know it. I watched him pretty closely, too."

"Any other passengers, Captain?"

"No; he is the only one."

The talk continued for some minutes.

Suddenly there came a cry from the stateroom.

Harry, who is devotedly attached to Alice, sprang to his feet and made a rush for the door.

But before he could reach it Alice threw it open and came out, looking excited.

"Dead?" cried the captain.

"Pretty close to it, but it isn't that. There has been a spy listening. Up there!"

Alice pointed to a sort of fretwork near the ceiling, open for ventilation.

"A Chinaman looked down on me from there!" she cried. "You want to get him, Mr. Brady. What he overheard is very important!"

"Fen Low, the rascal!" cried Captain Schackleton.

He sprang forward and flung open a door adjoining that of the stateroom.

But, instead of leading into another stateroom, it communicated with a passage.

"This way!" cried the captain. "This leads to the galley. We shall find the steward there."

But they did not!

In order to reach the galley Old King Brady, who followed Captain Schackleton, was obliged to cross another passage, from which a bunker shutter opened in the side of the steamer.

It stood open now.

Finding the galley empty, Old King Brady jumped back to it.

Thrusting his head out, he peered about.

"Do you imagine he has jumped overboard?" demanded the captain.

"I heard a splash!" replied Old King Brady. "Has your steward a citizen's certificate?"

"No; he is supposed not to be allowed to land," the captain replied.

"Then he is landing now, all right. Look! There he goes, swimming around the end of the pier!"

"Sure thing!" cried the captain. "The rascal! But what can I do? Lower a boat?"

"You can do as you wish," replied Old King Brady. "But I doubt if your men can overhaul him. He is a crack swimmer. These Chinamen are very slick."

"By jove! I'll try it on, then!" cried the captain. "He may have stolen something. Yet I always trusted the fellow. He has been with me two years."

The Captain hurried on deck.

Old King Brady returned to the cabin, where Harry remained with Alice.

Both were in Long Dong's stateroom now.

Old King Brady looked in.

"Dead?" he breathed.

"Looks so," said Harry. "You are the doctor. It is up to you to decide."

And, indeed, Old King Brady is considerable of a doctor in his way.

He bent over the bunk and examined the Chinaman.

"Yes, he is dead!" he remarked in a minute. "Is it up to us to bury him?"

"Such was his request," replied Alice. "He gave me this pocketbook, which seems to contain considerable money. He told me also that there was more in his trunk."

He wanted to be buried in the Chinese plot at the Evergreens."

"Right. You were saying, Alice, that his communication was of importance. Do you want to talk about it now?"

"No," replied Alice. "I got such a scare, seeing that ugly faced Chink peering down at me! He must have heard every word that was said."

"He stood on a chair in the passage next to this," replied Old King Brady, adding:

"It only goes to show how careful one ought to be. I never doubted that the next door opened into another stateroom."

"What about that?" demanded Harry. "Did you catch him, then?"

"Catch him, no! He jumped overboard. The captain went to lower a boat."

"Then there you are!" said Alice. "We want to get a move on if we expect to do anything about this matter. But, anyhow, we can do nothing to-night."

"Sure?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Do you want to go prowling about Chinatown looking for a Chinese woman in this rain?"

"It is not a good night for the job."

"We can do nothing. Nor can that spy, probably. Does he belong in New York?"

"No. The captain says he has no certificate."

"Well," sighed Alice, "I guess it will keep. It must, anyhow. We must have time to think and we want to get the dead man's trunk."

They returned to the cabin, closing the stateroom door, and there waited for the captain.

He returned after a little.

"Very sorry, Mr. Brady," he said. "We sent a boat after Fen Low, but the men could find no trace of him. They seem to think that he is probably drowned."

"Nonsense!" retorted Old King Brady. "The man swam like a duck."

"I can only lodge a description of him with the United States Marshal."

"Do so, please. Let the Secret Service men who are out for Chinamen catch him if they can. Meanwhile we are off, Captain. I will send you an undertaker to-night. We take charge of the burial of Long Dong."

"That will be very satisfactory. Did you learn what you wanted to know, may I ask?"

"I learned what Long Dong wanted me to know," replied Alice.

"Ah! So? Well?"

"Well, Captain Schackleton?"

"Oh! You don't care to tell me what he said, then?"

"Certainly not! Why should I reveal this man's dying statement? If he had wanted you to know he would have told you."

Captain Schackleton looked rather called down.

It seemed a good time to pull out, and the Bradys did so.

Returning to their carriage, Old King Brady ordered the driver to take them through to Atlantic avenue, where there was an undertaker whom he knew.

"And now, Alice," he said, as they started along Furman street.

"What he told me was this," began Alice: "When we hustled Long Dong out of Chinatown that time it appears that he buried a part of his money and some of his diamonds. In this he was assisted by a woman, whom he claims is his sister. Her name is Mrs. Quing Quong. She agreed to look after the stuff until he could communicate with her. He wrote twice from China, but received no answer. He has never heard from her since. He wanted us to attend to his burial, to take his trunk and to unearth this treasure. He had just got that far when I saw the spy looking down at me. I was foolish enough to scream, and you know what followed. When I went back into the stateroom the man was dead."

"Did he give you no clew to the whereabouts of his sister?" asked Old King Brady.

"None. He had no idea where she was. He gave me a token, however. He said that if I could only find the woman and place it in her hands that she would surely tell us where the money and diamonds were hidden. He seemed to feel absolute confidence on that point, which is more than I do."

"Indeed, yes!" added Harry.

"Oh, I don't know," said Old King Brady. "These Chinks are pretty loyal to each other."

"The men are in business—yes," replied Alice; "but when it comes to a Chinese woman, living the life they live on Mott and Pell streets, that is altogether another matter. But we shall see."

"And what is it he gave you?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Here you are," said Alice, placing a small, green stone in the old detective's hand. "A jade seal, with some Chinese characters on it. I have not had a chance to find out what they mean."

"And he gave you the pocketbook, too?" suggested Harry.

"Yes," replied Alice. "It is stuffed with money. He said he had more in China in bank, as papers in his trunk would show. He also said that there was a paper in his trunk which tells what we are to do with this treasure, in case we get it."

"Do you think he knew where his sister was? Did he intend to tell?" Old King Brady asked.

"He was just in the act of telling when the spy looked down upon us," replied Alice. "If I had not been such a fool as to call out as I did I should have heard the rest. It is one of my blunders."

"For which you are not to be blamed," added Harry, loyally.

"I blame myself, just the same," said Alice; "but we are stopping. Are we at the undertaker's already, then?"

"Yes, here we are," replied Old King Brady, looking out of the window. "There is no sense in all of us going in. I'll attend to the matter. You two remain here."

In a few minutes Old King Brady was out again and they drove back to Washington Square.

Alice went in with them, for she wanted to examine the pocketbook and the jade seal in a better light than had been theirs in the cab.

The pocketbook was indeed stuffed with money, and it contained nothing else.

Some of it was in United States greenbacks; there were

also many Bank of England notes, and a few pieces of gold.

Harry counted it upon the library table and found that the contents of the pocketbook amounted to almost six thousand dollars.

"Plenty to bury the poor wretch with and a lot to spare!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "It is really touching to see what confidence he had in us."

"He knew who he was dealing with," replied Alice; "but let us see about this seal."

The seal was an oval piece of green jade, bearing two Chinese characters, cut intaglio.

Alice, however, could make nothing of them.

She declared that they were old Chinese.

"Perhaps if you could see an impression in wax you could do better," suggested Harry. "Governor, have you such a thing as sealing wax?"

Old King Brady had, and he produced it.

The impression was then made, but Alice still was unable to tell what the characters meant.

"Well, at all events, if this Mrs. Quing Quong won't give away the secret until she gets the seal in her hands we are safe from the steward," remarked the old detective.

But Alice was still doubtful.

"Is there a Mr. Quing Quong?" Old King Brady then asked.

Alice did not know.

Long Dong did not get as far as that, it appeared.

It was now time for Alice to go, and Harry saw her home.

Old King Brady gathered up the dead Chinaman's money.

He had no other idea than to carry out the wishes of the man, who had paid him a good fee in the past.

As he stuffed the bills into the pocketbook he came across a slip of red paper bearing Chinese characters, which had escaped their notice.

"Pshaw! Here is another job for Alice," thought the old detective; "but it is too late to do anything about it to-night."

And such were the singular circumstances under which the Bradys came to take up with their latest Chinese case.

CHAPTER III.

THE MYSTERIOUS QUEEN OF PELL STREET.

Morning came, clear and hot.

Alice, called over the telephone, came around to breakfast, which she sometimes did.

Of course, Old King Brady showed her the red slip of paper.

It proved to be of the highest importance to the detectives themselves.

"Why, look here!" exclaimed Alice, as soon as she looked at it. "I can read this all right. It says that Old King Brady is to keep all the money in the pocketbook in case he secures the hidden treasure."

"That is certainly interesting!" chuckled Harry. "A pretty good fee."

"And one yet to be earned," added Old King Brady. "I shall keep faith with this dead man. I was in hopes, however, that the paper would give us some clew."

"Starting clews are the hardest things to get hold of in a Chinese case," said Alice. "The first thing for you to do is for you to get around among some of your Chinese friends, Mr. Brady. They may be able to tell you just where we can put our hands on this woman."

"Quite so," replied Old King Brady. "And as she, or her husband—if she has one—seems to belong to the Quong family, we will begin with a call on Quong Lee."

Quong Lee is the keeper of an opium joint on Chatham Square.

Once it fell in Old King Brady's way to do the man a most important service.

This has never been forgotten, and from that time on the old divekeeper has held himself in readiness to serve the Bradys in any way he can.

As Harry and Alice both had matters on hand which demanded their attention during the morning, Old King Brady went to Chinatown alone and sought out Quong Lee.

The divekeeper received him in bed, for he rarely got up before noon, his business requiring him to remain up until long after midnight.

"Well, what you wantee now, Blady?" he asked. "Slometing de old Chink can do for you? Well?"

"Remember Long Dong?" demanded the old detective.

"Belly well. He go back to China."

"He is dead!"

Old King Brady had resolved to tell no one of the circumstances of Long Dong's death, except Mrs. Quing Quong, for the present at least.

"Dead!" cried Quong Lee. "How you know?"

"I know, Quong. It is straight."

"Belly well. Me no care. He no good. Makee lots of money. Belly mean man. You lun him out of Chinatown. Only for dlat he would have been dead long ago."

"Well, he is dead now, at all events, and I am asked to find his sister and tell her. That is what I want. Her name is Mrs. Quing Quong."

"So?"

"You know her?"

"Me know 'bout her. Me no bother with such people."

"Is she living here in Chinatown now?"

"Yair."

"Perhaps she is a relation of yours, Quong? You don't seem to be very anxious to talk about her."

"No 'lation of mine. She belly big woman. Dley callee her de Queen of Pell Street."

"Hello! hello! Now I know who she is. The widow of that Chinese banker who used to stake the racetrack Chinks. She follows her husband's business, but never shows herself to any one, I have heard it said."

"Dlat's right. She belly big woman. Dlon't let no one see her. She lend lots of money. Oh, yair."

"Well, I want to see her and tell her about her brother's death. You can fix that, Quong?"

"Can't do it, Blady. She neber see no one. Dlose

who borrow money have to talk to her through a little hole in the wall."

"Well, that will suit me well enough. I will talk to her through the little hole in the wall."

"Dlon't know. Me see. Better you gettee Mliss Alice write her a Chineese letter. Dlose people don't likee me. Say, Blady, you know me. You know I would do anything I can for you, but dis time I no good."

"All right, Quong. I know you would do it, if you could. But tell me where she lives."

"Dlat's it. De dlectives try to find her lots of times. No can. Her husband's sign is still up on No. — Pell street. Dley lun de bank, but you can't find her dere. Dley blindfold dlose Chinks what want to bollow money. Dley takee dlem somewhere. Den she talkee troo little hole—see?"

"But what is all this mystery about, Quong? Why does she do business in this singular fashion?"

"She terrible wise woman, Blady."

"Oh, a sort of clairvoyant?"

"Me no lunderstand. She luck woman? Know what dlat means?"

"It means the same thing, I fancy. Well, I will call at Quing Quong's bank and try my luck. Perhaps I shall do better than you think for."

"Allee light. Go ahead. Me askee people. Mebbe me can do better dlan me tink. Anyhow, me tly."

Old King Brady now went up Pell street and entered the Chinese bank at the number Quong Lee had given him.

It was a neatly furnished room, with counter, a scales for weighing money, a big safe and a high iron railing screwed to the top of the counter.

An elderly Chinaman sat on a high stool behind the counter, working a Chinese counting machine with one hand, while with the other he wrote in a tissue-paper book.

At the other end of the counter sat a younger man, arranging little slips of red paper.

Old King Brady thought they looked suspiciously like lottery tickets.

He felt that his detective shield would hardly help him here.

"And probably they know me," he thought.

Probably they did, for the Bradys are well known in Chinatown.

The younger man came forward to the opening in the railing.

He was dressed in the latest style, and his queue was braided up around his head.

"What did you want?" he asked, in good English.

"This is Mrs. Quing Quong's bank?" Old King Brady asked.

"Yes."

"You know me?"

"Yes. You are Old King Brady."

"That's right. Can I see Mrs. Quing Quong?"

"No. She never sees anybody. Besides, it would do you no good. She don't speak English, and I suppose you don't speak Chinese. You can only do business with her through me. What is it you want?"

"I want to see her about her brother, Long Dong."

"What about?"

"That I can only tell her. Suppose I bring a letter here in Chinese? Will you give it to her?"

"Yes."

"Very well. I will do that."

"You have a letter from Long Dong?"

"I have heard from him—yes."

"He is very well?"

"No. He is very sick."

"So?"

"Tell Mrs. Quing Quong that. I will come again."

"Very well," said the Chinaman, and he went back to his red slips.

Old King Brady now went to his office.

He had frequently heard of this mysterious wise woman of Chinatown, who backed the Chinese racetrack gamblers, but he had never heard her called the Queen of Pell Street until Quong Lee gave her that name.

He understood that this was a small-footed woman, who came of a very fine Chinese family, thus he was not surprised that her countrymen should treat her like a queen.

Alice and Harry did not come in until nearly three o'clock, thus it was late in the afternoon before the old detective found opportunity to take up the matter.

"Don't you think, Mr. Brady," said Alice, "that we better wait until we can look over Long Dong's trunk before we act?"

"Oh, I don't think so," was the reply. "The trunk is probably at the house now. I left word for the express company to call for it. But this dead man has to be buried. His sister may have something to say about it. It seems to me that the sooner we notify her of his death the better."

"Then why didn't you tell them at the bank that he was dead?"

"Really, Alice, you press me hard. I don't just know why I did not. Write your letter asking for an interview with the woman and we will go right down there now."

Alice complied.

The letter informed Mrs. Quing Quong of her brother's death on the steamer, and stated that he had made a dying request of the writer, who desired to talk with her about it in Chinese.

"Look here!" said Old King Brady, after Alice had read the letter over in English. "You don't give up that jade seal to the first person who asks for it. We must know that we are actually dealing with Mrs. Quing Quong."

