



CHAPTER V. MY FIRST DAY.

(Continued.)

All this occurred on a Wednesday night in May. Harold engaged passage on one of the outgoing steamers for Saturday, to remain away a year, during which time I was to be at all intents and purposes Harold, instead of Harmon, O. Westcott.

Much of the intervening time was spent by him in preparing me, so far as he could, to face and dispose of the matters likely to come before me. Of necessity there would be many little things which he forgot. In those cases I must depend upon my own wit and ingenuity.

"There will be any number of persons after money. They will insist that I promised them. I may have given some of them encouragement, but every distinct promise has been kept. You will know how to dispose of them."

"I think so."

"If they become obstreperous, throw them out, for some of them were not present at the debut of yourself and Mr. Mortimer and may not be aware of your capacity as a bouncer. My appearance is not calculated to strike terror to the ordinary heart, and you look just like me."

I smiled, clearly foreseeing the nature of some of the coming interviews. A few days later I was alone in the handsome bachelor apartments long occupied by my friend, who had been so careful of his disguise in going aboard the steamer that he was sure no one suspected or dreamed of the truth. He took another name, as a matter of course, though the change was not great, being H. O. Walcott. He promised to write me monthly and to hold himself ready to give me whatever counsel I might need.

Since I was fully satisfied of the insincerity of many of the clubmen, I took no pains to keep upon friendly terms with them. When they called to congratulate me over the astounding manner in which I knocked out the famous pugilist, I gave them to understand that I knew the trick they tried upon me and that no gentleman would have been guilty of anything of that nature.

This caused a coldness between me and a number of the leading members, especially when I expressed a wish to try the same feat upon any and all of them. I was as offish as they and held my head as high in the air.

"Who the deuce is this fellow?" I asked, holding the card in my hand, on which was engraved the name, "Sam Johnson."

I ordered the servant to show him in, and he quickly appeared, with a loud clearing of his throat and an overwhelming manner. He was large, fleshy-dressed, with dyed hair, side whiskers, and moustache, an immense watch-chain, slightly bald, and with the unmistakable marks of dissipation and fast living on his pimply countenance.

He strode hastily across the apartment and extended his fat hand with great effusion. I allowed him to take mine, but did not return the pressure.

"I hope you're well. By the horned spoon, I never saw you look better!" he exclaimed, as if the discovery caused his whole being to bubble with delight.

"I am well, but no better than usual. Why did you call to see me?"

He flushed under this chilling greeting, but quickly rallied.

"I've good news for you—the best of news."

"What is it?"

"We've floated the 'Queen.' She is safe."

"I didn't know that she had been in any danger."

"Haw, haw, haw! As jolly as ever, eh, Harold, my boy? This mine is in the richest part of Colorado; fifty people were after it; had to play my points mighty fine, but I played 'em and won—suced 'em all!"

"Well, what of it?"

"That gives you the chance of your life. You'll come in on the ground floor. You'll triple your money inside of six weeks, for things are booming."

"How much did you expect me to put into this hole in the ground?"

"Why what you said—\$20,000."

"I have made up my mind not to put twenty cents into it."

"But, good heavens, you promised!" he exclaimed, agitated and angry.

"I made no promise. I told you I would think it over. I have done so, and you have heard my conclusion."

I was self-flattered by noting that this random shaft hit the mark exactly.

"I s'pose that's true, but them words was as good as a promise."

"I can't regard them as such. It is useless to waste time. I look upon the whole thing as a swindle, and you don't get a penny from me."

"By—, but I will have it!" roared my caller, his face purple, as he rose from his chair. "You can't treat me that way and intimate as much as I'm a swindler."

"I don't intimate it; I say it. You are a scamp, and if you had your deserts would be behind prison bars. If you do not leave at once, I'll throw you out."

The knock was so timid that I hardly heard it. The door was gently pushed inward, and a woman stood before me. She was plainly dressed, but neat and clean looking, with pinched face that told of much suffering. A wan smile lit up her countenance as she saluted me, and she stood, trembling and apprehensively.

