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Az part ov the converzhon ov the booc too its nu didgital

format, we hav made certane minor ajustments in its layout.

THE CACE-BOOC OV  
SHERLOC HOAMZ

BI ARTHHER CONAN DOIL

LUNDON  
JON MURRA, ALBEMARL STRETE, W.

"Ferst Publisht 1927"

PREFFACE

I fere dhat Mr. Sherloc Hoamz ma becum like wun ov dhose poppular tennoz whoo, havving outlived dhare time, ar stil tempted too make repeted faerwel bouz too dhare indulgent augencez. This must cece and he must go the wa ov aul flesh, materyal or imadginary. Wun liax too thhinc dhat dhare iz sum fantastic limbo for the children ov imaginaishon, sum strainj, imposcibel place whare the bouse ov Feelding ma stil make luv too the belz ov Ritchardson, whare Scots herose

stil ma strut, Dickensez deliatfool Cocnese stil rase a laaf, and Thackerase werldlingz continnu too carry on dhare reprehencibel careerz. Perhaps in sum humbel corner ov such a Val'hallaa, Sherloc and hiz Wautson ma for a time fiand a place, while sum moer aschute slueth widh sum even les aschute comrade ma fil the stage which dha hav vacated.

Hiz carere haz bene a long wun--dho it iz poscibel too exadgerate it; decreppit gentelmen whoo aproche me and declare dhat hiz advenchuerz formd the reding ov dhare boihood doo not mete the respons from me which dha ceme too expect. Wun iz not ancshous too hav wunz personal daits handeld so unkiandly. Az a matter ov coald fact Hoamz made hiz *daboo* in "A Studdy in Scarlet" and in "The Cine ov Foer", too smaull booclets which apeerd betwene 1887 and 1889. It wauz in 1891 dhat "A Scandal in Bohemeyaa," the ferst ov the long cerese ov short stoerese, apeerd in "The Strand Maggasene". The public ceemd apreeshative and desirous ov moer, so dhat from dhat date, thherty-cix yeerz ago, dha hav bene projuest in a broken cerese which nou containz no fuwer dhan fifty-cix stoerese, republisht in "The Advenchuerz", "The Memwarz", "The Retern", and "Hiz Laast Bou", and dhare remane these twelv publisht juring the laast fu yeerz which ar here projuest under the titel ov "The Cace-Booc ov Sherloc Hoamz". He began hiz advenchuerz in the verry hart ov the later Victoereyan Eraa, carrede it throo the aul-too-short rane ov Edword, and haz mannijd too hoald hiz one littel nich even in these feverish dase. Dhus it wood be troo too sa dhat dhose whoo ferst red ov him az yung men hav livd too ce dhare one grone-up children following the same advenchuerz in the same maggasene. It iz a striking exaampel ov the paishens and loiyalty ov the Brittish public.

I had folly determiand at the concluezhon ov "The Memwarz" too bring Hoamz too an end, az I felt dhat mi litterary ennergese shood not be directed too much intoo wun channel. Dhat pale, clere-cut face and

loose-limbed figure were taking up an unjust share of my imagination. I did the deed, but, fortunately, no coroner had pronounced upon the remains, and so, after a long interval, it was not difficult for me to respond to the flattering demand and to explain my rash act away. I have never regretted it, for I have not in actual practice found that these literary sketches have prevented me from exploring and finding my limitations in such various branches of literature as history, poetry, historical novels, civic research, and the drama. Had Hoamz never existed I could not have done more, who he may perhaps have stood a little in the way of the recognition of my more serious literary work.

And so, adieu, farewell to Sherlock Hoamz! I thank you for your past constancy, and can but hope that some return has been made in the shape of that distraction from the worries of life and stimulating chain of thought which can only be found in the fairy kingdom of romances.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

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I

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE ILUSTREYOUUS CLIYENT

"It caant hert nou," wauz Mr. Sherloc Hoamsez comment when, for the tenth time in az menny yeerz, I aasct hiz leve too revele the following narrative. So it wauz dhat at laast I obtaind permishon too poot on reccord whaut wauz, in sum wase, the supreme moment ov mi frendz carere.

Boath Hoamz and I had a weecnes for the Terkish Baath. It wauz over a smoke in the plezzant lascichude ov the drying-roome dhat I hav found him les retticient and moer human dhan enniwhare els. On the upper floer ov the Northumberland Avvenu establishment dhare iz an isolated corner whare too couchez li cide bi cide, and it wauz on these dhat we la uppon Ceptember 3, 1902, the da when mi narrative beghinz. I had aasct him whether ennithing wauz sturing, and for aancer he had shot hiz long, thhin, nervous arm out ov the sheets which envellopt him and had draun an envelope from the incide pocket ov the cote which hung becide him.

"It ma be sum fuscye, celf-important foole, it ma be a matter ov life or deth," ced he, az he handed me the note. "I no no moer dhan this message telz me."

It wauz from the Carlton Club, and dated the evening befoer. This iz whaut I red:

"Cer Jaimz Damery presents hiz compliments too Mr. Sherloc Hoamz, and wil caul uppon him at 4.30 too-morro. Cer Jaimz begz too sa dhat the matter uppon which he desiarz too consult Mr. Hoamz iz verry dellicate, and aulso verry important. He trusts, dhaerfoer, dhat Mr. Hoamz wil make evvery effort too graant this intervü, and dhat he wil conferm it over the tellefone too the Carlton Club."