"So I say," put in Harry. "Another thing, I don't think this hidden Queen of Pell Street ought to be allowed to even see the token until she promises that we shall be present when the treasure is unearthed."

Alice looked doubtful.

"You are laying down a lot of rules, which you may find difficult to carry out," she said. "However, we can tell better when we see what effect this letter has."

So the Bradys and Alice went down to Pell street and called at the Quing Quong bank.

Old King Brady persisting in his idea, had the token concealed in one of his secret pockets.

"He was resolved that no Chinaman should see it until he was reasonably certain that said woman was actually Mrs. Quing Quong.

The same two Chinamen were behind the counter.

There were also several Chinaman standing around outside.

They eyed the detective suspiciously and jabbered among themselves.

"Here is the letter," said Old King Brady. "Please give it to Mrs. Quing Quong."

"All right," replied the young Chink, receiving it. "Come to-morrow."

"No, no!" replied Old King Brady. "To-morrow won't do. I want you to give that letter to her now."

The Chinaman looked very doubtful.

Alice tackled him in Chinese, and much to his surprise.

They talked for some minutes.

It was amusing to see how quickly the talk among the men outside the counter ceased!

At last the Chinaman opened a gate, came out from behind the counter and passed into the back room.

"Is he going to deliver the letter?" asked Old King Brady.

"Yes," replied Alice.

"I hope you were guarded."

"Certainly, Mr. Brady."

The Chinamen now began leaving.

In a moment the Bradys were the only persons in the bank except the old Chink at the other end of the counter, who was still working the sampan and writing in his tissue-paper book.

The clerk soon returned.

He looked somewhat excited.

"So Long Dong is dead?" he said. "Why did you not tell me that at first?"

"You know now," replied Old King Brady. "Can Miss Montgomery see Mrs. Quing Quong?"

"As I told you before, no one can see her," was the reply, and the fellow began talking Chinese.

"He says he will take me to where I can talk with Mrs. Quing Quong," said Alice; "but I must be blindfolded and go alone."

"It won't do, my friend," said Old King Brady. "We don't object to the blindfold part, but one of us must go with the lady."

The clerk shrugged his shoulders.

"I have nothing to do with it, Mr. Brady," he said. "Mrs. Quing Quong is a queen among her people here in Pell street. Her orders must be obeyed."

"I am not a bit afraid," said Alice.

"There is nothing to be afraid of," added the Chinaman. "It is the only way the 'Queen of Pell Street,' as we call her, ever receives any one but me and one or two others. I give you my promise that this lady shall return in safety."

"She don't go!" said Harry, decidedly.

"It is as he says," added Old King Brady. "One of us must go with her or we shall have to find some other

way of getting at Mrs. Quing Quong. We may even have to bring the police in here."

The Chinaman shrugged his shoulders again.

"That will do you no good," he said. "That has been tried before. Neither you nor your police can find the Queen of Pell Street."

"But I will ask her if she minds," he added. "If one of you go in there you will be the first white man who has ever been admitted to the presence of the Queen."

"Ask her," said Old King Brady. "Tell her there will be something doing if she says no."

There was a decidedly ugly look on the Chinaman's face as he left the room.

"Which of us go?" inquired Harry, in a whisper.

"It better be you," replied Old King Brady. "In case you don't return I may have to work the police."

"That suits me best," said Harry.

"I don't imagine there is a particle of danger," said Alice. "The woman is simply regarded as a clairvoyant. She adds to the mystery of her predictions by concealing herself, that is all. It is quite Chinese."

They waited.

Sam, the clerk, returned.

"She says one of you can go," he announced. "But you must both be blindfolded, as I said."

"Very well," said Harry, stepping forward. "I will go."

"Follow me," replied the Chinaman.

And they followed the man into the room behind the bank.

CHAPTER IV.

A MIDNIGHT ALARM.

In the room which Harry and Alice entered sat an aged Chink, with a long, drooping, white mustache.

The clerk said something in Chinese.

Rising, the old fellow went to a bureau drawer and took out two silk handkerchiefs.

One of these he proceeded to tie over Harry's eyes and then served Alice in the same fashion with the other.

"Take hold of his coat," said the clerk, and, taking Harry's hand, he guided it.

Alice's hand was then placed on Harry's coat, and they started.

First, it was around and around several times.

Then, advancing, they passed through a door.

Crossing a room, they went out in the open.

Then it was over a flagged yard, in by another door, up a flight of stairs and then several turns were made.

Next they descended a flight of stairs.

Harry, who counted the steps on both occasions, was satisfied that all this was bluff, and that it was the same flight.

He was still more certain of it when, in a moment, they found themselves in the yard again.

But now they only advanced a few steps and then went in through a door, which could not have been the same one they came out of.

And now the old fellow pulled himself away from Harry.

"You standee still," he said.

Harry obeyed, but he listened for all he was worth.

The Chinaman went shuffling about the room, making a great deal more noise than was necessary, apparently.

Presently he came back and, taking Harry's hand, placed it on his coattail again.

"Lookee out! No faller! Go downstairs," he said.

They descended a flight of ten steep steps.

Harry was satisfied that they had passed through a trap door.

Reaching the level, they were led on through a long passage.

At last they paused and the Chinaman, opening a door, stood back.

"Takee off blinds," he said.

It was done.

They found themselves standing in a narrow passage, facing an open door.

"Go in dlere," said the old fellow, pointing. "When you troe knock on dloor."

They entered a small room, bare of all furnishing.

There was but one door and no window.

The room was lighted by a bracket lamp.

Near the lamp, in the partition, which was made of planed boards, was a round hole.

The old man closed the door, and as he did so a voice spoke from behind the hole.

The words were Chinese, and the voice was that of a woman.

Alice advanced close to the hole and answered.

An extended conversation followed.

Presumably the Queen of Pell Street was behind this panel.

But to Harry it was all jargon.

At last, however, the voice became insistent, and the same thing was repeated, again and again, and Alice's answer was always the same.

Finally a little shutter inside the hole was heard to close with a bang, and Alice turned away.

"All over," she said.

"And what does it amount to?" demanded Harry.

"Don't ask me now," replied Alice. "It is all very unsatisfactory. Let us get out of here—quick!"

Harry pounded on the door.

It was instantly opened by the old Chink.

"You go now?" he demanded.

"Yes," replied Alice.

"Allee light. Me put on hankerfellers again."

It was done, and they returned by the way they came. Once more Harry felt satisfied that the going up and down stairs was only bluff.

At last they were landed in the back room behind the bank, where the handkerchiefs were removed, and they rejoined Old King Brady.

"Well?" demanded the old detective. "What's the report?"

"The report will come later," replied Alice.

The Chinese clerk got busy then.

He wanted to know where Long Dong had died and all about it.

Needless to say, he learned nothing.

Alice hurried the Bradys out.

"Where did you go?" demanded the old detective, when they found themselves on Pell street, "through to Mott street?"

"Yes, I think so," replied Harry.

"Did you see the Queen?"

"Saw nothing but a hole in the wall, through which a voice spoke. Alice did the talking. I can't chew the rag in Chinese, but she did a lot of it, just the same."

"Spare us your slang," said Alice.

"But what he says is true," she added. "We didn't get on at all. It was just as I supposed. The woman demanded the token. I hadn't it to give her. Consequently there was nothing doing. She even refused to have anything to do with the funeral."

"Got angry?" asked Old King Brady.

"Indeed, yes! She finally slammed the panel in a rage. She wouldn't tell me a thing."

"I suppose it would be impossible for you to repeat the actual conversation?"

"Very difficult, Mr. Brady. You have the sense of it in what I have just said."

"Well, let me try to get at it in another way. Did you tell the Queen that we had the jade seal or did she ask for it?"

"I had to tell her. She acted as if she didn't know anything about it. She wanted to know how and where her brother died, and then she asked if he had left any money. I told her that he had left money and that she ought to know where it was. She declared she didn't. We fenced for a few minutes and then I told her about the seal and that the money was to go to her brother's people in China, and that he said she had it and that we expected her to give it up."

"Did she get angry at that?"

"She began to talk loud. 'Give me the seal!' she said, again and again.

"And your answer?"

"'You describe it and you get it.'"

"She refused?"

"Yes. 'Give me the seal!' she kept saying. Finally she called out that we could throw her brother's corpse to the fishes, for all she cared, and slammed the panel. We came away then."

They walked on to the Bowery in silence.

"Alice," said Old King Brady, suddenly, "it comes to me very strongly that we have tackled the wrong woman."

"Mr. Brady," replied Alice, "do you know I am thinking the very same thing."

"But what can it mean? Can Quong Lee have deceived us? Hardly. This woman, who is never seen, must surely be the one known as the Queen of Pell Street and as the widow of Quing Quong, the banker."

"Can it be possible," suggested Harry, "that the real Mrs. Quing Quong is dead and that this woman has been set up in her place? Wouldn't that, in a way, account for her never being seen?"

"Sounds reasonable. We will start work on those lines."

The Bradys now returned home, Alice accompanying them.

"They expected to find Long Dong's trunk at the house and in this they were not disappointed, for it had arrived some hours before.

They had the key—it had been taken from the dead man's pocket.

So the trunk was opened and its contents fully examined.

Besides clothing, there was a bag of gold coin, amounting to over \$3,000, a bundle of old letters, all in Chinese, and a few odds and ends, which seemed to have been intended as presents.

One was a diamond brooch of considerable value.

The stones were not of the first water, but Old King Brady thought that the brooch might be worth as much as \$2,000.

There was nothing discovered in the trunk which would seem to throw any light upon the mystery of Mrs. Quing Quong, unless, indeed, it was to be found in the letters, and this Old King Brady instructed Alice to ascertain.

There were over a hundred of the letters, and it proved a tedious task.

Alice could not read them all, for in some instances the writing was so bad that she could not make out what the characters were intended to be.

But she was able to decipher a good many of them.

Those written in China she threw aside.

There were several from San Francisco, relating to the smuggling of Chinamen.

Others were from various American cities, and these mostly concerned the smuggling of opium.

There was one from New York, dated three months before the time of the sailing of the Woolwich Castle from Shanghai.

This was the only one which Alice thought likely to help them out.

She accordingly wrote out a free translation of it, which read as follows:

"To Long Dong:

"Honored Friend—I received your letter. I have no good news. Your sister, Quing Quong, now refuses to see any one. She prophesies about the races, fan tan and lottery tickets more and more. Indeed, she has grown so common that everybody goes to her, but she will see nobody. She talks to them through a hole, and Wing Alow manages all her affairs. Friend, I had a dream. I dreamed that your sister came to me and said: 'Hing, I am dead. The woman you hear of is not me. Tell Long Dong that I died of poison and did not reveal where he hid the treasure.' Friend, you know I believe not in dreams, and will laugh at these words. Still upon me my dream has made so strong an impression that I mean to investigate. If you left money with your sister, I bid you beware! I believe your enemies killed her. Will they find this hidden money? If you wish to trust me, you can safely. I await your pleasure.

"Your friend and brother,

"Hing Wow."

"This certainly confirms our suspicion, Alice," said Old King Brady. "It is very important. Immediate steps must be taken to find this Hing Wow."

"I will write out a request for him to call on us about Long Dong," said Alice. "Harry can go down to Chinatown and paste it on the bulletin."

Now, the bulletin, or Chinese newspaper, as it is sometimes called, is the dead wall on the corner of Pell and Doyers street.

Here any day one may see hundreds of little slips of red paper, bearing Chinese written characters pasted up.

They are notices of meetings, items of Chinese news, advertisements of those who wish to hire laundrymen, and the like.

Old King Brady usually keeps some of the blank slips on hand, and upon one of them Alice wrote in Chinese the following:

"To Hing Wow: Please call at once at No. — Union Square about Long Dong. Per order of Old King Brady, detective."

"The detective with the big, white hat" was the way Alice expressed Old King Brady's name.

Harry took this paper to Pell street and pasted it up before supper.

"It may bring something, but I almost doubt it," Old King Brady remarked at the supper table. "These Chinese don't love detectives. However, we shall see."

The Bradys stayed home that night and played chess. At eleven o'clock they retired.

Old King Brady sleeps in the back chamber on the second floor and Harry has the room in front.

Julius sleeps on the top floor, and a more careful man about locking up nights it would be hard to find.

Harry is a sound sleeper, as a rule, while Old King Brady is always a light one.

But on this night Harry suddenly awoke somewhere along toward two o'clock.

He felt singularly oppressed by a strange sense of fear.

"What in the world is the matter with me?" he asked himself. "Have I been having a nightmare or what?"

He turned over and, shaking up his pillow, was about to go to sleep again, when suddenly he heard a slight sound at the door.

Now the Bradys usually sleep with revolvers within reach, for their lives have been threatened many times.

Harry's was on a table and he raised up and grabbed it.

It was well that he did so, for at the same instant the door opened and a dark figure came gliding into the room.

There was light enough from the electric lamps in Washington Square to show Young King Brady that the intruder was a Chinaman.

He carried in one hand an electric flashlight, while in the other he held a long knife!

It was a desperate moment.

But Young King Brady preferred capturing the intruder to killing him.

He blazed away, firing over the fellow's head.

"Drop that knife! Back up against the wall!" he shouted, springing out of bed.

The Chinaman, however, did neither one nor the other.

Instantly backing out through the door, he could be heard running through the hall.

Harry dashed after him and fired again as the intruder ran downstairs.

CHAPTER V.

"IS THIS HING WOW?"

Old King Brady heard the shots and was up and out in the hall on the instant.

The front door stood wide open and Harry was standing at the head of the steps in his pajamas.

"What is it?" shouted the old detective, dashing downstairs.

Harry turned and, coming in, closed the door behind him.

"Who fired? Are you hurt?" demanded Old King Brady.

"I fired, and I am not hurt," replied Harry. "It's all over now. I'd liked to have caught the Chink, but he was too fast for me, and I have no notion of chasing through the street in this light and airy costume."

"A Chinaman! Do you mean to say——" gasped Old King Brady.

"But explain," he added. "I suppose it must be that wretch of a steward, Willie Wee Wah, as Captain Schackleton called him."

"I wish you could have seen him then, so that we might decide that point," replied Harry, and he went on to tell what had occurred.

"That is who he was, in all probability," said Old King Brady. "Of course, he was after the jade seal."

"And where is it?"

"Locked in the safe in the library."

"We better have a look."

And they had it, going so far as to open the safe and, to their satisfaction, they found the jade seal intact.

"I could have wished that you had winged him," said Old King Brady.

"My second shot was fired with that intention," replied Harry; "but, somehow, I managed to make a miss of it."

"Describe the man."

Harry did so.

"Sounds like the steward," said the old detective. "I guess he must have lived in New York, in spite of what Captain Schackleton said."

"Looks so; otherwise he could hardly have found us out."

"These Chinamen are pretty smooth articles, Harry; but, speaking of finding us out, how did he get in?"

"The front door stood wide open."

"Yes; but Julius must surely have locked it. He never fails."

"Perhaps he got in some other way and left the front door open so as to secure himself an easy means of retreat."

"That sounds more like it. Let us investigate."