My heart went out to her at once. Possibly I was wrong, but I believed that whatever she represented herself to be that she was.

"Sit down," I said, kindly, pointing to a chair. "Did you walk upstairs?"

"Yes, sir. There's a new boy running the elevator to-day."

"What of it? Didn't I tell you always to take the elevator? What is it made for if not for ladies? If the boy makes any objection, let me know, and I will have him discharged."

"Ye have always been kind to us, Mr. Westcott. What would Mike and me do if it were not for yer goodness?"

"Pshaw, there are plenty better than I, only you haven't found them!"

"Nor anyone else," she said, with a flash of her Irish wit.

This was one of the cases of which I had been informed by Harold. Mrs. Murphy was a poor, industrious woman who had buried two children and had a husband in the last stages of consumption. Harold had investigated her story and found her a worthy woman.

"Why have you been so long in calling, Mrs. Murphy?"

"Well, sir, the money which ye were kind enough to give me when I came a fortnight since has kept poor Mike as comfortable as could be, and, with the washing that I had, there was no need of trispassing on yer goodness, for which Hiven will reward ye."

"Nonsense! You mustn't wait until you're penniless, and why should you wear yourself out with work when Mike needs your attention? Let me see—it was twenty dollars I handed you two weeks ago."

"Excuse me, it was twenty-five."

"Very well. Here's fifty dollars."

"God bless ye!" she faltered, the tears filling her eyes.

"None of that. You know I don't like it. If you run short, come whenever you need more, and Mrs. Murphy," I added, severely, "if you don't wish to offend me, always take the elevator."

I rose and accompanied her to the elevator, ringing sharply. When the boy came up, I said:

"Tom, when this lady comes to call on me, bring her up in the elevator. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir, but I'm afeard—"

"Shut up, or I'll cuff your ears! Step in, Mrs. Murphy. Good-by!"

I laid my hand in a fatherly way on her shoulder to help her. Before I could remove it she had impulsively caught and kissed it. At the same moment a hot tear dropped on the back of my hand. And when I sank in a chair in my room—I'm not ashamed to own it—there were tears in my own eyes.

"That pays me for all else, no matter what comes. If a man with wealth knew how to get the best good out of it there would be no such thing as ennui in this world."

I had no intention of staying in my room. It was a radiant day, with just enough coolness in the golden sunshine to make it an ideal one for an outing. I went to the stable where Harold kept his horse and had him saddled for a ride in the park.

It may have been fancy on my part, but there was something in the manner of Jack that made me half suspect he was not fully satisfied with me. It could not be, however, that his senses were so much sharper than those of mankind, and I dismissed the thought as I vaulted into the saddle and cantered off.

The pony had been standing so long in the stable that he was fractious and caused me some concern, but after a brisk ride along the roadway he calmed down and became as tractable as a child's animal.

I continually encountered persons who scolded me and whom, of course, I saluted in return.

"Harold certainly has a large number of lady acquaintances," I thought, as I raised my hat for the twentieth time. "He gave me little information about them, and I'm afraid I shall encounter some breakers before I'm through. If matters get too hot I'll take a run out of the city for a time."

"How do you do?"

"I don't know that she had been in any danger."

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"I don't intimate it; I say it. You are a scamp, and if you had your deserts would be behind prison bars. If you do not leave at once, I'll throw you out."

This was too much, and the infuriated rogue made for me. But he did not reach me. So I merely jammed him down so hard on the floor that it must have loosened several of his teeth. Then I opened the door and flung him through.

"Go in peace."

"I don't think Sam Johnson will ever give Harold much trouble after this, for even if I was gentle with him he discovered that I was his master—Hello! Come in!"

As he turned on his wheel as if challenging a race with one of the policemen who was certain soon to discover him. My horse shied a little, but not dangerously so. Just ahead of me was a carriage, with the driver on top holding the reins over two spirited animals.