"I nede not sa dhat I hav confermd it, Wautson," ced Hoamz, az I reternd the paper. "Doo u no ennithhing ov this man Damery?"

"Oonly dhat hiz name iz a hous'hoald werd in Sociyety."

"Wel, I can tel u a littel moer dhan dhat. He haz raather a reputaishon for arain'ging dellicate matterz which ar too be kept out ov the paperz. U ma remember hiz negoasheyaishonz widh Cer Jorj Luwis over the Hammerford Wil cace. He iz a man ov the werld widh a natchural tern for diplomacy. I am bound, dhaerfoer, too hope dhat it iz not a fauls cent and dhat he haz sum reyäl nede for our acistans."

"Our?"

"Wel, if u wil be so good, Wautson."

"I shal be onnord."

"Then u hav the our--foer-thherty. Until then we can poot the matter out ov our hedz."

I wauz livving in mi one ruimz in Qwene An Strete at the time, but I wauz round at Baker Strete befoer the time naimd. Sharp too the haaf-our, Cuunel Cer Jaimz Damery wauz anounst. It iz hardly nescesary too describe him, for menny wil remember dhat larj, bluf, onnest personallity, dhat braud, clene-shaven face, abuv aul, dhat plezzant, mello vois. Francnes shon from hiz gra Irish ise, and good humor plade round hiz mobile, smiling lips. Hiz lucent top-hat, hiz darc froc-cote, indede, evvery detale, from the perl pin in the blac sattin cravat too the lavvender spats over the varnisht shoose, spoke ov the meticculous care in dres for which he wauz famous. The big, maasterfool arristocrat domminated the littel roome.

"Ov coers, I wauz prepaerd too fiand Dr. Wautson," he remarct, widh a kerchous bou. "Hiz colaboraishon ma be verry nescesary, for we ar deling on this ocaizhon, Mr. Hoamz, widh a man too whoome viyolens iz familleyar and whoo wil, litteraly, stic at nuthhing. I shood sa dhat dhare iz no moer dain'gerous man in Urope."

"I hav had cevveral oponents too whoome dhat flattering term haz bene aplide," ced Hoamz, widh a smile. "Doant u smoke? Then u wil excuse me if I lite mi pipe. If yor man iz moer dain'gerous dhan the late Professor Moreyarty, or dhan the livving Cuunel Cebaschan Moran, then he iz indede werth meting. Ma I aasc hiz name?"

"Hav u evver herd ov Barron Grooner?"

"U mene the Austreyan merderer?"

Cuunel Damery throo up hiz kid-gluvd handz widh a laaf. "Dhare iz no ghetting paast u, Mr. Hoamz! Wunderfool! So u hav aulreddy ciazd him up az a merderer?"

"It iz mi biznes too follo the detailz ov Continental crime. Whoo

could possibly have had what happened at Praag and have any doubts as to the man's guilt! It was a purely technical legal point and the suspicious death of a witness that saved him! I am as sure that he killed his wife when the so-called accident happened in the Splooghen Paas as if I had seen him do it. I know, also, that he had come to England, and had a presentiment that sooner or later he would find me out too. Well, what has Barron Crooner been up to? I presume it is not this old tragedy which has come up again?"

"No, it is more serious than that. Too serious a crime is important, but to prevent it is more so. It is a terrible thing, Mr. Hoamz, too, a dreadful event, an atrocious commission, preparing itself before your eyes, too clearly understood whether it will lead and yet too utterly unpreventable to avert it. Can a human being be placed in a more trying position?"

"Perhaps not."

"Then you will sympathize with the client in whose interests I am acting."

"I did not understand that you were merely an intermediary. Who is the principal?"

"Mr. Hoamz, I must beg you not to press that question. It is important that I should be able to assure him that his own name has been in no way dragged into the matter. His motives are, too, the least degree, honorable and honorable, but he prefers to remain unknown. I need not say that your face will be assured and that you will be given a perfectly free hand. Surely the actual name of your client is immaterial?"

"I am sorry," said Hoamz. "I am accustomed to have mystery at the end

ov mi cacez, but too hav it at boath endz iz too confusing. I fere, Cer Jaimz, dhat I must decline too act."

Our vizsitor wauz graitly disterbd. Hiz larj, cencitive face wauz darkend widh emoashon and disapointment.

"U hardly reyalise the efect ov yor one acshon, Mr. Hoamz," ced he. "U place me in a moast cereyous dilemmaa, for I am perfectly certane dhat u wood be proud too take over the cace if I cood ghiv u the facts, and yet a prommice forbidz me from reveling them aul. Ma I, at leest, la aul dhat I can befoer u?"

"Bi aul meenz, so long az it iz understood dhat I comit micelf too nuthhing."

"Dhat iz understood. In the ferst place, u hav no dout herd ov Genneral de Mervil?"

"De Mervil ov Kiber fame? Yes, I hav herd ov him."

"He haz a dauter, Viyolet de Mervil, yung, rich, butifool, acumplisht, a wunder-woomman in evvery wa. It iz this dauter, this luvly, innocent gherl, whoome we ar endeuvoring too save from the clutcher ov a feend."

"Barron Grooner haz sum hoald over her, then?"

"The stron'ghest ov aul hoaldz whare a woomman iz concernd--the hoald ov luv. The fello iz, az u ma hav herd, extrordinarily handsum, widh a moast fascinating manner, a gentel vois, and dhat are ov romans and mistery which meenz so much too a woomman. He iz ced too hav the whole cex at hiz mercy and too hav made ampel uce ov the fact.