The briefest investigation solved the mystery.

The Bradys' old-fashioned house has no bats at the basement window, as is usually the case with New York dwellings.

Going downstairs, the detectives found that one of the

big window panes had been skillfully cut out with a diamond.

"This explains it," said the old detective. "The fellow came in this way and left the front door open so as to secret his retreat. Was he in my room before he tackled you, think?"

That was looked into next.

But as everything in Old King Brady's room remained undisturbed, it was evident that the Chinaman had but just begun his work.

"We must have bars put on those windows at once," said Old King Brady. "But now to ring off. You go back to bed, Harry, and I'll watch."

Harry protested, but Old King Brady was determined. They might as well have both finished out their night's sleep, for there was no further alarm.

And thus the Bradys had something to tell Alice next morning.

"It is as I have often told you," said Alice. "You take a sharp Chinaman and there is really no limit to his shrewdness. This Willie Wee Wah is likely to prove a dangerous enemy. We want to look out for ourselves until this case is closed."

That morning brought a move which pleased the detectives.

For they had scarcely been half an hour in the office before a Chinese visitor was announced.

He proved to be the most up-to-date specimen of his race the Bradys had seen in some time.

His clothes were the newest thing, his trousers carefully pressed.

A diamond glittered in his four-in-hand tie and another in a ring.

And his name was Hing Wow!

But nobby as the fellow appeared, his English was poor, and Alice was called in.

The conversation, as she translated it, ran thus:

"You advertised for me and here I am," the Chinaman began. "What about my friend Long Dong?"

"He is dead," replied Alice.

Hing Wow was visibly affected.

He wanted to know all about it, and Alice told him.

"And as he was dying he sent for us," she added.

"Yes; he thought a great deal of Old King Brady," replied Hing Wow.

"He ought to. Old King Brady was a good friend to him."

"I know it. I know all about it. He told me before he left New York. What did he want?"

Alice handed the man the letter.

"Yes, I wrote that," said Hing Wow.

"What he wanted was for us to get the money he hid and send it to a certain person in China," continued Alice. "It is a woman. We found instructions in his trunk."

"His wife?"

"Mrs. Mong Fee is the name."

"She is his wife."

"Now about this sister of his. I cannot tell you exactly what Long Dong said to me before his death; but we were instructed to go to his sister. She was to tell us where the money was hidden."

"Did you go?"

"Yes."

"Did you see her?"

"No; I talked with her through a hole in the wall."

"You mean the woman who calls herself Mrs. Quing Quong, the Queen of Pell Street?"

"Yes."

"It is the only way any one is ever able to talk with her. Can you read Chinese as well as speak it?"

"Yes."

"You read my letter?"

"I did."

"Then you know what I think. I don't believe this Queen of Pell Street is really Long Dong's sister. Mrs. Quing Quong was a wonderful wise woman. I believe that she is either dead or these people have her locked in somewhere. They pay high for these tips on the races. The Queen of Pell Street makes a great deal of money that way."

"Do her tips always come true?"

Hing Wow shrugged his shoulders.

"Sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't," he replied. "I used to go to her, but I don't now. Let others pay their money. I know a better way."

And whatever way his was, he certainly looked as if it brought him profit.

"We want to get at the truth of this matter," said Alice. "Did you ever do anything about it?"

"No," was the reply. "I never got any answer to that letter."

"You still believe in your dream, however?"

"Yes, I do."

All this Alice translated as she went along.

"Wait a minute," she now said in English and rose abruptly, motioning to Old King Brady, who at once followed her out of the office.

At the same time Harry got a secret sign not to let the Chinaman leave until they returned.

"What do you think of it all, Mr. Brady?" asked Alice, when she had the old detective alone in her private office.

"What do you mean? Do you imagine that the fellow may not be Hing Wow?" was asked.

"I don't know. I don't like him."

"He is clearly a pretty slick proposition, Alice, but then we must remember that Long Dong himself was just the same sort, and that is the way he made his money."

"I know; but just the same I feel afraid of this man and I can't exactly tell you why. I don't believe he is Hing Wow."

"We have no possible way of proving it, unless I ask him for his certificate."

"That is just why I called you out. Do it."

"Very well."

They returned to the other room, where Harry was jollying the Chink to keep him in good humor.

"Look here," said Old King Brady. "Before we go any further in this matter we must be sure who we are dealing with. Let me see your certificate."

Now, perhaps it may not be generally known that under the present laws each Chinaman in the United States is obliged to take out a certificate, which carries a full description of the possessor, together with his photograph in miniature in one corner.

This Chinaman looked steadily at Old King Brady and for the moment did not reply.

"Did you understand me?" demanded the old detective.

"Yair. Me lunderstan'. Me tellee Mees Lady."

"Very well. Tell her, then."

"Tell him that I have not my certificate with me," said the man, in Chinese. "If you will come to Pell street this afternoon I will show it to you. I will also show you where the Queen hides, so that you can get at her. I think you should arrest her. Then you will know the truth."

Alice translated.

"Get the number. Tell him we will come," said Old King Brady.

More Chinese talk followed.

"He says," continued Alice, "that Long Dong must have left some token to indicate where he buried or hid the money. He thinks if he could search Long Dong's trunk he could find something of the sort. He says if we have already found anything of the kind that we ought to tell him and to let him see it, as he was Long Dong's best friend and might be able to understand its meaning where we would not."

"Oh, he says all that, does he?" replied Old King Brady. "Well, you tell him that when we see his certificate we will take all this into consideration. Make him understand that all we want is to carry out the wishes of his friend Long Dong."

Alice translated.

Hing Wow merely said:

"Belly well," and then added in English:

"You givee my fend Long Dong Chinee fun'l? Yair? You letee me boss job?"

"Sure," replied the old detective. "Only too happy. Tell him, Alice."

Alice translated.

"Allee light. Good morning!" said the Chink.

And, rising, he put on his hat and walked out of the office.

The Bradys sat looking at each other for a moment in silence.

"Well, and what do you think of my suspicions now?" demanded Alice, after a minute.

"Fully justified," replied Old King Brady.

"The fellow is surely a fakir," added Harry. "Do we go, Governor?"

"Oh, yes; I think so," replied Old King Brady. "We will take no risks. I want to see the end of this. But we will not go before the end of the day. If he is a fake, Hing Wow the genuine may show up in the meantime."

"That is what I told him," said Alice. "I said we would be there about five o'clock."

The day passed and no other Chinaman called.

Toward five o'clock the whole firm again started for Chinatown.

The number on Pell street given proved to be a few
The number on Pell street given proved to be next door to the Quing Quong bank.

This of itself was suspicious.

The business carried on in the store was that of a Chinese grocery.

Old King Brady did not bring the jade seal with him. He was taking no chances of losing this object, which appeared to be the key to the whole situation.

If Hing Wow produced his certificate it was the old detective's intention to go no further, but to take the man to his house and show him the seal.

Alice tackled the man behind the counter, asking for Hing Wow.

"Yes, he lives here," replied the man, in Chinese; "but he is not here now. Step into my back room and I will send for him."

He came out from behind the counter and, opening a door, ushered the detectives into a room, comfortably furnished in the Chinese style.

Here he placed chairs and, explaining to Alice that they would have to wait perhaps as long as fifteen or twenty minutes, retired.

But the wait was even longer than that.

Half an hour passed, and still there was no sign of Hing Wow.

The detectives naturally grew tired of waiting.

"Go back into the shop, Alice, and ask that man if he can't hurry matters up," said the old detective.

Alice arose and went to the door.

It was locked.

"What's this?" cried Old King Brady. "Are they holding us prisoners here, then?"

He sprang up and tried the door at the other end of the room.

This was also locked.

"This won't do!" cried the old detective.

He strode toward the front, and as he did so a key was heard entering the lock of the back door.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SECRET OF THE SEAL.

Old King Brady turned, prepared for trouble.

But it was only the man who had called himself Hing Wow who entered.

"So you have come?" he said to Alice, in Chinese. "I am sorry to have kept you waiting; but I am here now."

Alice rapidly translated.

Hing Wow stood with his back to the door.

The Bradys, fully on the alert for trouble, let Alice continue her work.

"Tell Mr. Brady that I have seen Mrs. Quing Quong," continued the man. "Tell him that I am now satisfied that my dream was false and that she is really Long Dong's sister. Tell him that she will be here in a minute and will talk to you. This is a great compliment. The Queen of Pell Street never shows herself to any one, as you know. It is only on account of her desire to carry out her brother's last wishes that she does so now."

Alice translated.

"Tell him that we can do no business until he produces his certificate."

He was certain that the man understood what he said. But the certificate was not forthcoming.

Hing Wow declared that he kept it in a certain box and that when he went to look for it, to his surprise, he found it missing. He could not account for this. He felt very badly about it. To-morrow he would take Old King Brady before the commissioner, who would testify that he was Hing Wow.

"Very well," said the old detective. "Tell him, then, that we will wait till to-morrow, and in the meantime I want him to instantly unlock this door."

There was a decidedly ugly look on the Chinaman's face when this was said, which only went to confirm Old King Brady's suspicion that he understood every word that was said.

He spoke rapidly in answer.

Alice, translating, said:

"He says that the door was locked because he is bringing the Queen into this room and that he is about to call her in now."

"Very well," said Old King Brady. "Let her come."

Hing Wow opened the back door and called out something in Chinese.

And then a woman entered.

She was a small person, dressed in a sort of semi-Chinese costume.

Her features were peculiar, but to the Bradys she looked more like a halfbreed than a fullfledged Chinawoman.

But one thing struck all of them at once.

The woman had full-sized feet.

This marked her as belonging to the working class.

With her feet left in their natural condition, she could not belong to the Chinese aristocracy, as Old King Brady had always understood was the case with the Queen of Pell Street.

Advancing a little way into the room, the woman stood beside Hing Wow.

The talk Alice had with her ran as follows:

"I want to know about my brother. Has he been buried yet?" she began.

The voice was certainly the same which had spoken through the hole in the wall.

"No," replied Alice. "He has not been buried yet. Have you changed your mind? Do you want to take charge of the remains?"

"I do."

"You are ready to tell where your brother hid his money and to let us get it and so carry out his last wishes?"

"Yes; I am if you will give me the token."

"We cannot give you the token until we know that you are actually Long Dong's sister; but we will show it to Hing Wow just as soon as he shows us his certificate."

"He will do that to-morrow. I want to see the token now. Then we can go ahead and do business."

"No; it must be just as Old King Brady says; he will have it no other way."

As Alice said this the woman looked at Hing Wow.

Instantly both turned and left the room.

"What does she say?" cried Old King Brady. "Are they coming back again, or what?"

But before Alice could answer the door flew open and

four Chinks, each wearing a hideous pasteboard mask, burst into the room.

Trouble was in the wind.

The Bradys and Alice acted promptly.

All three drew revolvers.

Old King Brady and Harry sent shots flying over the heads of the masks.

Such vigorous action seemed not to have been anticipated.

The Chinks turned and fled.

Old King Brady's temper, decidedly peppery at times, was now thoroughly aroused.

"After them!" he shouted. "Some one shall sweat for this fool business!"

They rushed through a rear room and out into the yard.

Here, on the other side of a fence, the low roof of a small building was seen rising above the boardline, with Chinese signs on the fence.

It was a veritable hidden hut here in the heart of Chinatown.

Hing Wow had vanished.

A Chinaman leaned out of an upper window of the Pell street house.

The masks were running toward the fence, near which the supposed Queen of Pell Street stood.

Just then a loud cry rang out.

It was the Chink at the window who gave the alarm.

Old King Brady fired into the air, and as he did so the woman flung open a door.

The masks made a rush for the hidden hut.

Alice followed Harry into the yard.

The Chinamen were through the door in a jiffy, the woman following.

Instantly the door was slammed.

Without actually shooting one of this singular bunch the Bradys could do nothing to stop their retreat.

Old King Brady rushed to the fence and began kicking on the door, which resisted his efforts.

Meanwhile the man at the window continued to shout.

Other windows were flung up and heads were thrust out.

"Come, come, Governor!" cried Harry. "With Alice on our hands, this won't do. We want to get out of here as quick as we can or we shall have all Chinatown to fight."

This brought Old King Brady to his senses.

"You are right, Harry," he said. "I am going too far. Let us retreat and take up the ball again."

They moved none too soon, either, for before they were fairly back into the house half a dozen Chinaman came tumbling out of the side door of an extension to the next house.

The Bradys hurried Alice through to the room in which the interview had taken place.

Harry was in the lead and, trying the door, he found it unfastened.

They passed into the grocery.

The man who had first received them stood there alone behind the counter.

His face was as blank as a block of wood.

Old King Brady would have questioned him, but again Harry interfered.

"Come, come, Governor!" he cried. "We want to get Alice out of here."

The next moment they were on Pell street and out of danger.

Here no one would have known that there had been any excitement in the rear.

The Chinese never air their affairs in public, unless absolutely forced to do so.

The Bradys walked through the Chatham Square and there stopped to review the situation.

"We got out of that lucky!" exclaimed Harry.

"It is the worst ever," growled the old detective. "The idea of putting us up against those ridiculous masks! There is no end to the fool things these Chinks will do."

"If we hadn't showed fight it might not have proved such a fool thing, then," said Harry. "Alice should not have come."

"And what would you have done without me, sir?" demanded Alice. "You make a regular baby of me, Harry. I am only sorry now that I did not insist upon exploring that hidden hut."

"I shall take care of you until the last gun fires, Alice," he said.

And Young King Brady is always looking out for Alice's safety.

For, truth told, Harry is deeply in love with his accomplished partner and hopes some day to claim her for his wife.

But this was no time for lovemaking, and Old King Brady cut it short.

"Look here!" he said. "Does it occur to either of you that your trip to the Queen yesterday was made via the hidden hut?"

"I am sure of it," said Alice.

"And I agree," added Harry. "I am inclined to think that we should have found our trap door if we had gone into the hut. Do we get the police and pull the place, Governor?"

"I have been thinking," replied Old King Brady. "Of course, we know now that our Hing Wow is a fake. Suppose we wait another day? I am curious to see what the next move of these people will be. Alice, you consider the woman we saw the same person you talked to through the hole in the wall?"

"The voice was the same," replied Alice.

"Not a doubt of it," added Harry.

"Then I believe in that letter. That woman had large feet. She is not the genuine Queen of Pell Street. I once talked with a detective, dead now these six months, who claimed to have seen her and I believed him. He told me positively that she had small feet. But, come, let us go back to the office and see if there were any important letters in the last mail. Then we will call it a day and go home."

And thus ended the Bradys' second-trip to Chinatown in the Long Dong case.

It began to look as if they had a very difficult undertaking on their hands.

There was nothing of importance at the office, and the night passed without another alarm.

But next morning the Chinese business cropped up again just as soon as they got to the office.

For here they found a small, insignificant specimen of the genus Chink awaiting them.

He was a young man and evidently only a halfbreed.

His English was as perfect as could be asked for.

"Mr. Brady," he began, "my name is Hing Wow. You advertised for me on the Chinese bulletin. You wanted to see me about my friend Long Dong?"

