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## THE MYSTERY OF COUNT LANDRINOF. BY FRED WHISHAW.

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SYNOPSIS.

The hero of this story, Boris Landrinof, is a young Russian, who was sent to England to be educated. He is hastily summoned home by his mother owing to the sudden disappearance of his father, Count Landrinof. Shortly after, in London, he is astonished when a friend tells him he has just seen his father. Accompanied by this friend he returns to Russia. Boris discovers a clue, and sets out in search of two men who have as he supposes, abducted his father.

"But as this part of the tale is so very interesting we will drink a glass of wine to steady our nerves."

"Drink the whole bottle and be hanged, only go on!" I raved.

"Good wines should never be taken too fast," said the little rascal, deliberately sipping from his glass. "And this is good wine—claret, do you call it, or burgundy? I don't often have the opportunity of sampling these expensive vintages, and therefore I do not claim to be much of a judge. Take a glass. You won't? Well, I see you are excited to hear what I have to tell you, so here goes.

"One of us—one of them, I should say—conceived this idea. Andre, he knew, they all knew, was well connected. He owned to a brother who ranked as a patrician among the patricians. Moreover, Andre made it a boast that he bore more than a strong family likeness to his brother, the great Count Landrinof.

"This ingenious person, the hatcher of the plot, took the trouble to visit Count Landrinof at this very aristocratic and palatial establishment in which I am at this moment an honored guest. He came ostensibly to ask for a contribution for some benevolent enterprise which he mentally evolved for the occasion, but in reality to judge whether the brothers were really so much alike that there was reasonable expectation that they might be mistaken one for the other.

"Well, he met with extraordinary success; double—nay, treble—success. Your father, he found, was a generous man, and, pardon me, more than a little foolish. He subscribed 5 rubles toward Ivanof's fund (we will call him Ivanof for convenience), which 5 rubles Ivanof found very useful.

"Secondly, Ivanof saw at a glance that Andre and his brother were quite exceptionally and marvelously alike and might easily be mistaken the one for the other. That this is no none knows better than yourself, for to this fact you are indebted for the pleasure of Andre's presence under your roof."

"Go on!" I said. Even now I could not for the life of me foresee what was coming.

"Thirdly, Ivanof, while waiting in the great hall down stairs—a splendid hall, by the way; but is it not cold in winter? A space of that size would, I should say—

"Go on!" I cried, stamping my foot.



A SEA OF FLAME.

On the evening of November, 28th, 1875, a fire broke out in the British ship Melanie, loaded with 500 barrels of petroleum. An awful mass of flames shot up from the main hatch and the vessel quivered from stem to stern with explosion of the barrels. Her seams opened and the blazing petroleum poured out into the river, spreading a belt of fire around her. The master and seamen jumped overboard. Captain Sharp, whose vessel was lying close-by, propelled a small boat through the blazing river and after a severe scorching and imminent peril, saved the seamen from a horrible death.

All over civilization there are thousands of men in more imminent danger than were those seamen. They are threatened with consumption or are already in the clutch of that deadly disease. If they only knew it, help is at hand. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cures 98 per cent. of all cases of consumption. It also cures bronchitis, asthma, throat and nasal troubles and all diseases of the air passages. It is the great blood-maker, flesh-builder, and nerve-tonic. It makes the appetite hearty, the digestion perfect and the liver active. The "Golden Medical Discovery" is the product of that eminent specialist, Dr. R. V. Pierce, who, during the thirty years that he has been chief consulting physician to the great Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, at Buffalo, has treated more cases than fifty ordinary physicians treat in a lifetime. Thousands given up by doctors, have testified to complete recovery under this marvelous medicine.

Constipation causes and aggravates many serious diseases. It is speedily cured by Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets.

I could have twisted the little rascal's head off but for the frenzied desire I now felt to hear the end of his tale.

"Well, thirdly, then, Ivanof had the pleasure of seeing another gentleman besides the count, an Englishman named Herbert, or Hulbert, and of hearing the end of your father's conversation with him, which fell in marvelously well with Ivanof's plans. The two gentlemen were, in fact, arranging for a shooting party at a place called Erinofka, and fixed upon the days and hours for their sport in Ivanof's presence. Then our friend laid his plans, which were made very easy for him by his visit to the count and what he had learned there.

"Do you follow me now? Have you mastered the plot of my tale? Need I go on?"

### CHAPTER XXIII. ABDUCTION OF THE COUNT.

"I think I begin to understand the detestable plot a little," I said. "My father fell, I suppose, into the hands of the precious villains who are your accomplices. What have they done with him? For by all that's sure—

"Not so fast! I am no accomplice, so far as you can prove. May not a man discover a plot without being set down at once as an accomplice? I am coming to your father's fate."