"But how came such a man to meet a lady of the standing of Miss Violet de Mervil?"

"It was on a Mediterranean yachting voyage. The company, I select, had one passage. No doubt the promoter hardly realized the Barron's true character until it was too late. The villain attached himself to the lady, and with such effect that he had completely and absolutely won her heart. Too soon that she loved him hardly expressed it. She devoted herself to him, she is obsessed by him. Outside of him there is nothing on earth. She will not here win a word against him. Everything has been done to cure her of her madness, but in vain. To sum up, she proposes to marry him next month. As she is of age and has a will of iron, it is hard to do anything to prevent her."

"Does she know about the Austrian episode?"

"The cunning devil has told her every unsavory public scandal of his past life, but always in such a way as to make himself out to be an innocent martyr. She absolutely accepts his version and will listen to no other."

"Dear me! But surely you have inadvertently let out the name of your client? It is no doubt General de Mervil."

Our visitor fidgeted in his chair.

"I could deceive you by saying so, Mr. Hoamz, but it would not be true. De Mervil is a broken man. The strong soldier has been utterly demoralized by this incident. He has lost the nerve which never failed him on the battlefield and has become a weak, doddering old man, utterly incapable of contending with a brilliant, resourceful rascal like this Austrian. My client, however, is an old friend, one who has known the General intimately for many years and taken a paternal interest in this young girl since she was a child. He

cannot see this tragedy consummated without some attempt to stop it. There is nothing in which Scotland Yard can act. It was his one suggestion that you should be called in, but it was, as I have said, on the express stipulation that he should not be personally involved in the matter. I have no doubt, Mr. Hoamz, with your great powers you could easily trace my client back through me, but I must ask you, as a point of honor, to refrain from doing so, and not to break in upon his incognito."

Hoamz gave a whimsical smile.

"I think I may safely promise that," said he. "I may add that your problem interests me, and that I shall be prepared to look into it. How shall I keep in touch with you?"

"The Carlton Club will find me. But, in case of emergency, there is a private telephone call, 'XX.31.'"

Hoamz noted it down and sat, still smiling, with the open memorandum-book upon his knee.

"The Barrons present address, please?"

"Vernon Loj, near Kingston. It is a large house. He has been fortunate in some rather shady speculations and is a rich man, which, naturally, makes him a more dangerous antagonist."

"Is he at home at present?"

"Yes."

"Apart from what you have told me, can you give me any further information about the man?"

"He haz expencive taists. He iz a hors fanceyer. For a short time he plade polo at Herlingam, but then this Praag afare got noizd about and he had too leve. He colects boox and picchuerz. He iz a man widh a concidderabel artistic cide too hiz nachure. He iz, I beleve, a reccogniazd authorrity uppon Chinese pottery, and haz ritten a booc uppon the subget."

"A complex miand," ced Hoamz. "Aul grate crimminalz hav dhat. Mi oald frend Charly Pece wauz a viyolin verchuwoso. Wainrite wauz no mene artist. I cood qwote menny moer. Wel, Cer Jaimz, u wil inform yor cliyent dhat I am terning mi miand uppon Barron Grooner. I can sa no moer. I hav sum soercez ov informaishon ov mi one, and dare sa we ma fiand sum meenz ov opening matter up."

When our vizsitor had left us, Hoamz sat so long in depe thaut dhat it ceemd too me dhat he had forgotten mi prezsens. At laast, houwevver, he came briscly bac too erth.

"Wel, Wautson, enny vuse?" he aasct.

"I shood thhinc u had better ce the yung lady hercelf."

"Mi dere Wautson, if her poor oald broken faather canot moove her, hou shal I, a strain'ger, prevale? And yet dhare iz sumthhing in the sugeschon if aul els failz. But I thhinc we must beghin from a different an'ghel. I raather fancy dhat Shinwel Jonson mite be a help."

I hav not had ocaizhon too menshon Shinwel Jonson in these memwarz becauz I hav celdom draun mi cacez from the latter fasez ov mi frendz carere. Juring the ferst yeerz ov the cenchury he became a vallubel acistant. Jonson, I greve too sa, made hiz name ferst az a verry dain'gerous villane and cervd too termz at Parc'herst. Finaly, he

repented and allide himself too Hoamz, acting az hiz agent in the huge crimmlinal underwerld ov Lundon, and obtaning informaishon which often pruivd too be ov vital importans. Had Jonson bene a "narc" ov the polece he wood soone hav bene expoazd, but az he delt widh cacez which nevver came directly intoo the coerts, hiz activviteser wer nevver reyaliazd bi hiz companyonz. Widh the glammor ov hiz too convicshonz uppon him, he had the *ontra* ov evvery nite-club, dos-hous, and gambling-den in the toun, and hiz qwic observaishon and active brane made him an ideyal agent for ganing informaishon. It wauz too him dhat Sherloc Hoamz nou propoazd too tern.

It wauz not poscibel for me too follo the imejate steps taken bi mi frend, for I had sum prescing profeshonal biznes ov mi one, but I met him bi apointment dhat evening at Cimpsonz, whare, citting at a smaul tabel in the frunt windo, and loocking doun at the rushing streme ov life in the Strand, he toald me sumthhing ov whaut had paast.

"Jonson iz on the proul," ced he. "He ma pic up sum garbage in the darker rececez ov the underwerld, for it iz doun dhare, amid the blac ruits ov crime, dhat we must hunt for this manz ceecrets."

"But, if the lady wil not axept whaut iz aulreddy none, whi shood enny fresh discuvvery ov yorz tern her from her perpoce?"