"That's right," replied Old King Brady. "Come into my private office, young man, and we will talk it over."

Alice and Harry followed them in, curious over this new turn of affairs.

"Now, first of all, young man, have you your certificate?" demanded Old King Brady. "We must know that you are actually Hing Wow before we say a word."

The Chinaman promptly produced the certificate.

It bore an accurate description of himself and the photograph attached was an unmistakable likeness.

"This goes," said Old King Brady. "But I want one other proof. While Long Dong was in Shanghai you wrote him a letter. Now, in a general way, what did you say in it?"

Hing Wow repeated the substance of the letter accurately.

This settled it.

The ground was gone over again.

Hing Wow was very much affected when he heard of Long Dong's death.

"I have plenty of money," he said. "I will bury him in our Chinese way at my own expense."

"You don't have to, although you may take charge of everything," replied Old King Brady. "Long Dong left money enough to bury him many times over."

Then came the talk of the hidden money.

Hing Wow spoke of his dream.

"I never got an answer to my letter," he said. "But I went ahead and looked the matter up. I knew Mrs. Quing Quong well. I have not been allowed to see this so-called Queen of Pell Street, but I have talked with her through the hole in the wall, just as this lady did. I am sure she is not the same person."

"There is one sure test," said Old King Brady. "Was Mrs. Quing Quong a small or a large footed woman?"

"Small," replied Hing Wow, promptly.

"Then this woman is a fake, for she has large feet," said Old King Brady.

He then went on to tell about their adventure of the previous night and wound up by telling of the jade seal.

"Can I see that seal?" demanded Hing Wow. "I have made a study of old Chinese literature. There are many characters in our old language which Miss Montgomery could not know unless she had done the same."

"Which I haven't," spoke up Alice. "I know nothing of old Chinese."

"Perhaps I can read the characters on the seal," replied the Chinaman.

Old King Brady at once ordered Harry to go to the house and get the seal.

"Do you know anything about that hidden hut?" Old King Brady then asked.

"I have seen it," was the reply. "Quing Quong, the banker, built it for his wife's private chamber. You must know that these small-footed women are not to be seen

by the average Chinaman. Long Dong knew all about this hidden hut, as you call it. His sister lived there. It would not surprise me at all if it was there that she and he hid the money. But wait until I can see the seal."

Harry was not long gone, and the seal was placed in Hing Wow's hands.

"This thing is not old," he promptly said, "but the characters are. I have no doubt Long Dong had them cut on the jade himself."

"And what do they say?" demanded Alice.

"Open me and read," promptly replied Hing Wow.

"Ha!" said Old King Brady. "We might have guessed it. That groove in the seal means that it is in two parts."

Hing Wow was fussing over the seal.

The next the Bradys knew he had separated it into two pieces.

A slip of red paper, carefully folded up, lay within.

The halfbreed had solved the secret of the jade seal.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRADYS IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP.

And now came the question what the paper said.

But here disappointment came again.

The red slip, being unfolded, proved to be like a laundry ticket, torn off from something else.

There was one row of characters on it and half a second row.

Hing Wow promptly announced its character.

Alice confirmed what he said.

Neither of them could make anything out of the paper as it stood, except that it bore one complete character, which signified "little house."

Did this refer to the hidden hut?

Old King Brady was inclined to think so.

Hing Wow was of the same opinion.

"It looks to me," said Old King Brady, "as if the Queen of Pell Street, as we must continue to call her, probably has the other half of that paper. If the real Mrs. Quing Quong is dead, then the paper may have been found among her effects. We want that, and she naturally wants this, so there you are."

Hing Wow agreed with him.

"It is of no use to go there with the police," he said.

"There are secret passages opening from under the hut, I am certain. You are right when you say that the trap door through which visitors are taken down to see the Queen probably opens out of the hut. If you start your police at work the chances are that the whole bunch will pull out and go in hiding somewhere else."

"And what would you suggest?" questioned Old King Brady.

"Give me a day or so to work in," replied Hing Wow.

"If we could only capture this Wing Chow and hold him a prisoner we might do something. But I suppose you would not stand for anything like that?"

"Meaning that we arrest him?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Not arrest him, but lock him up somewhere privately until we get him so scared that he is ready to help us out."

"I am afraid it would not work, but I am willing to try that or any other plan if I can see anything in it. Do you know the man?"

"Yes. He used to be clerk for Quing Quong. When the banker died he took charge of the business for the widow and he has been running it ever since."

"Well, go ahead and see what you can do," said Old King Brady; "but keep a sharp lookout for the steward of the Woolwich Castle. In some way, he must have got an inkling of this secret, even before he played the spy upon Long Dong and Miss Montgomery. I regard him as a very dangerous man."

And so the interview ended and the Bradys waited that day and the next.

Naturally, they hoped to hear from Hing Wow, but the day passed and he did not put in an appearance.

He had given an address on Mott street, and that evening the Bradys started out to look him up.

This time they went at it in a different fashion.

Both Harry and Alice disguised as Chinamen, as they often do.

Old King Brady went alone in the guise of one of the many opium wrecks who float about Chinatown at night.

It had been arranged that Harry and Alice should call at the Mott street address first and then report to Old King Brady at Quong Lee's.

On these expeditions Harry always poses as a deaf and dumb man, this being the only way he can get around his lack of knowledge of the Chinese language.

The number on Mott street proved to be one of the more modern tenements.

Harry and Alice toiled up the stairs to the top floor, where Hing Wow boarded with a Chinese family.

But they only had their labor for their pains, for the Chinaman who opened the door for them reported that Hing Wow went out right after breakfast that morning and had not been seen since.

Harry and Alice now went around to Quong Lee's and reported to Old King Brady.

"It is certainly disappointing, but it don't argue anything against the man's sincerity," said the old detective. "Do you know what I have been thinking of?"

Naturally they wanted to know, and Harry said so.

"I've been doing a little prowling about since we parted," continued the old detective. "I find that there are two rooms to let on the top floor of the building in which the Quing Quong bank is located. Suppose you see if you can't hire them? They may even be furnished, for all I know. I noticed a fire escape on the back of that building. I could drop in on you and some time during the night we could easily get down into the yard where the hidden hut is."

"Rather a bold move with Alice in it, is it not?" said Harry.

"Nothing of the sort," put in Alice. "If Mr. Brady wants us to go I am ready. Disguised as I am, I am perfectly willing to take the risk."

"I leave it to Alice," added the old detective. "If you can get the rooms and will let me know I can soon join you. With both of us on hand to protect Alice, I don't consider the risk so great."

"We will go and see about hiring the room at once," said Alice, and they left the dive.

The Chinese tenements on Mott and Pell street are usually leased to one Chinaman, who sublets to his own countrymen.

"When Alice and Harry got to the bank they found a bill on the side door, printed in English, reading:

"Rooms to Let."

Below these printed words were a few Chinese characters.

"I wonder how Old King Brady knew that these rooms were located on the top floor?" questioned Alice.

"Is that what the Chinese writing says?" asked Harry.

"Yes."

"I am sure I don't know. The Governor has ways of his own of getting at these things."

"He almost always manages to get there, somehow."

"He certainly does. But we must not be caught talking. Where are we to apply?"

"In the bank. Come on!"

They ascended two steps and entered the Quing Quong bank.

A solitary Chink sat behind the counter.

The old fellow whom Old King Brady had seen working the abacus was not in evidence now.

Nor was the man Wing Chow, with whom Harry and Alice had dealt before.

The Chinaman arose and came forward.

Alice began her Chinese talk.

It seemed to work all right.

After a little the man went into the back room, leaving the door open behind him.

They could hear him talking to some one, and it was a woman's voice which replied.

Both Harry and Alice recognized the voice of the Queen of Pell Street.

Here was a discovery.

The Queen came out of her seclusion at times, it would seem.

Presently the Chink returned, carrying a bunch of keys.

He said something to Alice, who began to talk with her fingers to Harry.

"We have to wait a minute until some one comes to relieve him," she said.

And then she added:

"Don't you notice anything?"

"What?" asked Harry.

"Can't tell now. We go ahead," was the reply.

Harry thought that what she meant was, did he not notice that this was a different man.

Now, Alice and Harry have thus played the part of Chinaman so many times that they have little fear of detection.

And certainly this man could not have suspected them.

But Harry had his eyes opened a few minutes later, for the door opened and in walked the bogus Wing Wow.

"Take these men upstairs to the vacant rooms," the man behind the counter said in Chinese.

He gave the fellow the keys and, Harry and Alice following him outside, they ascended to the rooms.

They proved to be furnished, as indeed Alice had already learned.

She soon struck a bargain, and paying the man a week's rent in advance they were left to themselves.

Alice hastened to lock the door.

"Now, then, did you notice anything?" demanded Harry.

"More than you did, sir; I am sure of that."

"The man who has just left us is the bogus Hing Wow."

"Certainly. But the other?"

"Well?"

"You did not recognize him, then?"

"I must confess that I did not."

"Do you think he looks anything like your burglar?"

"Well, I wouldn't want to say. You see, I only saw the fellow in the dark, and I must confess that, like all coons, all Chinks look much alike to me."

"Will you never brighten up and learn to the contrary, Harry? There is as much individuality among Chinamen as there is among white people."

"Oh, I daresay; but, as it happens, I can't see it. But I suspect what you are driving at. Is he the spy?"

"He certainly is. If I know anything that man is the missing steward of the Woolwich Castle, William Wee Wah."

"Then what has become of Wing Chow?"

"Don't ask me, Harry; I'll never tell you."

"Singular."

"Very. It looks as though this pair of scoundrels had taken possession of the whole Quing Quong outfit—bank, queen and all."

"Well, as long as they did not suspect us it is all right."

"I don't think they did. I watched them both closely. There wasn't a word dropped to lead me to believe it."

"All right, then. The Governor must be promptly notified. But let us have a look at that fire escape first."

Harry looked out of the window.

The fire escape led down to the roof of the extension, which concealed the hidden hut.

From the extension to the courtyard there was another fire escape.

"No trouble in getting down there," Young King Brady remarked. "If we can do it without attracting attention. Did he make any objection to renting the rooms?"

"At first he said he did not know anything about it, but would inquire. He went inside then, and I suppose you heard the woman talking?"

"Yes. She was certainly the Queen."

"No doubt about it. I recognized her voice distinctly. But one of us better hurry and tell Mr. B."

"You go, Alice. I don't like to leave you alone here."

So Alice hurried away, soon returning.

"He will be right around," she said. "Anything doing here?"

"No; no one came. I saw three men go through the courtyard blindfolded, however."

"You did? The Queen seems to have got down to business. Who was leading them?"

"The man who brought us up here."

"Wing Chow and the rest seem to be out of it."

"For the present, anyway."

"Footsteps were soon heard on the stairs."

The newcomer proved to be Old King Brady.

"It has just come around nicely," he said, as he closed the door behind him. "I don't think any one saw me come in here, and I didn't meet a soul on the stairs."

"I begin to have more confidence in your scheme, Governor," said Harry. "Everything seems to be working around our way. Alice told you about those two men, I suppose?"

"Yes. The Queen seems to have got new court attendants. I am wondering what has become of Wing Chow."

"And those two old men," said Alice. "I don't understand it."

"Oh, I suppose they may have only been hired by her," said the old detective. "She may have given them the bounce. But we must take it as it comes."

They so placed themselves that they could watch the courtyard.

After a little the bogus Hing Wow came into view, leading three blindfolded Chinks, who held on to each other as Alice and Harry had done at the time of their visit to the Queen of Pell Street.

A little later the same individual took one man in the other direction after the others came out.

They seemed to go in and out through the side door of the extension.

From the window no part of the hidden hut was visible.

It seemed certain, however, that this is where they went.

And this seemed to be the last of the Queen's customers for the night, for after the man was led out no one else went in.

The Bradys continued their watch until after midnight.

Chinatown now began to quiet down.

"We don't make a move before two o'clock," Old King Brady announced.

"And in the meantime," he added, "let us try to get a little sleep."

CHAPTER VIII.

STARTLING DISCOVERIES.

Old King Brady said sleep, but he had no idea of taking a nap himself.

He was only thinking of Harry and Alice.

The old detective himself is a perfect owl and will go without sleep for days together.

So Alice retired to the other room and Harry went to sleep on the lounge, while Old King Brady himself sat smoking by the open window, where, partially con-

cealed behind a red curtain, he could watch the courtyard. He wished much that he could overlook the entrance to the hidden hut, but that was not visible from the window.

Along about half-past one the old detective woke Harry.

"I think we may as well get busy now," he said.

Harry was broad awake on the instant.

"Very well," he replied, "but what about Alice? Have you called her?"

"No; she is still asleep."

"What if we leave her alone? I don't like the idea of her poking about down there."

"I don't see any necessity for it, either; but she will be mad enough if we let her sleep till morning."

"Let her get over it, then. These Chinese cases are too dangerous. I wish she might never have to do with another one. Why, just think! We are up against that wretch who would have killed us last night, to say nothing of the bogus Hing Wow."

"All right. We will let her alone. I will bolt both doors. The chance of any one getting in, by way of the windows is rather remote."

But this suggestion started Harry going again.

"I don't know that it is so remote, then," he said. "By jove! Governor, I don't relish the idea of leaving her alone."

"We have to do one thing or the other; but, come, if you say so I'll chance it alone."

But Harry balked at this also.

"I can't think of it. I am the one to go, of course," he said.

"Pshaw, Harry! Wherein are you any better fitted for the job than I am? If you are captured all you can do is to play the dummy. Very unsatisfactory."

"We will both go and leave Alice behind," said Harry, after a moment's reflection. "I guess it will be safe enough; but, suppose, as a matter of precaution, I go down into the yard first alone? If anybody should happen to be on the watch, you would attract a whole lot of attention."

This was agreed to.

Harry was gone only about five minutes, and then he came crawling back through the window.

"The coast seems to be clear," he remarked. "I could not see a soul."

"Did you see any way of opening that door in the fence?"

"No. But I did not particularly look. What I wanted most to see was if anybody was watching out of the windows."

"Come on. We'll try it for better or for worse."

They climbed down on the extension roof.

It was of no use to shut the window, for they had no means of fastening it on the outside.

Descending into the yard, Old King Brady examined the fence in front of the hidden hut.

There was nothing to indicate that there was any door here.

But the old detective is thorough in his methods, and he soon found a way of opening up the concealed door.

Putting his finger through a knot hole, he discovered a spring latch behind it.

Working this, he was able to pull forward three boards, which swung outward on hinges.

And this door opened directly into the hidden hut.

The Bradys stood motionless for several minutes, peering in.

They could not hear a sound.

At last Old King Brady suddenly sprang his flashlight.

It was the critical moment, but it worked all right, for the hidden hut was untenanted.

A few chairs stood around, and there were Chinese scrolls hanging on the walls.

In the middle of the floor they could see a trap door, with a big iron ring attached.

"Not much attempt at secrecy here," breathed Old King Brady.

"Not at all, apparently."

"I suppose we may as well bust ahead?"

"I am ready. Let me go first."

For once Old King Brady yielded.

It was better that it should be so, on account of Harry's Chinese dress.

The trap door was raised and the stairs revealed.