"For," I repeated, springing to my feet and seizing the little rascal by the shoulders and shaking him as a cat would a mouse. "See here, you vile little wretch, if you dare to tell me that these people have injured a hair of my father's head I swear to you that no promise or anything else shall save you and your abominable friends! I—

"Do be a reasonable creature and allow me to finish my story," said my companion, twisting himself out of my clutches. "I did not say your father was injured, did I? If he was injured, it was not, at any rate, by our people. Will you allow me to go on in peace or not? I will not be hustled; remember that. You are stronger than I, but I have a will which is perhaps more than equal to your own. You cannot compel me to speak. There is much more to tell, but I will not tell it unless you promise to behave like a gentleman."

"Go on, then," I said, "but if I find you have lied, and your friends have done father any injury, heaven help you, for I think I should kill you!"

"Bah! I am not afraid. You are not the kind to kill a fellow creature, espe-



"Bah! You are not the kind to kill a fellow creature."

cially one who is trying his best to do you a very great service. Besides, I might not be so easily killed. Killing is a game of which it is necessary to understand the elements. There is science in it. Maybe I have thought over such matters more than you have, and understand more thoroughly the tricks of the trade."

"You are welcome to your knowledge," I said. "For all I know you may be a murderer already, but it is certain that I will thrash you within an inch of your life in certain events. Therefore be careful how you tell your story."

"Bah!" said the student, who assuredly was no coward, though he was the most conceited and detestable little rascal, I should say, that ever breathed God's air. "Bah! I shall tell the tale as I think best. If you do not like my manner of telling it, that is your misfortune, but not my fault. Well, then, Ivanof's plan was this: Arrangements were made to seize your father at Erinofka, on the moor or at the lodge or wherever it should prove to be most practicable. From there he should be brought by road to the house of—it does not matter whose house—and there he should be shut up. Then some one, one of the circle of friends, should go

with a tale to the police announcing that by means of accidentally overhearing a conversation he had become aware of the hiding place of one upon whom he believed the police desired to lay their hands. The police would then send and arrest your father, believing him to be Andre, and Andre himself would quietly depart for England, dressed in grand seigneur, and, batz, there's the end!"

"I see," I gasped. "And did this all happen, then, as arranged? Father was captured, as I believe, at Erinofka. What happened then? Tell me the truth."

"Why should I lie? The count was brought to St. Petersburg by road, as per programme. He was dressed in a suit of Andre's clothes and looked, I am told, marvelously like Andre—indeed the police had no doubt whatever that he was that very individual. They bagged him neatly, and I have no doubt that they are still firmly under the impression that they have in their clutches somewhere Andre, or Kornilof, as they call him, and no other.

"As for the real Andre, you know all about his doings. He went to London like a milord, and like a milord he returned. He fell on his feet and still stands upright. Who knows it better than yourself?"

"Stop, you infernal little rascal!" I cried, stamping my foot with rage.

"What of my father? I have heard enough of your detestable Andre. Tell me of my father. Where is he? What have they done with him?"

"Ah, you must ask the police that question," said the student. "Probably he is at Sakhalin or in that choice neighborhood. He was taken out of our—out of Andre's friends'—hands, you see. I cannot be supposed to be in the confidence of the third section, which is the section of police spies. Can I, now? Be reasonable!"

"I suppose not," I grained. "But, great heavens, what are we to do? How are we to get at the authorities? Will they believe us?"

"Ah, that is a very delicate question! I should say they will not, but it is worth trying."

"What will Andre's attitude be supposing we go to the police and explain that, though passing as the count my father, this man is not my father but an impostor?"

"My dear sir, do I know the mind of Andre? Though acquainted with him, as you are aware, I cannot therefore state what he would do under any given circumstances. But I will say this—that probably our good friend has not neglected to prepare himself for such an emergency. He would know that at any time you might for reasons of your own disown him and declare that though you have pretended that he is Count Landrinof, he is in effect nothing of the kind, but Mr. Kornilof, the escaped convict. He will probably say that you are mad, and that your mother, the countess, is no less, or that the countess has reasons for cherishing animosity against him, and that you are with her—being a mother's child—to rid her in this crude way of a husband of whom she has grown tired."

"Such a ridiculous cock and bull story would never take in the police!" I cried scornfully.

(To be Continued.)

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One of the most distressing symptoms imaginable is the almost unbearable itching which is an accompaniment of Leucorrhoea or whites. The nerves are irritated by the poisonous discharge, and the result is an itching which is only rendered more excruciating by rubbing or scratching.

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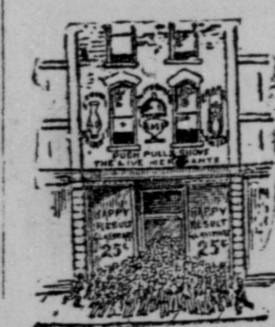
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