"Whoo nose, Wautson? Woommanz hart and miand ar insollubel puzselz too the male. Merder mite be condoand or explaind, and yet sum smauler ofens mite rankel. Barron Grooner remarct too me----"

"He remarct too u!"

"O, too be shure, I had not toald u ov mi planz! Wel, Wautson, I luv too cum too close grips widh mi man. I like too mete him i too i and

rede for micelf the stuf dhat he iz made ov. When I had ghivven Jonson hiz instrucshonz, I tooc a cab out too Kingston and found the Barron in a moast affabel moode."

"Did he reccognise u?"

"Dhare wauz no difficulty about dhat, for I cimply cent in mi card. He iz an exelent antaggonist, coole az ice, cilky voist and suithing az wun ov yor fashonabel consultants, and poizonous az a coabraa. He haz brede in him, a reyal arristocrat ov crime, widh a superfishal sugeschon ov aafternoone te and aul the croowelty ov the grave behiand it. Yes, I am glad too hav had mi atenshon cauld too Barron Adelbert Grooner."

"U sa he wauz affabel?"

"A puuring cat whoo thhinx he cese prospective mice. Sum pepelz afability iz moer dedly dhan the viyolens ov coercer soalz. Hiz greting wauz characteristic. 'I raather thaut I shood ce u sooner or later, Mr. Hoamz,' ced he. U hav bene en'gajjd, no dout, bi Genneral de Mervil too endevvor too stop mi marrage widh hiz dauter, Viyolet. Dhat iz so, iz it not?"

"I aqweyest.

"Mi dere man,' ced he, u wil oanly roowin yor one wel-deservd reputaishon. It iz not a cace in which u can poscibly suxede. U wil hav barren werc, too sa nuthhing ov incuuring sum dain'ger. Let me verry strongly advise u too drau of at wuns.'

"It iz cureyous,' I aancerd, but dhat wauz the verry advice which I had intended too ghiv u. I hav a respect for yor brainz, Barron, and the littel which I hav cene ov yor personallity haz not lescend it. Let me poot it too u az man too man. No wun waunts too rake up yor paast and

make u unjuly uncumfortabel. It iz over, and u ar nou in smuidh wauterz, but if u percist in this marrage u wil rase up a swarm ov pouwerfool ennemese whoo wil nevver leve u alone until dha hav made In'gland too hot too hoald u. Iz the game werth it? Shuerly u wood be wiser if u left the lady alone. It wood not be plezzant for u if these facts ov yor paast wer braut too her notice.'

"The Barron haz littel waxt tips ov hare under hiz nose, like the short antenna ov an incelet. These qwivverd widh amuezmment az he liscend, and he finaly broke intoo a gentel chuckel.

"Excuse mi amuezmment, Mr. Hoamz,' ced he, but it iz reyaly funny too ce u trying too pla a hand widh no cardz in it. I doant thhinc enniwun cood doo it better, but it iz raather pathhettic, aul the same. Not a cullor card dhare, Mr. Hoamz, nuthhing but the smaulest ov the smaul.'

"So u thhinc.'

"So I no. Let me make the thhing clere too u, for mi one hand iz so strong dhat I can afoerd too sho it. I hav bene forchunate enuf too win the entire afecshon ov this lady. This wauz ghivven too me in spite ov the fact dhat I toald her verry cleerly ov aul the unhappy incidents in mi paast life. I aulso toald her dhat certane wicked and desining personz--I hope u reccognise yorcelf--wood cum too her and tel her these thhingz, and I wornd her hou too trete them. U hav herd ov poast-hipnottic sugeschon, Mr. Hoamz? Wel, u wil ce hou it werx, for a man ov personallity can use hipnotizm widhout enny vulgar paacez or tomfoolery. So she iz reddy for u and, I hav no dout, wood ghiv u an apointment, for she iz qwite amenabel too her faatherz wil--save oonly in the wun littel matter.'

"Wel, Wautson, dhare ceemd too be no moer too sa, so I tooc mi leve

widh az much coald dignity az I cood summon, but, az I had mi hand on the doer-handel, he stopt me.

"Bi the wa, Mr. Hoamz,' ced he, did u no Le Brun, the French agent?"

"Yes,' ced I.

"Doo u no whaut befel him?"

"I herd dhat he wauz beten bi sum Apatchese in the Monmartr district and crippeld for life.'

"Qwite troo, Mr. Hoamz. Bi a cureyous cowincidens he had bene inqwiring intoo mi afaerz oanly a weke befoer. Doant doo it, Mr. Hoamz; its not a lucky thhing too doo. Cevveral hav found dhat out. Mi laast werd too u iz, go yor one wa and let me go mine. Good-bi!"

"So dhare u ar, Wautson. U ar up too date nou."

"The fello ceemz dain'gerous."

"Mity dain'gerous. I disregard the blusterer, but this iz the sort ov man whoo cez raather les dhan he meenz."

"Must u interfere? Duz it reyaly matter if he marrese the gherl?"

"Conciddering dhat he undoutedly merderd hiz laast wife, I shoold sa it matterd verry much. Beciadz, the cliyent! Wel, wel, we nede not discus dhat. When u hav finnisht yor coffy u had best cum home widh me, for the bliadh Shinwel wil be dhare widh hiz repoert."