Old King Brady flashed his light down.

The stairs ended in a boarded-up passage."

"Go ahead, Harry!" whispered the old detective. "Slow and easy now!"

They descended into the passage and followed it to the end.

"We are now under some Mott street house sure," whispered Old King Brady. "But here we have three doors to tackle."

"Question is, ought we to attempt to go any further to-night?" breathed Harry. "We know how to get into the place now and we can pilot the police."

"Let us listen," was the reply.

Each took a door and for some minutes they stood with their ears pressed against the keyholes.

Harry could hear some one snoring. Old King Brady could not catch a sound.

He stepped to the other door and tried it then, Harry watching him.

"Well, how did you make it?" was asked, when he pulled away.

"I can hear nothing in the first room," breathed the old detective. "In this second room I get a moaning sound; seems to be a woman. Listen for yourself."

"It certainly is a woman," remarked Harry when he pulled away.

"Seems to be," said the old detective; "but it won't do for us to go butting in too heavy. What do you think?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Governor."

"Suppose you try your skeleton keys on the door I listened at first?"

"All right. I'm willing."

Harry got to work with all possible caution.

In a minute a faint click was heard and he very cautiously opened the door.

From time to time the Bradys had used their flashlights, but now they stood in the dark.

There was not a sound. A rush of damp, foul air assailed them.

This seemed to indicate that behind the door was a passage leading on still further.

Suddenly Old King Brady flashed his light.

It proved to be as he had suspected.

The passage continued, and right ahead took a turn.

"Come on, boy!" whispered the old detective. "We will see this thing through if it takes a leg."

They slipped in, closing the door behind them.

Both got busy with their flashlights now.

The passage went around on a sharp curve and then struck off on an angle in the direction of Chatham Square.

"Well, this is truly amazing!" breathed Old King Brady. "There seems to be no end to these secret passages."

"How in the world do they build them?" queried Harry.

"What they do with the earth is the point which puzzles me most," replied Old King Brady. "But let us continue our explorations while we've so good a chance."

The passage extended for a considerable distance, and here again were three doors.

All were locked and, listening, the detectives decided that behind two people were sleeping.

Behind the middle door there was no sound to be heard.

"Shall we tackle this door?" questioned Harry.

"Really, I don't know what to say," was the answer.

"This thing seems endless. I don't like the idea of leaving Alice so long. I think we ought to get back."

"And I agree with you. We can raid the place in the morning."

"It is what we will have to do. I don't see that we can do much without the police, for we are liable to stir up a wasps' nest at any moment. Come!"

They accordingly started on their return.

Getting back into the first passage, they now heard some one crying behind the door where they had heard the moans.

It was evidently a woman.

She appeared to be in the deepest distress.

The Bradys were puzzled.

What to do they did not know.

"If we butt in here it may mean all kinds of delay," breathed Old King Brady. "Just the same, I would like to do it."

"I am thinking of the danger of leaving Alice alone," replied Harry.

"Wait!" said the old detective. "I will sneak back into the room and see if Alice is all right. Meanwhile you listen here and see what turns up. I won't be gone long."

He started then and Harry continued to listen.

The old detective got out of the hidden hut and climbed the fire escape to the roof of the extension.

Suddenly a window was raised on the floor over the bank and a Chinaman peered out.

It was only for an instant, but in that instant he saw Old King Brady.

Then he drew back, closed the window and disappeared.

The old detective got no good view of his face.

It was impossible for him to determine whether he had ever seen him before or not.

"Botheration! I wish this hadn't happened," he said to himself. "It's a bad job."

He watched for a few minutes.

The room was dark, and he could not determine whether he was being watched or not.

There was no help for it, of course, so Old King Brady climbed up to his own window and crawled into the back room.

Nothing had been disturbed, apparently.

He listened at the door of the dark room adjoining, where he could hear Alice's regular breathing.

Opening the door then, he peered in.

Alice, in her disguise, lay on the bed, facing outward and sound asleep.

In some way the wig which she wore, with its braided-up pigtail, had become dislodged and had fallen on the floor, and Alice's own hair was thus revealed.

"I have seldom seen her sleep sounder," thought Old King Brady. "Well, she is safe, anyway. I'll hurry back to Harry and finish up there."

He climbed down upon the extension roof and soon gained the courtyard.

Here, for a moment, he stopped to look back; but nothing further was seen of the man.

Old King Brady now made a dive into the hidden hut and hurried down into the secret passage.

Here he found Harry standing where he had left him and laboring under considerable excitement.

"There is certainly a woman in terrible suffering inside there," he said. "Did you find Alice all right?"

"Right as the mail and sleeping as peacefully as a child," was the reply.

"Good! But I am almost sorry now we did not let her come, for her services may be needed here. Shall we butt in?"

"Yes, I think we will risk it. What do you say?"

"I say yes. I'll try my keys."

Harry then worked his skeletons, and soon had the door open.

A startling sight met the gaze of the Bradys.

It was the room with the hole in the wall they were looking into. Harry recognized it at once.

There, on the floor, lay the so-called Queen of Pell Street.

The woman had been terribly beaten and her face was covered with blood.

Over in one corner lay a Chinaman, face downward on the floor.

She partially turned over and looked up at the detectives, calling out in Chinese.

Old King Brady spoke to her in English, but of her answer he could make nothing.

Meanwhile Harry had been examining the man, whom he had turned over.

"Great Scott! Governor, this man is dead and cold!" he said. "He has been shot through the head!"

"Doesn't he look to you like Hing Wow, Harry?"

"He certainly does, but he is in Chinese dress. They all look so much alike that way that I can't be sure."

The Queen now groaned louder, and Harry turned to her.

He took her by the hand, intending to pull her up.

The result was a scream.

The woman's arm was broken.

As nearly as Harry could see, she had been seriously injured about the head.

He told Old King Brady about the arm.

"We can do little for her. The police must be called," said the old detective.

"And if that isn't Hing Wow I know nothing," he added.

"Let us pull out and hurry to the Elizabeth street station. Alice will be able to get some story out of her, I suppose, when we return with the police."

They hurried back to the hidden hut and, ascending to the window, climbed in.

"You arouse her, Harry," said the old detective.

Harry stepped down into the dark room.

Just then Old King Brady made the startling discovery that the door had been unlocked and unbolted.

"How is this?" he cried.

"How is this, indeed?" echoed Harry, coming out of the dark room in a state of great excitement. "Alice has disappeared!"

CHAPTER IX.

HOT ON ALICE'S TRAIL.

The Bradys now found themselves with their hands full.

In the dark room there was no sign of a struggle.

Alice was gone, and the wig which Old King Brady had seen lying on the floor had likewise vanished.

That Alice had departed by the door was evident enough.

It almost looked as if she had gone off of her own accord.

But this, of course, was not to be imagined.

Old King Brady instantly made a discovery which seemed to throw some little light on the mystery.

Meanwhile Harry was talking excitedly, blaming himself for having left Alice alone.

"Calm yourself, boy! Take it easy!" ordered the old detective, sternly. "This sort of thing has happened before and has come out all right. It will work out the same way this time, I daresay. Now, look here! Do you observe the peculiar odor there is in this room?"

"Yes, now that you call my attention to it, I do."

"Some Chinese drug has been used here. I think I can account for it all. It is, unfortunately, up to me."

Old King Brady hurriedly told about the man who had looked out of the window.

"We must go for the floor above the bank," he said, hurriedly. "I daresay she has been taken there."

They ran downstairs.

Reaching the second floor, Old King Brady tried the door of the back room.

It yielded to his touch, and he entered a room well furnished in Chinese style.

There was no one in the room, nor in the dark room beyond.

Entrance to the front room was cut off by a locked door.

The door in the hall communicating with that room was also locked.

Old King Brady thundered on it, and after a few moments it was opened by a sleepy-looking Chink in his under clothes only.

Flashing their lights and displaying their shields, the Bradys forced an entrance.

Once they were in the man ceased to protest.

There were two other men in bed here.

They sat up and looked frightened.

Harry pushed on into the hall bedroom, where a woman was sleeping.

But the woman was not Alice.

Seeing that there was nothing doing, the Bradys beat a hasty retreat.

"It is up to the man I saw looking out of the back window," said the old detective. "Let us get to Elizabeth street without an instant's delay."

But they halted on the way, for at the door they met the policeman on the beat—a man whom they both knew.

Old King Brady, without stopping to explain who Harry was, instantly tackled him.

The officer's statement only added to the mystery.

He had seen two Chinamen leave the house but a short time before.

Old King Brady pressed him for a description of the pair.

And he got it with such accuracy as to leave no doubt in his mind that one of them was Alice in her disguise.

"Watch that door. Let no one leave. There has been a Chinaman murdered in one of the underground dens behind this house." And he and Harry started for Elizabeth street.

"Apparently Alice went away with the man of her own accord," said Old King Brady. "That spells but one thing—she has been drugged!"

At Elizabeth street three officers were secured.

The Bradys said nothing about Alice.

They went directly to the hidden hut and on to the room where they had left the Queen of Pell Street, stopping only to ring for an ambulance on the way.

While waiting for the coming of the ambulance Old King Brady and Harry opened the other door with their skeleton keys.

Here they found Wing Chow asleep in bed. The fellow had been drugged.

Passing back into the other room, they examined the partition in which the hole was.

This opened as a door.

Behind was a room comfortably fitted up in Chinese style.

It was evidently the Queen's private chamber. But the whole place was in fearful disorder.

In one corner the floor had been pulled up.

Near this lay a rusty, japanned cashbox, quite empty.

"Looks as if some one had been searching for Long Dong's hidden treasure, and had found it," remarked Harry, after the detectives had remained for a few minutes in silence contemplating the scene.

"Indeed, yes," replied Old King Brady.

And then in a minute he added:

"There is no denying, Harry, that we have made a bad botch of this case."

"We certainly have. How do you figure this thing out?"

"Well, there are several ways of looking at it. To me the most likely one seems to be that Hing Wow remembered the characters on that paper we found inside the jade seal and was either forced to reveal them to the people who have assaulted this woman or did so of his own accord. Perhaps he and the Queen of Pell Street unearthed the treasure and were then attacked. Perhaps Hing Wow undertook to betray us. It is impossible to say; but, whichever way it happened, it has spelled death for him."

And these theories were borne out by a discovery Harry made a few minutes later.

This was a piece of red paper exactly like the one found in the jade seal, except that, while that was the left-hand piece this was the right-hand piece.

With it on the floor lay a piece of white paper, similarly torn.

It bore Chinese characters which exactly corresponded with those on Old King Brady's red slip.

The ambulance doctor now came in, piloted by one of the officers, who had gone back on Pell street for that purpose.

The young man seemed to know his business.

He declared that the woman's skull was fractured and her left arm broken.

Examining Hing Wow, he said that death must have been instantaneous.

In Wing Chow's case he was doubtful.

He was not able to arouse the Chinaman, and he gave it as his opinion that the man was suffering from an overdose of opium, internally administered.

The Bradys now pulled out and left matters in the hands of the police.

Now, the nighthawk cabbies who stand on Chatham Square are nearly all personally known to the Bradys.

One in particular, a man named Kelly, has done much work for them.

As it happened, Kelly was then on the stand, and to him the Bradys went.

"Yes, Mr. Brady, I seen dem two Chinks," asserted Kelly. "Dey hired Moloney's cab. From your description I am sure dey was de same ones."

This seemed to be a point gained.

But the Bradys were destined to learn in a very few minutes how little it amounted to, for while they were still talking to Kelly the man Moloney drove up.

"What did youse do wit dem two Chinks?" called Kelly before the driver could get down off the box. "Sure here is Old King Brady wanting to know."

"I left dem at de Brooklyn Bridge. I s'pose," replied Moloney, jumping down. "Sure it was a great bilk. Lucky dat dey paid in advance."

"What do you mean? Explain yourself," demanded Old King Brady.

"Well, dey come to me, and one says, 'What will you charge to drive us to de Borough Hall over in Brooklyn?' jest like dat. I told him and he coughed right up. Den

dey got in, and when I got to de Bridge I seen one of me doors was swinging open. I suspicioned dat something might be wrong, so I stops and gets down. Sure enough, dere was no wan in de cab."

"The old game to destroy the trail," muttered the old detective. "You have no idea when they got out?"

"No more dan you have, boss."

"Were you driving fast?"

"No; de big Chink, he told me de other one was kinder sick and dat I wanted to drive slow on dat account."

"So? Then it was easy for them to get out?"

"Yes; any one who was at all spry might easy have got out de way I druv."

"Did the man look particularly sick?"

"He looked like he had been drinking or hitting de pipe extra hard. He held h's eyes half shut and his face was pretty white."

"Drugged, beyond all doubt!" groaned Harry. "What shall we ever do now?"

"Keep cool!" said the old detective. "We will get down to the Bridge."

He took Harry's arm, and as they walked on said:

"Now, Harry, you must brace up and take this misfortune coolly. You really must. It is one of those things which comes to us at times. I don't by any means despair of being able to trace them up. Even at this early hour there are always people about the Bridge and somebody must have seen them leaving the cab."

They hurried on to the Bridge and renewed their inquiries there.

They did not succeed in finding any one who had seen the two Chinamen climbing out of a moving cab.

But a policeman stationed at the Bridge entrance had seen two Chinamen go up the stairs to the elevated railroad at about the time Moloney missed his fare.

Old King Brady then described Alice's disguise with his accustomed accuracy.

The policeman was pretty certain that he had described one of the pair he had seen.

But this scarcely mended matters.

The elevated trains starting from the Brooklyn Bridge branch off in many directions once they get into Brooklyn.

The next step was to ascertain the particular train the pair had taken.

So the Bradys tried the different ticket offices.

They soon located their quarry.

The "two Chinamen," it appeared, had taken a "City Line" train.

This, of course, was as far as the detectives could go until they had seen the trainhands, which would be impossible for an hour or more.

"Harry," said Old King Brady, "I believe the best thing we can do is to go on to Borough Hall. Slick as this Chink appears to have been, your average Chinaman is a person of one idea, so to speak. He probably had Borough Hall in his mind, and that is why he told Moloney he wanted to go there. He may even have taken another cab there."

"Yes; but, Governor, Chinks don't as a rule go in for cabs."

"Well, welly, dey do stop and think. This man had

Alice on his hands, if our suspicions are correct. Moreover, the chances are that he killed Hing Wow, so he had his own escape to make. Then, again, what if he had Long Dong's treasure about him? Would not that be excuse enough for him to be willing to blow in his money on cabs?"

"I yield to the force of your argument," said Harry.

And the Bradys, boarding the first train, started for Borough Hall.

CHAPTER X.

THE CHINAMAN PROPOSES TO ALICE.

Alice had fallen into bad hands.

The worst of it was the poor girl did not know it.

She knew nothing of all that had happened, or was happening, to her at the time the Bradys were working on the trail, as just described.

Alice never knew a thing from the time she dropped off asleep in the house in Pell street until she suddenly awoke to find herself lying in a narrow bunk in what appeared to be a stateroom of some steamer.

The sensation was most singular.

But, then, poor Alice only half realized what had happened to her.

She was still suffering from the effects of the drug.