The sudden burst of the cyclist so startled them that they plunged off at headlong speed. The driver tugged at the lines, but for the time they were beyond control. A scream from within the vehicle showed the terror of



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the occupants, and the next thing I saw was a woman that had opened the door and was trying to leap out, while someone else, evidently a female, resolutely prevented her.

I spurred Jack forward and drew up beside the vehicle.

"Don't jump, madam!" I called. "You will be killed. Keep your seat, and we'll check the team in a few minutes."

"Mother, don't you hear him?" called the one who was holding back the other. "Keep your seat. It is Harold. He will save us!"

I had to spur Jack to his best before I could place myself within reach of the heads of the terrified team, but I did it at last, and, while thus occupied, saw a mounted policeman bearing down upon us. With his help I was sure all would end well, provided the mother could be restrained.

Reaching forward, I seized the bridle rein of the near horse. In the excitement of the moment I forgot my strength and drew back so furious that the strap snapped, and the team continued their wild flight without the slightest check.

I now determined to ride in front and round to the opposite side, so as to grasp the other rein, remembering not to break it.

But the devil got into Jack just then, and he refused to obey me. He shied to the right and came within a hair of unseating me. I was so enraged that I twisted his head back and dug the spurs into his flanks. He whinnied with pain and became frantic.

"Confound you!" I muttered. "I have a great mind to kill you! If it were not for those in the carriage, I would do it!"

At that moment the form of a man flew through the air, striking the roadway as if hurled from a catapult.

It was the coachman, flung with frightful force from his seat, while the team dashed madly on, with the strength of the daughter who was clutching her mother's dress evidently falling, for the figure of the elder was partly through the open door and gathering herself for the fatal leap.

(To be Continued.)

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THE TATTLER.

Miss A. H. Graser is a reliable Cincinnati custom house broker and forwarder. Miss Ada Ward, a well known young London actress, has joined the Salvation Army.

Miss Jessie Langford of Duluth has a clean record as a licensed pilot. She has served more than ten years on the great lakes.

Mrs. Mills of New York city is a successful tinsmith. She learned the trade of her husband and has kept up the business since his death.

Miss May Kerns, operator in the Western Union office at Niagara Falls, has won medals in telegraphic contests and is now called one of the fastest women operators on the line.

The Countess de Casa Miranda (Christine Nilsson), who possesses one of the most famous collections of precious stones in Europe, is now making a collection of black and white laces.

Mrs. John Sherman, wife of the secretary of state, is an elderly woman, well read and deeply interested in current events. Next year she and Secretary Sherman will be able to celebrate their golden wedding.

Mrs. McKinley is a woman of quiet tastes in dress. Dark blue of almost the Salvation Army tint is her favorite color. She is also fond of dove, gray and a soft chestnut brown. Her hats are always unobtrusive and ladylike.

The daughter of Osman Pasha is believed to be the only poetess in Turkey. She lives in a white marble palace overlooking the Bosphorus and dines every day in the conservatory from a service of golden plate. This undoubtedly is her inspiration.

Mrs. Gage, the wife of the secretary of the treasury, is a handsome, middle aged woman, with a well known faculty for making friends and holding them. In Albany, her old home, she is exceedingly popular, and everywhere she maintains an easy lead in society by right of her culture and broad information.

Lillie Devereux Blake suggests as one rule for married happiness that the wife should not always ask the husband where he is going when he goes away and where he has been when he comes back and as another the equal division of money, for she claims that one-half of every dollar the husband has belongs in the law to the wife.

Miss Dell Ten Eyck of Worcester, Mass., entertains herself by capturing and cultivating all kinds of queer sea monstrosities. She puts the creatures in glass jars and makes pets of them. Devilfish and other similar horrors are the pride of this peculiar young woman's heart, and her collection is said to be unique and interesting in the extreme.

England has several grand old women who were born before Victoria and carry their years well. Mrs. Gladstone is six months older than the queen, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts is five years older, and Lady Louisa Tighe, who was present at the ball on the eve of Waterloo and is still hale and lively, was a girl of 15 when Victoria was born.

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