We found him shure enuf, a huge, coers, red-faist, scorbutic man, widh a pare ov vivvid blac ise which wer the oanly external cine ov

the verry cunning miand within. It ceemz dhat he had diavd doun intoo whaut wauz peculeyarily hiz kingdom, and becide him on the cetty wauz a brand which he had braut up in the shape ov a slim, flame-like yung woomman widh a pale, intens face, uethfool, and yet so woern widh cin and sorro dhat wun red the terribel yeerz which had left dhare leproous marc uppon her.

"This iz Mis Kitty Winter," ced Shinwel Jonson, waving hiz fat hand az an introducshon. "Whaut she doant no--wel, dhare, sheeysl speke for hercelf. Poot mi hand rite on her, Mr. Hoamz, within an our ov yor message."

"Ime esy too fiand," ced the yung woomman. "Hel, Lundoon, ghets me evvery time. Same adres for Porky Shinwel. Were oald maitz, Porky, u and I. But, bi Griaps! dhare iz anuther whoo aut too be doun in a lower hel dhan we if dhare wauz enny justice in the werld! Dhat iz the man u ar aafter, Mr. Hoamz."

Hoamz smiald. "I gather we hav yor good wishez, Mis Winter."

"If I can help too poot him whare he belongz, Ime yorz too the rattel," ced our vizsitor, widh feers ennergy. Dhare wauz an intencity ov haitred in her white, cet face and her blasing ise such az woomman celdom and man nevver can atane. "U neednt go intoo mi paast, Mr. Hoamz. Dhats niather here nor dhare. But whaut I am Adelbert Grooner made me. If I cood pool him doun!" She clucht frantically widh her handz intoo the are. "O, if I cood oanly pool him intoo the pit whare he haz poosht so menny!"

"U no hou the matter standz?"

"Porky Shinwel haz bene telling me. Hese aafter sum uther poor foole

and waunts too marry her this time. U waunt too stop it. Wel, u shuerly no enuf about this devvil too prevent enny decent gherl in her cencez waunting too be in the same parrish widh him."

"She iz not in her cencez. She iz madly in luv. She haz bene toald aul about him. She caerz nuthhing."

"Toald about the merder?"

"Yes."

"Mi Lord, she must hav a nerv!"

"She poots them aul doun az slaanderz."

"Coodnt u la pruifs befoer her cilly ise?"

"Wel, can u help us doo so?"

"Aint I a prooffe micelf? If I stood befoer her and toald her hou he uezd me----"

"Wood u doo this?"

"Wood I? Wood I not!"

"Wel, it mite be werth triying. But he haz toald her moast ov hiz cinz and had pardon from her, and I understand she wil not reyopen the qweschon."

"Ile la he didnt tel her aul," ced Mis Winter. "I caut a glimps ov wun or too merderz beciadz the wun dhat made such a fus. He wood speke ov sumwun in hiz velvet wa and then looc at me widh a stedly i and sa: He dide within a munth.' It wauznt hot are,

iather. But I tooc littel notice--u ce, I luvd him micelf at dhat time. Whautevver he did went widh me, same az widh this poor foole! Dhare wauz just wun thhing dhat shooc me. Yes, bi Griaps! if it had not bene for hiz poizonous, liying tung dhat explainz and suidhz, Ide hav left him dhat verry nite. Its a booc he haz--a broun lether booc widh a loc, and hiz armz in goald on the outcide. I thhinc he wauz a bit drunc dhat nite, or he wood not hav shone it too me."

"Whaut wauz it, then?"

"I tel u, Mr. Hoamz, this man colects wimmen, and taix a pride in hiz colescshon, az sum men colect moths or butterflise. He had it aul in dhat booc. Snapshot fotograafs, naimz, detailz, evverithhing about them. It wauz a beestly booc--a booc no man, even if he had cum from the gutter, cood hav poot tooghether. But it wauz Adelbert Groonerz booc aul the same. Soalz I hav roowind.' He cood hav poot dhat on the outcide if he had bene so mianded. Houwevver, dhats niather here nor dhare, for the booc wood not cerv u, and, if it wood, u caant ghet it."

"Whare iz it?"

"Hou can I tel u whare it iz nou? Its moer dhan a yere cins I left him. I no whare he kept it then. Hese a precice, tidy cat ov a man in menny ov hiz wase, so maby it iz stil in the pidjon-hole ov the oald buro in the inner studdy. Doo u no hiz hous?"

"Ive bene in the studdy," ced Hoamz.

"Hav u, dho? U havnt bene slo on the job if u oanly started this morning. Maby dere Adelbert haz met hiz mach this time. The outer studdy iz the wun widh the Chinese crockery in it--big glaas cubbord betwene the windose. Then behiand hiz desc iz the doer dhat leedz too the inner studdy--a smaull roome whare he keeps paperz and

thhingz."

"Iz he not afrade ov berglarz?"

"Adelbert iz no couward. Hiz werst ennemy coodnt sa dhat ov him. He can looc aafter himcelf. Dhaerz a berglar alarm at nite. Beciadz, whaut iz dhare for a berglar--unles dha got awa widh aul this fancy crockery?"

"No good," ced Shinwel Jonson, widh the decided vois ov the expert. "No fens waunts stuf ov dhat sort dhat u can niather melt nor cel."

"Qwite so," ced Hoamz. "Wel, nou, Mis Winter, if u wood caul here too-morro evening at five, I wood concidder in the meenwhile whether yor sugeschon ov ceying this lady personaly ma not be arainjd. I am exedingly obliajd too u for yor co-operaishon. I nede not sa dhat mi cliyents wil concidder libberaly----"

"Nun ov dhat, Mr. Hoamz," cride the yung woomman. "I am not out for munny. Let me ce this man in the mud, and Ive got aul I werct for--in the mud widh mi foot on hiz kerst face. Dhats mi price. Ime widh u too-morro or enny uther da so long az u ar on hiz trac. Porky here can tel u aulwase whare too fiand me."