She still wore her Chinese disguise, and as she crawled out of the berth, intending to try and get out of the room, a terrible dizziness came over her.

She felt that she must have fallen to the floor if she had persisted.

She was glad enough to drop back on her pillow.

In an instant she was sound asleep.

It seemed to Alice when she awoke again that a long time must have elapsed.

It was daylight, and she was still in the same little room.

But now her head was clear and she remembered her former effort to rise, but nothing else of all that had occurred to her.

"What can it mean?" she asked herself. "Where am I, anyhow?"

Well might she ask, seeing that she had gone to sleep in Chinatown!

She got up now and peered out of the little window.

The steamer lay motionless.

Alice gazed about and presently recognized her surroundings.

"Why, this is the Erie Basin!" she murmured. "How in the world did I ever come here?"

Now, the Erie Basin has nothing whatever to do with the Erie Railroad, as some may imagine.

It is a large, enclosed basin on Gowanus Bay, lying between Red Hook Point and the Gowanus section of Brooklyn.

Here, alongside of long rows of great storage warehouses, lie the steamers and ships out of commission and such as are waiting to go on the drydock or to be sold.

Alice saw masts and funnels everywhere, while the steeples of Gowanus and South Brooklyn rose beyond.

Here was indeed a mystery.

Adjusting her Chinese dress, Alice tried the door.

It yielded to her touch, and she stepped out into a small cabin, which had been practically dismantled.

It was rather dark and decidedly stuffy.

Alice looked about in a bewildered way, when suddenly a Chinaman rose up out of a chair and came forward.

He was well dressed in the American style, and as he drew near Alice perceived that she had to deal with the hogus Hing Wow.

"Good morning, Miss Montgomery!" he said, removing his hat. "I hope I see you well?"

And this was the man who could speak no English!

Alice shuddered.

She realized now that she had fallen into bad hands.

"Well, sir!" she retorted. "And what does this mean?"

"Would you mind talking in Chinese?" said the fellow, blandly, in that language. "No one on board this steamer knows that you are a woman or that you can speak English, and I had just as soon they would not know it. Sit down, please, and we will talk matters over. Believe me, if you will only listen to what I have to say you will thank me for having brought you here."

Alice dropped into a chair.

"Say what you have to say, and be quick about it," she replied, in Chinese.

She was thinking fast.

"If I am alone on this steamer with this fellow my only safety is to jolly him along," she reasoned. "He might easily murder me out here on the Erie Basin and no one ever be the wiser."

The Chinaman began his talk while she was thinking thus.

"You recognize me?" he asked.

"Oh, yes."

"Well, then, who am I?"

"How should I know who you are? You called at our office, pretending to be Hing Wow, but as I happen to know that your claim was false I am all at sea about the rest of it."

"You speak truly. I am not Hing Wow. I am quite a different person, but no matter about my name just yet. You were hoping to recover Long Dong's hidden treasure when you went to that house on Pell street with the Bradys, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Then let me tell you that neither you nor they will ever do it. I have already recovered it. The treasure is now mine!"

"So you say."

"I can prove it."

"Very likely. I know nothing about your affairs, but if you have the money——"

"And Long Dong's diamonds; they are worth the most!"

"So? Well, then, as I was about to add, you are a lucky man."

"The luckiest man ever, Miss Montgomery! But I see you don't really know me, and it is no wonder. I saw you only once, in San Francisco, a year ago. You were working on a case there with the Bradys."

"What case?"

"An opium-smuggling case. You arrested one Hong Gee."

"Ah! I remember you now. You were one of the witnesses against that man. You are Ling Ti!"

"That's right. I thought I could make you know me."

"You pretended then not to be able to speak English and I acted as interpreter between you and the Secret Service people."

"That's right. Did you know that I fell desperately in love with you then?"

Alice was expecting something of this sort from the way the man had kept eying her. It came as no shock.

"Indeed, I was not aware of that interesting fact," she said, with a laugh. "But why not? You are not a bad-looking fellow, even if you are a Chink. As for me, I think I would pass in a crowd."

"If I was to tell you what I thought of your looks it would make you blush," cried Ling Ti, evidently greatly pleased.

"Tell it some other time," retorted Alice. "Tell me what you are driving at before you start in to pay compliments. But, first, let me tell you something, my friend. I am all business; money talks with me every time."

"Good! That's my kind, too!" cried Ling Ti. "I was sure I had sized you up right. Listen to me, Miss Alice. There certainly is no other woman in the United States who can speak the Chinese language the way you can. We would make a great team. I was worth over \$50,000 before I got hold of Long Dong's treasure. If you would consent to marry me and go down to Rio Janeiro or Buenos Ayres, where we could start a big gambling house and bleed Chinks and whites alike, we would soon make a fortune. Now I have exposed my hand. That is the reason I brought you here."

Alice took it very coolly, as was the only wise way.

"I don't know but what that would be a good scheme," she said. "Can you speak Spanish and Portuguese?"

"Sure. I have lived all over South America. How about yourself?"

"Oh, I can speak both languages."

"You're a wonderful woman. It is a shame for you to waste your time in the detective business. Is it a go?"

"Hold up! Don't be in such a hurry. I shouldn't mind. I'm about tired of the Bradys, anyhow. Old King Brady is the meanest man who ever came down the pike. Very likely I may consent; but before I do say yes I want you to show your confidence in me by telling me straight how I came to be here, for I don't understand the situation at all. Besides, I want to see Long Dong's money and those wonderful diamonds. Are those some of them which you have on now?"

Ling Ti laughed.

"No, indeed," he replied. "Those belong to me. I'm willing; but, first, let us have breakfast, if you don't mind eating with a despised Chink."

"I have eaten with many of them," answered Alice. "While I don't take stock in all of them, I am very far from despising a bright fellow like you. Bring on your breakfast. I'm as hungry as a wolf."

Ling Ti jumped up, full of animation.

"We are going to make a great team," he repeated.

I wouldn't have missed this chance for all the money I'm worth."

He hurried out of the cabin, passing through a door at the further end.

Soon he returned, accompanied by another Chinaman, who wore a white suit.

This man carried a table cloth and napkins.

Ling Ti called him Fong, and introduced him to Alice as Fong Wing.

Alice exchanged a few words with the man, who did not appear to be particularly interested in her.

He and Ling Ti then set the table and a substantial breakfast was brought in, all cooked in the Chinese style.

Alice was also provided with chopsticks, in the use of which she is an expert.

After everything was placed Ling Ti told the other Chink that he would no longer be needed and the man took himself off.

They sat down at the table and began to eat, Ling Ti at once beginning his story.

"I am not going to tell you how I finally captured Long Dong's treasure," he said, warily. "That's my private business; but I will tell you all the rest."

"I knew Long Dong very well. I also knew that he must have left money behind him when he fled to China, so when I saw that advertisement on the Chinese bulletin I suspected what was in the wind and went to your office, with the result you know."

"When I left there I went directly to the Queen of Pell Street, so-called; and right here I must go back in my story to explain about this woman. She is not the real Queen of Pell Street, who was a small-footed woman and was Long Dong's sister and the wife of Quing Quong, the banker, who died before Long Dong ran away."

"This woman—I don't know her real name—was a servant who worked for Mrs. Quing Quong. Shortly after Long Dong left New York Mrs. Quing Quong died. Some say she was poisoned by this woman and Wing Chow, who ran the bank and who married the woman. Anyway, Mrs. Chow, as we will call her, took up Mrs. Quing Quong's business of giving out tips on the races through that hole in the wall. Between them they did a fine business. So stood matters when I butted in. I saw the Queen and told her all about you and what the Bradys were trying to do. I told her that I thought we could capture you all and make you give up the jade seal. Then she sprung a surprise on me by telling me that she was tired of her husband and had him drugged in a secret room. It seems that she had become acquainted with one Willie Wee Wah, who was steward on that steamer. He had told her all about Long Dong, the hidden treasure and the jade seal, in which was the half of a paper, which told where the treasure was hidden. The Queen had the other half, which she had found among the effects of the real Mrs. Quing Quong."

"She then informed me that she proposed to put Wing Chow out of the way and marry this steward; that he had tried to steal the jade seal from the Bradys, but failed. She agreed to take me into the deal, and I was to entice you three to Pell street. We tried it on. It failed, as you know."

"Yes," laughed Alice; "failed miserably. You have to

get up early in the morning to get the best of Old King Brady. Let me tell you that."

"Oh, I know," was the reply; "but I did it, just the same, when I got you. But let me finish my long story, Alice. What happened next was the coming to the bank of the real Hing Wow. He had fared better than I, for he had seen the jade seal and made a copy of the paper from memory. He was prepared to sell you all out, and after a lot of talk we took him into partnership, too—as he believed. Well, we got the treasure. It was hidden under the floor in Mrs. Quing Quong's room. What came next I propose to cut out. Enough to say that I now have the whole business. No dividing!

"After it was all over I was in my room over the bank alone. I happened to look out the window—it was early this morning—and saw Old King Brady on the roof of the extension. As I was just getting ready to light out, I was naturally scared. I waited and watched. I saw him climb the fire escape. Then it dawned on me that the tenants I had put in those top floor rooms were none other than you and Young King Brady in your Chinese disguises.

"Still watching, I saw Old King Brady come down again and go into the hidden hut. I knew then that it was time for me to get a move on; but I was determined to know the truth before I started on my travels, so I climbed up the fire escape and had a look into those rooms."

"And there you found me asleep," said Alice, who naturally was feeling the deepest interest in all this.

"And there I found you asleep," continued the Chinaman. "What happened after that is my secret. I know things about Chinese drugs which I reveal to no one. Enough to tell you, Alice Montgomery, that I gave you a dose which put you completely in my power. While unconscious you arose and followed me to this steamer, simply because I told you to do so. And now you are here. Such is my power. If you marry me we can use these secrets to the greatest advantage. That is the end of my long story. Now what do you say?"

"That you must prove to me that you actually secured Long Dong's treasure before I say a word."

"Well, that can easily be done," replied Ling Ti. "That comes next."

CHAPTER XI.

THE BRADYS GET THE HIDDEN TREASURE.

The Bradys turned up at Borough Hall, Brooklyn, at about three o'clock in the morning.

Here there is also a cab stand, and here also the Bradys know some of the drivers of these nighthawk vehicles, as is natural in their business.

There was one old fellow on the stand, a man named Dolan, who has driven a night cab in Brooklyn for many years, and to him Old King Brady applied.

"Yes; there was two Chinks here only a little while ago, and they hired Johnny Casey's cab," said Dolan; "but where they went I dunno, Mr. Brady. All I can tell you is that they were here."

It seemed trying enough to have to wait for the return of the cab, but the Bradys did it, and about four o'clock Johnny Casey came back on the stand.

His story only added to the mystery, like everything else which came to light in this singular case.

"Sure I tuk them two Chinks down to de fut of Van Brunt street and left them there," said Casey. "Wan of them was half doped to death. The other give me an extra dollar and told me that they were going to wait for a boat to take them off to some steamer. He said he was de steward an' de other feller was cook. I warned dem to look out for demselves, for de neighborhood is a tough wan. I'll not deceive you, Mr. Brady; dat's all I know."

The Bradys turned away, puzzled.

"Can we have been following the wrong man?" queried Harry, as they walked through the little square.

"I am very much afraid so," replied Old King Brady, gravely. "We can go to the foot of Van Brunt street, but I doubt if anything comes of it. This looks like a case of some Chinese steward taking an opium-doped friend aboard ship."

"But the description we got fits Alice so perfectly."

"Remember Alice was made up to look like a Chinaman. But let us decide. Shall we go?"

"Yes. It seems to be all we can do."

They went in Dolan's cab.

But it was as Old King Brady had feared.

Van Brunt street ends abruptly at a stringpiece, beyond which is Gowanus Bay.

On the right as the Bradys stood at the stringpiece were the storehouses of the New York Warehousing Company; on the left the long line of the Beard Stores.

The street was like a deserted canyon.

Not a soul was to be seen.

"It is hopeless," said Old King Brady. "There is no one to inquire of; there is nothing to be done."

Little did he imagine that at this very moment Alice was sleeping off the effects of the drug in the stateroom on board a steamer which lay in the Erie Basin, on the other side of the Beard Stores, or within a hundred yards of where they stood.

But this was one of the things they could not know.

The Bradys now began to consult together.

The idea of both was that the Chinaman with Alice, if their original supposition was correct, must be the steward of the Woolwich Castle, Willie Wee Wah.

Of course, the possibility of his being the bogus Hing Wow suggested itself, but this was rejected in favor of the other theory.

"Suppose we run down to the Woolwich Castle and have a talk with Captain Schackleton?" suggested Old King Brady.

Harry yielded.

His despair and concern for Alice were too great to permit him to think clearly.

He preferred to be guided by his chief.

So they got back into the cab and were driven to the Liberty Stores on Furman street, which they reached about half-past five.

After much difficulty they got at the surly watchman.

It cost them a five-dollar note to get through the gate to the steamer.

Captain Schackleton was not up, but the sailor who received them informed Old King Brady that the captain was an early riser and might be expected to come out of his stateroom at any time.

Ten minutes later he appeared and, having recovered from his surprise at seeing the detectives at such an early hour, he took them down into the cabin, where he listened to Old King Brady's story.

The old detective told him the whole case.

"I have no doubt that the fellow was Willie Wee Wah," said Captain Schackleton. "And now let me make a slight addition to your stock of information, Mr. Brady. That Willie Wee Wah escaped alive that night I happen to know, for I met him on South street yesterday afternoon in company with my mate, Mr. Rown."

"Ha!" said Old King Brady. "And were you talking with him?"

"Why, yes, we had a few words. I tried to find out where he was stopping, but he wouldn't tell me. Of course, I could have had him arrested and sent back here; but I didn't want the bother."

"Did the mate have anything to say about him?" inquired Old King Brady.

"I am coming to that," continued the captain. "After the steward left I asked Rown how he came to be with him, and he claimed that they had accidentally met. Just the same I didn't believe it. There was something peculiar about the mate's manner, and I wondered if he was figuring to desert me."

"So? And what did you do?"

"Nothing. If a man or an officer wants to quit me, I say let 'em go, for I want no unwilling man with me. So I just asked Rown when he was going aboard, and he said in time for supper, and then off I walked."

"And did he come?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Yes," was the reply. "He came. I didn't get back till eleven o'clock, and when I got here I got a yarn from the second mate, which didn't surprise me much, and is what I am driving at now. It seems that Rown came aboard at six. At something after ten Willie Wee Wah suddenly turned up. He and Rown had a long talk together, and then, without saying a word to any one, they simply walked off and haven't been seen since. So, there you are, Mr. Brady! I am no detective. There's your clew; make the most of it."

"It is certainly of the highest importance to us," said Old King Brady.

"I should say so!" cried the captain.

"Looks as though these two had shipped together."

"I haven't a doubt of it."

"And you think that Miss Montgomery has been taken to this ship, whatever it may be."

"I do."

"So much for my detective reasoning; you can help us, Captain. What do you advise?"

"To let me go the round of the shipping offices for you at the earliest possible moment. I have no doubt that I can locate them."

"Must we wait for that?" cried Harry. "In the mean-

while the ship or steamer may sail. Think of Alice's situation if carried off to sea in her Chinese disguise!"

"Excuse me, but we won't think of it!" said Old King Brady. "Captain, we will go now. We shall await your telephone."

And Old King Brady got Harry ashore.

"We must be patient," he said. "The captain can do nothing before nine o'clock. Meanwhile we have several hours to work in."

Now, what the Bradys did in those hours is not material, since it amounted to nothing.

At ten they turned up at their office, and at eleven-fifteen came the captain's telephone.

"It is as I thought, Mr. Brady," he called. "Rown and a Chinaman, who gave the name of Jim Charles, shipped yesterday afternoon on the tank steamer Golden Fleece, which is now loading oil at the Standard Oil Works, Bayonne, for Shanghai."

"Good!" called Old King Brady. "Captain, you're a jewel! You can arrest this Chinaman for desertion, I suppose?"

"Certainly, but not Rown."

"Will you go to Bayonne with us?"

"If you wish."

"Where are you?"

"Astor House."

"Stay there. We will come right downtown in the subway. What's that? You need a warrant? Get it; but if you fail it is no matter. I'll guarantee to do the arresting all right."

Half an hour later the Bradys and Captain Schackleton were on their way to Bayonne.

Here the Standard Oil Company conducts extensive works on the westerly side of the Kill-von-Kull, or the "Kills," as this broad waterway is popularly known.

The Bradys and their companion got down to the shore after a long walk from the railroad station, but only to find themselves held up by a watchman at a gate.

The old detective's Secret Service shield carried him through, however, and after some parley they were allowed to go aboard the Golden Fleece, which was then getting ready to sail.

The first person they saw was Rown, who was acting as mate.

The man was evidently much startled.

Captain Schackleton walked directly up to him and said:

"Well, Rown, so this is the way you give me the go-by, is it? Where's Willie Wee Wah?"

"I know nothing about the blame Chink!" stammered the mate. "Why do you ask me that?"

"Perhaps you don't remember these gentlemen, either, Rown?"

"Well, I do."

"Enough said," put in Old King Brady. "Mr. Rown, all is known. Come, out with the truth. Where is this Chinaman?"

Still Rown protested.

The captain was not aboard, and Old King Brady at once produced a pair of handcuffs.

"These for yours, my friend, unless you at once produce that Chink and tell the truth," he said. "Did two China-

men come aboard here early this morning—Willie Wee Wah and another, badly doped?"

"Sure not!" cried Rown. "There is a Chinese steward here, but I haven't seen him. I don't know who he is."

"Liar!" cried Captain Schackleton. "There's Willie Wee Wah now!"

Little dreaming what he was up against, the steward had just appeared on deck.

Old King Brady promptly pounced upon him and, while Harry held him covered with a revolver, the handcuffs were snapped upon his wrists.

The man was white with fear.

As for Rown he observed a sullen silence.

The steward, who spoke perfect English of the sailors' sort, now recovering himself, demanded why he was arrested.

"You are wanted by Captain Schackleton as a deserter," said Old King Brady, grimly. "Perhaps there are a few little matters to be settled up on Pell street, too—a murder, an assault on a woman known as the Queen, a little matter of stolen money, and——"

Then suddenly he thundered:

"Where is the Chinaman you smuggled aboard here early this morning?"

This time the old detective felt that they were barking up the wrong tree.

The man's face showed evident surprise.

"I came here alone, with Mr. Rown," he said. "I brought no Chinaman here. We came aboard about nine o'clock this morning."

Of course, all this caused some commotion on the steamer but, recognizing the Bradys as Secret Service detectives, none of the sailors made any attempt to interfere.

Old King Brady called the second mate, an intelligent Scotchman.

"This man is telling the truth," he said. "He came aboard with our new mate at nine o'clock. I saw them when they came and there was no one else with them."

"Mr. Rown, you are under arrest," said Old King Brady. "This Chinese pal of yours is mixed up in a robbery and in a murder case."

"These men must be searched," he added. "Can we use the cabin, mate?"

"It's nothing to me," said the second mate. "As long as you don't arrest me, I don't care what you do."

Then Rown and Willie Wee Wah were taken to the cabin and the search began.

Rown protested violently, but it was no use.

The result of the search was startling.

Rolls of bills, many twenty-dollar gold pieces and two papers containing small diamonds came to light.

Mate Rown had as much upon him as the steward. It looked like an even divide.

When Harry counted up the cash he found that it amounted to a little short of \$20,000, all told.

The diamonds were all small, low-grade stones.

Five thousand dollars would have been a high price for the outfit.

It looked like Long Dong's hidden treasure.

But not a word of satisfaction as to where or how it had been obtained could he get out of either man.

What had become of Alice was a mystery yet to be solved.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Ling Ti, in response to Alice's request, now produced great rolls of bills from various pockets beneath his blouse.

Next it was a bunch of \$20 gold pieces.

Then two blue papers, containing diamonds, were produced.

All this was spread out before Alice.

"That's what Long Dong left behind him!" cried Ling Ti. "Now, look here, Alice! Half is yours to do what you like with as soon as you become my wife, and I will marry you any way and at any time you say."

"Sounds well," replied Alice. "I don't object. But how are we to get out of New York? Of course, the Bradys are on your trail, and on mine, too, for that matter. Give me some idea of your plans. And, by the way, there was a fellow named Willie Wee Wah mixed up in this business. Where does he come in?"

Ling Ti's face clouded.

"The steward!" he cried. "That's my weak point. I was fool enough to tell him that my brother was acting as cook on this steamer. I gave him the slip, and the one thing I am afraid of is that he may track me here."

"Then you don't propose to stay here any length of time?"

"No; I want to go right away now. I know a place where we can hide, over in the new Chinese colony in Williamsburg, and there I shall have to take you. It is not a nice place to take a white woman, but it is the best I can do until I can get you out of New York. Day after to-morrow the Red D steamer sails, and I will secure first cabin accommodations for us both. We will run down to Venezuela, where I have business, and from there we will go to Rio. How does that suit you?"

"It suits me all right," replied Alice; "but if we are through breakfast, is there any reason why we should not go on deck? This place is terribly stuffy. I am simply dying for a breath of fresh air."

"I would sooner we didn't go on deck until we are ready to leave the steamer," was the reply. "The watchman has been off on a drunk for the last three days, and, to tell the truth, we are alone here, except for my brother. As soon as I have a chance to talk to him I will get you ashore and we will strike for Williamsburg. But now let me salute my future bride."

As he said this Ling Ti sprang up and was about to throw his arms around Alice, when, all at once, a loud cry rang out.

Instantly followed a shot and the sound of a fall.

The sound seemed to come from the direction of the cook's quarters.

"What does that mean?" cried Ling Ti, and he made a rush through the little door.

Alice was thoroughly frightened, for other shots followed, and she took refuge in the stateroom.

A few moments later two men burst into the cabin in full pursuit of Ling Ti.

Alice, peering through the crack of the stateroom door, saw that one of them was Willie Wee Wah, the spy, while the other was a white man, whom she could not remember ever having seen before.

They were chasing Ling Ti, and the Chinaman carried a revolver.

Ling Ti's right arm hung limp.

Alice now understood the meaning of the shots she had heard.

She thought that Rown, the mate—for he, was the white man—caught sight of her before she had time to close the door, which she did as quickly as she could.

Another shot was fired, and she heard Ling Ti fall.

Caught in a trap, Alice could only listen, hoping and praying that these two wretches might not come her way.

She heard their talk when they searched Ling Ti and when they got the money and when they divided it.

Then at length the mate said, in English:

"Say, Willie, I thought I seen that there stateroom door open and shut. I've been a-watching it. There hain't nobody looked out, but we better make sure there hain't no one else here."

"There is nobody here but me!" Ling Ti called out.

Then he began swearing in Chinese at Willie Wee Wah. The language was dreadful for Alice to hear.

But, in spite of this effort to save her and secure help for himself on the part of Ling Ti, Willie Wee Wah and the mate broke into the stateroom.

Alice had her revolver and might have defended herself, but she preferred to wait for some more-dire emergency, if it was to come.

"Another Chink!" cried Rown.

"Tie him up!" added the steward. "I won't shoot any more!"

He had his way.

Alice was bound hand and foot and thrown in the bunk.

The pair departed and the door was closed.

But, after all, it was a relief, for Alice had come to fear Ling Ti.

Whether the Chinaman had been seriously injured or not, she could not tell.

But certain it was that he could not get to her.

Again and again he called, but Alice could not understand what he said through the closed door, nor is it probable that the wounded man heard her replies.

And in this uncomfortable situation hours passed, but still no relief came.

* * * * *

The Bradys had made an important capture, but their extreme anxiety for Alice prevented them from taking much satisfaction out of it.

On the way back to New York, whither the Bradys took their prisoners without bothering themselves over the violation of the law in removing them from the State of New Jersey, the old detective used every effort to draw something from them which would solve the mystery, but in vain.

Rown told Captain Schackleton that it was all non-

sense about the "other Chink," as he put it. He assured him that there was no such person mixed up in their doings of the night before, and Willie Wee Wah said the same.

Then the Bradys were reluctantly led to believe that the disappearance of Alice could not have been engineered by either of these men.

He also tried to draw from the prisoners some admission as to where they had obtained the money and diamonds.

But it was all in vain.

Neither one would admit anything.

All the Bradys could do was to lodge a complaint against the prisoners and see them locked up.

"And now what are we to do?" demanded Harry. "This is a bitter disappointment to me."

"Equally so to me, I want you to understand," said Old King Brady. "I am sure I don't know what we can do, and, that being the case, let us get up to Bellevue and interview the Queen of Pell Street, if she is in condition to be interviewed. I judge that she is the only person likely to help us out."

Arrived at Bellevue, disappointment again met them.

"Why, that Chinawoman is dead, Mr. Brady!" the clerk in the office announced. "She died at ten o'clock this morning."

"Did she recover consciousness?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Yes, and made her ante-mortem statement. She declares in it that she was struck down by one Ling Ti. The police are now searching for the man. He shot the dead Chink found in that secret den by you, so the statement reads; but I am afraid they will have a job in finding out the murderer."

"Yes; it is a hard thing to find a Chinaman if he wants to keep out of the way. But how about the drugged man?"

"Oh, he is her husband. He was still too dopey to talk last accounts, but the doctors expect to bring him around all right."

"Can we see him?"

"Certainly, Mr. Brady. Bellevue is always open to you."

So the Bradys were conducted to the ward where the Chinaman lay.

A doctor stood beside his cot.

"You have come just in good time, Mr. Brady," said the doctor. "The man has just recovered consciousness. We have not told him of his wife's death, yet."

Old King Brady looked down on the Chinaman, who seemed very weak and dazed.

"You know me, Wing Chow?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Who am I?"

"Old King Brady."

"Right. You have been very near death."

"Yair. I know."

"Do you know who is responsible for it?"

The Chinaman did not seem to understand the question, and Old King Brady had to put it in simpler language.

At last he got the name Ling Ti.

But Wing Chow professed to know nothing about Ling Ti.

It is the hardest thing imaginable to get one Chinaman to betray another.

Wing Chow, however, changed his mind when the doctor informed him of his wife's death.

He then grew terribly excited, and Old King Brady was able to draw one point from him.

He assured the old detective that he did not know where Ling Ti lived, but that he did know that he had a brother, who was acting as cook for several watchmen who looked after some of the ships and steamers which were tied up in the Erie Basin.

Of course, this made the Bradys sit up and pay attention at once.

"We were right!" cried Harry. "Oh, if we had only known!"

But they knew now, and be very sure no time was lost in getting over to Brooklyn again.

The Bradys ran down to the Battery on the elevated.

They crossed the river on the Hamilton Ferry and took a Van Brunt street car for Red Hook Point.

Arrived at the Beard Stores, they were in the act of engaging a boatman to take them around into the Basin when two boats came into the slip.

In each was a policeman and in one sat an ambulance surgeon.

The Bradys had noticed the ambulance standing near the New York Warehousing Company's stores, but had supposed that it only meant that some accident had occurred on the wharves.

"What is all this?" Old King Brady asked the boatman.

"There has been a couple of Chinamen murdered on the Seminole, a steamer lying around in the Erie Basin," replied the man.

Poor Harry almost collapsed.

"Brace up!" breathed Old King Brady. "Hope for the best, my boy!"

The boats came to the landing.

In each lay a Chinaman.

As they drew near the Bradys got their look.

The first man they did not know.

He was evidently dead.

The second man, who was alive, they instantly recognized as the bogus Hing Wow.

The corpse was brought up first, and Old King Brady tackled the policeman.

"I don't know nothing about it," he said. "All I can tell you is that the watchman on the steamer found this man, who is a Chinese cook for several watchmen, dead.

The other fellow has a couple of shots in him, but they

don't know him. He's raving mad. They found him tied up in the cabin."

It was Ling Ti, of course, and he was a very badly used up Chink.

When they brought him ashore he was muttering and laughing in a silly way.

Old King Brady tackled him, but could get nothing out of him.

"We know something about this business, officer," the old detective said. "There should be a third Chinaman on that steamer. Was there a thorough search made?"

The officer admitted that no particular search had been made.

This, of course, sent the Bradys flying.

As fast as the boatman could get them around to the Seminole they went.

The watchman, looking very much the worse for a prolonged spree, was on hand to receive them.

"If there is anybody else on board this steamer but me I don't know it," he growled.

Which showed how much he knew about the business he was supposed to attend to, for in the stateroom the Bradys found Alice, sound asleep.

She was still a prisoner, bound hand and foot.

Probably it was the after-effects of the drug which made her sleep through the visit of the ambulance surgeon, the watchman and the police; but she awoke when Harry pronounced her name.

Of course, the Bradys made short work of getting her home, and this ended the case.

Ling Ti died in the hospital of his wounds.

Alice's explanation made everything clear, and Willie Wee Wah, convicted of shooting the two Tis, went to the electric chair. Wing Chow recovered and went free.

Mate Rown got five years for his part in the business.

It was a general wiping out of all concerned.

Old King Brady sent Long Dong's money and diamonds to his widow in China, after paying all expenses and deducting a reasonable fee for themselves.

Later they shipped the dead Chinaman's remains to his native land.

And this was the last act in the case of "The Bradys and the Queen of Pell Street."

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS' GOLD VAULT CLEW; or, WHO KILLED TREASURER BLACK?" which will be the next number (492) of "Secret Service."

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ITEMS WORTH READING.

A young baker, who was returning with a companion after an ascent of the Plan Aiguille, near Chamonix, was caught by the branch of a tree, after falling nearly 300 feet, and suspended by his braces, to the strength of which he owed his life. His companion fell 2,000 feet, and was picked up with nearly every bone in his body broken.

The naartje is the ugly name of a nice new fruit which has just been introduced to England, under the auspices of the Natal Government, and is recommended as an ideal fruit for hot weather. A London writer has just eaten two naartjes and found them deliciously juicy, sweet, and refreshing. He is assured also that naartje squash is an excellent drink when the shade temperature is up to 70; and it needs no sugar. This novelty is like a big tangerine orange, but it is altogether superior to that fruit, and it is reported that the demand is rapidly increasing. The only complaint against the naartje is its name. So delicious a morsel should have a title of sweeter savor.