I did not ce Hoamz agane until the following evening, when we diand wuns moer at our Strand restorant. He shrugd hiz shoalderz when I aasct him whaut luc he had had in hiz intervuu. Then he toald the stoery, which I wood repete in this wa. Hiz hard, dri staitment needz sum littel edditing too soften it intoo the termz ov reyal life.

"Dhare wauz no difficulty at aul about the apointment," ced Hoamz, "for the gherl gloerese in showing abgect feleyal obegens in aul cecondary thhingz in an atempt too atone for her flaigrant breche ov it

in her en'gajment. The Genneral foand dhat aul wauz reddy, and the firy Mis W. ternd up acording too shedjule, so dhat at haaf-paast five a cab depozsited us outside 104 Barcly Sqware, whare the oald soalger resiadz--wun ov dhose aufool gra Lundon caacelz which wood make a cherch ceme frivvolous. A footman shode us intoo a grate yello-kertaind drauwing-roome, and dhare wauz the lady awating us, demure, pale, celf-containd, az inflexibel and remote az a sno image on a mountane.

"I doant qwite no hou too make her clere too u, Wautson. Perhaps u ma mete her befoer we ar throo, and u can use yor one ghift ov werdz. She iz butifool, but widh the ethhereyal uther-werld buty ov sum fanattic whoose thauts ar cet on hi. I hav cene such facez in the picchuerz ov the oald maasterz ov the Middel Agez. Hou a beest-man cood hav lade hiz vile pauz uppon such a beying ov the beyond I canot imadgine. U ma hav notiast hou extreemz caul too eche uther, the spirrichuwal too the annimal, the cave-man too the ain'gel. U nevver sau a wers cace dhan this.

"She nu whaut we had cum for, ov coers--dhat villane had lost no time in poizoning her miand against us. Mis Winterz advent raather amaizd her, I thhinc, but she waivd us intoo our respective chaerz like a Revverend Abbes receving too raather leprous mendicants. If yor hed iz incliand too swel, mi dere Wautson, take a coers ov Mis Violet de Mervil.

"Wel, cer,' ced she, in a vois like the wind from an iasberg, yor name iz familleyar too me. U hav cauld, az I understand, too maline mi feyaansa, Barron Grooner. It iz oonly bi mi faatherz reqwest dhat I ce u at aul, and I worn u in advaans dhat ennithhing u can sa cood not poscibly hav the slitest efect uppon mi miand.'

"I wauz sorry for her, Wautson. I thaut ov her for the moment az I wood hav thaut ov a dauter ov mi one. I am not often elloqwent.

I use mi hed, not mi hart. But I reyaly did plede widh her widh aul the wormth ov werdz dhat I cood fiand in mi nachure. I picchuerd too her the afool posishon ov the woomman whoo oonly waix too a manz carracter

aafter she iz hiz wife--a woomman whoo haz too submit too be carest bi bluddy handz and letcherous lips. I spaerd her nuthhing--the shame, the fere, the agony, the hoaplesnes ov it aul. Aul mi hot werdz cood not bring wun tinj ov cullor too dhose ivory cheex or wun gleme ov emoashon too dhose abstracted ise. I thaut ov whaut the raascal had ced about a poast-hipnottic influwens. Wun cood reyaly beleve dhat she wauz livving abuv the erth in sum extattic dreme. Yet dhare wauz nuthhing indeffinite in her replise.

"I hav liscend too u widh paishens, Mr. Hoamz,' ced she. The efect uppon mi miand iz exactly az predicted. I am aware dhat Adelbert, dhat mi feyaansa, haz had a stormy life in which he haz inkerd bitter haitredz and moast unjust aspersonz. U ar oonly the laast ov a cerese whoo hav braut dhare slaanderz befoer me. Poscibly u mene wel, dho I lern dhat u ar a pade agent whoo wood hav bene eeqwaly willing too act for the Barron az against him. But in enny cace I wish u too understand wuns for aul dhat I luv him and dhat he luvz me, and dhat the opinyon ov aul the werld iz no moer too me dhan the twitter ov dhose berdz outside the windo. If hiz nobel nachure haz evver for an instant faulen, it ma be dhat I hav bene speshaly cent too rase it too its troo and lofty levvel. I am not clere,' here she ternd her ise uppon mi companyon, whoo this yung lady ma be.'

"I wauz about too aancer when the gherl broke in like a wherlwind. If evver u sau flame and ice face too face, it wauz dhose too wimmen.

"Ile tel u whoo I am,' she cride, springing out ov her chare, her mouth aul twisted widh pashon--'I am hiz laast mistres. I am wun ov a hundred dhat he haz tempted and uezd and roowind and throne intoo the reffuce hepe, az he wil u aulso. "Yor" reffuce hepe iz moer liacly too

be a grave, and maby dhats the best. I tel u, u foolish woomman, if u marry this man heeyl be the deth ov u. It ma be a broken hart or it ma be a broken nec, but heeyl hav u wun wa or the uther. Its not out ov luv for u Ime speking. I doant care a tinkerz kers whether u liv or di. Its out ov hate for him and too spite him and too ghet bac on him for whaut he did too me. But its aul the same, and u neednt looc at me like dhat, mi fine lady, for u ma be lower dhan I am befoer u ar throo widh it.'