Lake Baikal is a somewhat remarkable body of water. Its name is a corruption of the Turkish Bei-kul, "rich lake"—the reference being, presumably, to the valuable fish with which it swarms. Lake Baikal is the third largest body of water in Asia. The Caspian and Aral seas are the two larger. Both are salt, however, while Baikal is fresh. It is, therefore, the largest fresh-water lake in Asia, and the sixth in size in the world, the five Great Lakes of North America exceeding it in area. Its waters occupy a remarkable depression in the vast plateau of Central Asia. The level of its waters is 1,300 feet above the sea, while the bottom of the lake is, in some places, more than 3,000 feet below the sea-level. Its depth is, therefore, 4,500 feet in the deepest parts. The lake is 330 miles long, and from nine and a quarter to forty miles wide. Its waters are a deep blue, and remarkably clear. There are a number of islands in it; the largest, Olkhon, is forty-two miles long. There are numerous hot springs on the shores, and earthquake vibrations are frequent. The annual value of its salmon, sturgeon, and other fisheries, is about one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. Fresh-water seals are abundant, and they are caught for their fur. It receives the waters of several streams, the main one being the Salenga River, eight hundred miles long. The upper Angara River, also of considerable size, enters its northeastern end. Its outlet is the lower Angara, on which Inkutsk is situated.

A great Atlantic roller, disporting itself on top of between 2,000 and 3,000 fathoms of water, will completely change its character on coming into shallower surroundings. The drift is curtailed, and the crest becomes peaked up. Near the Eddy-stone lighthouse, where the depth steepens within the range

of but a few miles from 200 fathoms to 30 fathoms, the sea has been known to heap up in a solid wall of green water to a height of more than 100 feet. Such a procession of billows bearing down upon the famous lighthouse leave nothing but its lantern visible above their frothing ridges. The expression, "green water," or "green sea," by the way, is used to denote the actual wave body, as distinguished from the spray which it may throw up on breaking. Thus the celebrated St. Helena rollers measure no more than about 15 feet of green water, but on bursting they will fling their crystalline show-ers to a height of substantially over 100 feet. Although no hard and fast rule can be laid down upon the subject, it may be taken that the billows raised by an average "heavy gale," such as might be encountered in crossing the Atlantic during the winter, would have a normal height from hollow to crest of about 40 feet, and a period of about 18 seconds, giving a length of drift of some 1,500 feet. If a big ship were driven at all hard against such a sea it would smother her, causing her to labor so heavily that her decks would be untenable, and much of her top hamper swept away. On the other hand, if she were humored, and allowed to take up her own position, she would probably fall off into the trough and override the surges as buoyantly as a seagull.

WITH THE FUNNY FELLOWS.

"The poor you have with you always," the preacher quoted. "Thar's whar you're mistaken," said the old man. "Fer the last six months my oldest boy has been drawin' on me from Texas!"

O'Flannagan come home one night with a deep band of black crape around his hat. "Why, Mike!" exclaimed his wife, "What are ye wearin' that mournful thing for?" "I'm wearin' it for yer first husband," replied Mike firmly. "I'm sorry he's dead."

"What does you reckon you'll like ter do w'en you gits ter glory?" "Well," said Brother Dickey, "since you put de question ter me, I'll make answer ter it. Ef dey lets me have my way, I'll des lay back on a white cloud, an' let de heavenly winds blow me fum star to star."

"Young Ruggles did a very thoughtless thing." "What was that?" "He wrote a poem in honor of a certain young woman who had just completed her twenty-first birthday, and published it in the college paper." "Wasn't it a good poem?" "Very good." "What's the criticism, then?" "Why, anybody who wants to find out can look back any time and discover how old the young woman is."

The boy stood on the bridge of a schooner, beside the captain, on a starry night. It suddenly became necessary for the captain to go below, and he said to the boy: "Here, take the wheel. I'll be back in a few minutes. Steer by that star, and you'll be all right." The boy began to steer the boat, and soon he got her out of her course. The star now appeared astern instead of ahead. He shouted down to the captain: "Hi, Skipper! Come up and find us another star! I've passed that one!"

When Mr. B. went to call upon some friends the other afternoon he was on his way out of town, and so had his travelling bag with him. This he placed in a corner, and when he rose to leave he overlooked it. His hostess happened to notice it before he had reached the door, and called to her little daughter: "Marie, run after Mr. B., and tell him he has left his grip here." The little one gave her mother one swift glance of surprise, but flew dutifully to obey orders. "Oh, Mr. B.," they heard her say, "mother says you have forgotten to take your grip with you." Then she added, quickly, in a tone of polite apology: "You see, most all of us have had it this winter, and we'd rather not have any more."

BETRAYED BY A KISS.

By KIT CLYDE.

The inhabitants of Fordham were in a condition of mental excitement such as had never before convulsed the quiet community. While it is within the corporate limits of the city of New York, it is withal a country town, a place of suburban residence, the natural beauty of which has resulted in the creation of scores of handsome residences with beautiful out-lying grounds.

The reason of the great excitement was that a murder had been committed in their midst. A call came into the central office just before the daylight hour. The officer in charge called me, and with a smile, said:

"I have hardly the heart to ask you to go out, especially in this storm, but—"

"Well?" as he hesitated.

"It seems almost a fatality that you should always be here when these night alarms come in."

"It is singular," I assented.

"There has not," he continued, "been an occasion when a call has been made of any importance in six months when the investigation has not fallen on your shoulders."

"Fortunately, my shoulders are broad. What's up?"

"A case of robbery and murder."

"Where?"

"In the annexed district—in Fordham."

And he added:

"If you do not care to go, I will send somebody else."

"I'll go," I answered.

I was furnished with all the details contained in the report that had reached headquarters.

I then started for Fordham. The scene of the awful crime was a pretty villa occupying the crest of a gentle acclivity, and about fifty yards back from the road.

Day had broken before I passed through the gate and up the graveled path. On the veranda I discovered a weeping woman.

On hearing my step close at hand, she lifted her face from her hands and gave me an eager, questioning look. Divining that she was one of the most deeply interested parties, I said:

"I am the detective sent up from headquarters."

"I am so glad you have come!" she exclaimed. "I have been looking and waiting for a couple of hours."

At first her words were nearly indistinguishable, but before she had finished her voice had become firm. It clearly was made so by an effort.

"Madam," I said, "will you kindly inform me who you are?"

"I am Mrs. Sanford, the wife of the victim of last night."

"Ah! I am glad to meet you, although I deplore the bereavement that has made my presence necessary."

She impulsively placed a hand on my arm.

"You look and talk like an honest man!" she exclaimed. "In the name of high heaven, I adjure you to help me bring to justice the murderers of my husband."

"I will do so if it be possible."

"Thank you. Will you go now and see him?"

The last word came with an effort.

I shook my head.

"Not just yet," I said. "I should like to talk with you a little while, if you will be seated again."

When she had resumed her chair I said:

"Please tell me now what is known of this affair."

In a voice rendered clear and firm by an effort of will, wonderful in a woman, she said:

"There is not much I can tell you. At ten o'clock last evening, having a headache, I bade my husband good-night, and retired to my room."

"Leaving him where?" I interjected.

"In the library. It must have been about one o'clock that I was awakened by a single piercing cry. I lay still and listened. It was not repeated. I began to think that my imagination had played me a trick, and was on the point of dozing again, when I heard a shutter or door slam."

"Pardon me, but did not the absence of your husband at that late hour arouse any fears?"

"Not in itself, for I knew he expected to be up very late."

"For what purpose?"

"To investigate certain reports, and make calculations of his own, in connection with a mine in which he thought of investing."

"Ah! Well, the shutter slammed—what then?"

"It aroused all my fears anew, and rising, I went to the head of the stairs and called Henry by name. I got no answer. That made me almost wild. I returned to my room, hastily slipped on this wrapper, and went downstairs. In the library I found him—murdered!"

"You saw nothing of the assassin?"

"I did not."

"Nor have any clew to his identity?"

"I have not."

"You speak of a mine. What business was your husband in?"

"He had no business. He has been living a life of leisure on his income."

"Do you own this house?"

"No; it belongs to an ex-mayor of New York, and we rent it of him, furnished."

"What was the apparent motive for the crime? Was it robbery?"

"I don't know. Henry never kept any money or valuables in the safe—nothing but papers."

"Were you all alone in the house?"

"Practically so. One servant had been given permission to be away over night, and the other is hard of hearing."

"You have no children, then?"

"No," she answered, quickly. "We have been married only three months."

"Does your husband leave a fortune?"

"Yes."

"To whom will it go?"

I saw her give a start as the question was put. It probably had not occurred to her before. She then answered:

"That depends on whether there is a will, I suppose. I am not much of a lawyer, but I know that much."

"In case there is no will?" I suggested.

"As his widow, I presume I am entitled to something, but the rest will go to a person I cordially detest."

"Ah! Who is it?"

"Henry's cousin, Lucy Ray."

"Why do you dislike her?"

Mrs. Sanford flushed, but she quickly replied:

"I will be frank with you. She wanted Henry to marry her, and when she learned that he had become engaged to me, she did her best to break off the engagement. She vilified me and tried to blacken my character, and never ceased until convinced that her labor was being wasted. Then, suddenly, she altered, and made an offer of friendship, but I scornfully refused to recognize or have aught to do with her."

"Is Lucy Ray able to support herself?"

"No. She was dependent on Henry."

Gently forcing her back in the chair when she would have accompanied me, I said:

"It is needless to distress yourself by visiting what to you must be an extremely distressing scene. I can find the way."

In the library I found the deaf servant on guard over the body of her murdered master.

"He was such a kind, good man," she sobbed, "and I hope you'll hang them as did him this harm."

I looked around me.

The library was on the first floor.

Long French windows opened on a broad piazza outside.

It was easy to conceive how the crime had been committed. The assassin, in bare feet or stockings, had crossed the piazza unheard. Lying in wait outside the open window until the favorable moment occurred, he had then sprung inside and dealt his victim a heavy blow with a club.

He must then have uttered that cry heard by Mrs. Sanford.

I sat down before the desk at which Mr. Sanford had been writing during the evening, as was evidenced by the unstoppered ink-bottle and the writing materials.

My eye rested on a blotter. Suddenly I caught it up.

Faintly, yet legibly, I could read what had been written with coarse, bold lines, and been blotted to absorb the superfluous ink:

"Last Will and Testament of Henry Sanford."

The blotter had absorbed this ink not more than five or six hours earlier.

Where was the will?

I began a search for it. In the course of this, after failing to discover the instrument, I contemplatively paused beside the prone figure of the murdered man. One hand had doubled, and was partially hidden under his body. Between the fingers a scrap of paper was visible.

It was a small, triangular fragment of the will made that night by Henry Sanford!

I could feel my eyes dilate.

I guessed that there had been a struggle for the will. If there had not been it would not have been torn, and the greater part of it missing!

Lucy Ray boarded at a residence a mile distant.

She was given a liberal allowance by Sanford, and I learned kept a saddle-horse, as also that she was accustomed to ride out before breakfast in the morning.

My mind was quickly made up.

In an hour I was on horseback, slowly cantering in the direction of the place where she boarded.

I don't think I ever felt so much like a fool in all my life as in the disguise I had adopted. It was "very English, you know," particularly the eye-glass stuck over one eye.

Reaching a long shady lane that led up to the house, with many a twist and turn, where Lucy Ray stopped, I entered it.

I had gone only a short distance, but was out of sight of the road, when I heard the tramp of horse's feet approaching.

I continued onward at a walk, my horse's feet giving back no echo on the mossy stretch of road that I had met, and a couple of minutes later was an unseen witness to a meeting between two persons—a man and a woman.

She greeted him rather coldly, I thought, but he drew his horse around beside hers, and bending forward, lifted her hand, and with courtly grace pressed his lips to it.

"Well?" she said, sharply, questioning.

"I will meet you at the old place to-night and give it to you."

Then the woman started.

She had seen me.

As they passed both gave me a keen look. My "very English" appearance must have quieted any suspicions which, were they guilty, would naturally arise.

The woman, from descriptions given me, I knew to be Lucy Ray. The man I had recognized as the unworthy son of a father whose name is mentioned only with honor.

Left a fortune, he had squandered it with companions of the worst character. Very recently he had escaped being arrested on a charge that would have sent him to prison, friends of

the family having succeeded in silencing the witnesses by a liberal use of money. Personally, I had run across his track in investigating a safe-robbery that never could have occurred save through the connivance of a person as familiar with the place as only a few were beside Charlie Victor.

While the coroner was busy at the house I was sauntering near the depot, more comfortable now that I had rid myself of the eye-glass.

A phaeton came down the hill to meet a down-train.

From it Lucy Ray alighted, her eyes red, as though from weeping. As she turned from the companion who had accompanied her she said:

"I will return as soon as I have seen the lawyer."

I sauntered into the waiting-room, where I could watch her. Presently Charlie Victor entered.

Victor and Lucy acted toward each other like strangers.

What the purpose of this might be I could not divine. But I determined not to lose sight of the girl again during the day.

I followed her to the lawyer's, saw her enter, and when she departed followed her back to her home in Fordham.

Then I returned to the depot.

Charlie Victor came up on a train, arriving shortly after eight o'clock in the evening.

I dogged his steps like a bloodhound, and when he entered the shaded road where I had that morning witnessed the kiss I was close at his heels.

He shortly turned into a footpath, and going a couple of hundred feet, entered a rustic summer-house.

I was crouching outside of it when the rustle of a woman's dress informed me that Lucy Ray was approaching.

"Are you there, Charlie?" she queried.

"Yes."

"Well," in an eager tone, "tell me all about it. Did you find a will?"

"Yes."

"And had he left everything to that hussy?"

"Yes."

"Where is the will?"

"I have it here."

I waited for no more.

Bang—bang!

Two shots I fired in the air to summon others to the spot, and then, with my brace of revolvers again cocked, I barred the door of the summer-house, saying sternly:

"You are my prisoners! Stir a finger, and I will shoot!"

In less than a minute, almost before the evil pair could comprehend the situation, several of the male members of the family were beside me.

Victor was seized, and search of his person brought to light the will—a fragment of which I had earlier discovered in the murdered man's fingers.

Lucy Ray, proud and fearless as she was beautiful of face and evil of heart, cheated the law by swallowing some poison concealed on her person.

Victor was soon behind the bars.

He made a clean breast of the whole horrible affair. Driven to desperation by his financial straits, and also falling madly in love with the beautiful fiend, he had listened to her promptings and committed the awful crime which was to gain him at one stroke a wife and a fortune.

As to Lucy Ray's secret reasons none can say, but it appears like a sensible view of the matter that she was primarily actuated by an ungovernable desire to be revenged on her cousin's wife for her scornful refusal to speak or to associate with her.

So cold-blooded a murder should have sent Victor to the gallows, but his plea of manslaughter in the second degree was accepted, and he was sentenced to prison for life. He died miserably in confinement about two years later.

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