"I shood prefer not too discus such matterz,' ced Mis de Mervil coaldly. Let me sa wuns for aul dhat I am aware ov thre passagez in mi feyaansase life in which he became entan'gheld widh desining wimmen, and dhat I am ashuerd ov hiz harty repentans for enny evil dhat he ma hav dun.'

"Thre passagez!' screemd mi companyon. U foole! U unnutterabel foole!'

"Mr. Hoamz, I beg dhat u wil bring this interv u too an end,' ced the icy vois. 'I hav obade mi faatherz wish in ceying u, but I am not compeld too liscen too the ravingz ov this person.'

"Widh an oath Mis Winter darted forward, and if I had not caut her rist she wood hav clucht this maddening woomman bi the hare. I dragd her toowordz the doer, and wauz lucky too ghet her bac intoo the cab widhout a public cene, for she wauz becide hercelf widh rage. In a coald wa I felt pritty fureyous micelf, Wautson, for dhare wauz sumthhing indescribably anoiying in the caam aluifnes and supreme celf-complazans ov the woomman whoome we wer trying too save. So nou

wuns agane u no exactly hou we stand, and it iz clere dhat I must plan sum fresh opening moove, for this gambit woant werc. Ile kepe in tuch widh u, Wautson, for it iz moer dhan liacly dhat u wil hav

yor part too pla, dho it iz just poscibel dhat the next moove ma li widh them raather dhan widh us."

And it did. Dhare blo fel--or hiz blo raather, for nevver cood I beleve dhat the lady wauz privvy too it. I thhinc I cood sho u the verry paving-stone uppon which I stood when mi ise fel uppon the placcard, and a pang ov horror paast throo mi verry sole. It wauz betwene the "Grand Hotel" and Charing Cros Staishon, whare a wun-legghed nuse-vendor displade hiz evening paperz. The date wauz just too dase aafter the laast conversaishon. Dhare, blac uppon yello, wauz the terribel nuse-shete:

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+-----+
| MERDEROUS |
| ATAC |
| UPPON |
| SHERLOC |
| HOAMZ. |
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I thhinc I stood stund for sum moments. Then I hav a confuezd recolecshon ov snatching at a paper, ov the remonstrans ov the man, whoome I had not pade, and, finaly, ov standing in the doerwa ov a kemmists shop while I ternd up the faitfool parragraaf. This wauz hou it ran:

"We lern widh regret dhat Mr. Sherloc Hoamz, the wel-none private detective, wauz the victim this morning ov a merderous asault which haz left him in a precareyous posishon. Dhare ar no exact detailz too hand, but the event ceemz too hav okerd about twelv oacloc in Regent Strete, outcide the Caffa Roiyal. The atac wauz made bi too men armd

widh stix, and Mr. Hoamz wauz beten about the hed and boddy, receving injurese which the doctorz describe az moast cereyous. He wauz carrede too Charing Cros Hospital, and aafterwordz incisted uppon beying taken too hiz ruimz in Baker Strete. The miscreyants whoo atact him apere too hav bene respectably drest men, whoo escaipt from the biastanderz bi paacing throo the Caffa Roiyal and out intoo Glaas'houz Strete behiand it. No dout dha belongd too dhat crimmlal fraternity which haz so often had ocaizhon too bewale the activvity and in'genuwity ov the injuerd man."

I nede not sa dhat mi ise had hardly glaanst over the parragraaf befoer I had sprung intoo a hansom and wauz on mi wa too Baker Strete. I found Cer Lezly Oacshot, the famous cerjon in the haul and hiz broowam wating at the kerb.

"No imejate dain'ger," wauz hiz repoert. "Too lascerated scalp wuindz and sum concidderabel broosez. Cevveral stitchez hav bene nescenary. Morfene haz bene in'gected and qwiyet iz ecenshal, but an intervuu ov a fu minnuets wood not be absoluetly forbidden."

Widh this permishon I stole intoo the darkend roome. The sufferer wauz wide awake, and I herd mi name in a hoers whisper. The bliand wauz thre-qworterz doun, but wun ra ov sunlite slaanted throo and struc the bandaijd hed ov the injuerd man. A crimzon pach had soact throo the white linnen compres. I sat becide him and bent mi hed.

"Aul rite, Wautson. Doant looc so scaerd," he mutterd in a verry weke vois. "Its not az bad az it ceemz."

"Thanc God for dhat!"

"Ime a bit ov a cin'ghel-stic expert, az u no. I tooc moast ov them

on mi gard. It wauz the cecond man dhat wauz too much for me."

"Whaut can I doo, Hoamz? Ov coers, it wauz dhat damd fello whoo cet them on. Ile go and thrash the hide of him if u ghiv the werd."

"Good oald Wautson! No, we can doo nuthhing dhare unles the polece la dhare handz on the men. But dhare ghet-awa had bene wel prepaerd. We ma be shure ov dhat. Wate a littel. I hav mi planz. The ferst thhing iz too exadgerate mi injurese. Dhaiyl cum too u for nuse. Poot it on thhic, Wautson. Lucky if I liv the weke out--concushon--delereyum--whaut u like! U caant overdoo it."

"But Cer Lezly Oacshot?"

"O, hese aul rite. He shal ce the werst cide ov me. Ile looc aafter dhat."

"Ennithhing els?"

"Yes. Tel Shinwel Jonson too ghet dhat gherl out ov the wa. Dhose butese wil be aafter her nou. Dha no, ov coers, dhat she wauz widh me in the cace. If dha daerd too doo me in it iz not liacly dha wil neglect her. Dhat iz ergent. Doo it too-nite."

"Ile go nou. Ennithhing moer?"

"Poot mi pipe on the tabel--and the tobacco-slipper. Rite! Cum in eche morning and we wil plan our campane."

I arainjd widh Jonson dhat evening too take Mis Winter too a qwiyet subberb and ce dhat she la lo until the dain'ger wauz paast.

For cix dase the public wer under the impreshon dhat Hoamz wauz at the doer ov deth. The boolletin z wer verry grave and dhare wer

cinnister parragraafs in the paperz. Mi continuwal vizsits ashuerd me dhat it wauz not so bad az dhat. Hiz wiry constichueshon and hiz determiand wil wer werking wunderz. He wauz recuvering faast, and I had suspishonz at tiamz dhat he wauz reyaly fianding himcelf faaster dhan he pretended, even too me. Dhare wauz a cureyous ceecretive streke in the man which led too menny dramattic efects, but left even hiz clocest frend ghescing az too whaut hiz exact planz mite be. He poosht too an extreme the axeyom dhat the oanly safe plotter wauz he whoo plotted alone. I wauz nerer him dhan enniwun els, and yet I wauz aulwase conshous ov the gap betwene.

On the cevventh da the stitchez wer taken out, in spite ov which dhare wauz a repoert ov erisipelaaz in the evening paperz. The same evening paperz had an anounsment which I wauz bound, cic or wel, too carry too mi frend. It wauz cimply dhat among the pascen'gerz on the Cunard bote *Rooritainyaa*, starting from Livverpoole on Frida, wauz the Barron Adelbert Grooner, whoo had sum important finanshal biznes too cettel in the Staits befoer hiz impending wedding too Mis Vियोlet de Mervil, oanly dauter ov, etc., etc. Hoamz liscend too the nuse widh a coald, concentrated looc uppon hiz pale face, which toald me dhat it hit him hard.

"Frida!" he cride. "Oanly thre clere dase. I beleve the raascal waunts too poot himcelf out ov dain'gerz wa. But he woant, Wautson! Bi the Lord Harry, he woant! Nou, Wautson, I waunt u too doo sumthhing for me."

"I am here too be uezd, Hoamz."

"Wel, then, spend the next twenty-foer ourz in an intencive studdy ov Chinese pottery."

He gave no explanaishonz and I aasct for nun. Bi long expereyens I had lernd the wizdom ov obegens. But when I had left hiz roome I wauct doun Baker Strete, revolving in mi hed hou on erth I wauz too carry out so strainj an order. Finaly I drove too the Lundon Liabrary in St. Jaimsez Sqware, poot the matter too mi frend Lomax, the sub-liabrareyan, and departed too mi ruimz widh a goodly vollume under mi arm.

It iz ced dhat the barrister whoo cramz up a cace widh such care dhat he can exammine an expert witnes uppon the Munda haz forgotten aul hiz foerst nollej befoer the Satterda. Certainly I shood not like nou too pose az an authorrity uppon cerammix. And yet aul dhat evening, and aul dhat nite widh a short interval for rest, and aul next morning I wauz sucking in nollej and comitting naimz too memmory. Dhare I lernd ov the haul-marx ov the grate artist-decoratorz, ov the mistery ov ciaclical daits, the marx ov the Hung-wu and the butese ov the Yung-lo, the ritingz ov Tang-iyng, and the gloerese ov the primmitive pereyod ov the Sung and the Uwan. I wauz charjd widh aul this informaishon when I cauld uppon Hoamz next evening. He wauz out ov bed nou, dho u wood not hav ghest it from the publisht repoerts, and he sat widh hiz much-bandaijd hed resting uppon hiz hand in the depth ov hiz favorite arm-chare.

"Whi, Hoamz," I ced, "if wun beleevd the paperz u ar diying."

"Dhat," ced he, "iz the verry impreshon which I intended too conva. And nou, Wautson, hav u lernd yor lessonz?"

"At leest I hav tride too."

"Good. U cood kepe up an intelligent conversaishon on the subject?"

"I beleve I cood."

"Then hand me dhat littel box from the mantel-pece."

He opend the lid and tooc out a smaul obgett moast caerfooly rapt in sum fine Eestern cilc. This he unfoalded, and discloazd a dellicate littel saucer ov the moast butifool depe-blu cullor.

"It needz caerfool handling, Wautson. This iz the reyal eg-shel pottery ov the Ming dynasty. No finer pece evver paast throo Cristese. A complete cet ov this wood be werth a kingz ransom--in fact, it iz doutfool if dhare iz a complete cet outside the Impereyal pallace ov Peking. The cite ov this wood drive a reyal conocer wiald."

"Whaut am I too doo widh it?"

Hoamz handed me a card uppon which wauz printed: "Dr. Hil Barton, 369 Haaf Moone Strete."

"Dhat iz yor name for the evening, Wautson. U wil caul uppon Barron Grooner. I no sumthhing ov hiz habbits, and at haaf-paast ate he wood probbably be dicen'gaijd. A note wil tel him in advaans dhat u ar about too caul, and u wil sa dhat u ar bringing him a spescimen ov an absolutly uneke cet ov Ming chinaa. U ma az wel be a meddical man, cins dhat iz a part which u can pla widhout juepliscity. U ar a colector, this cet haz cum yor wa, u hav herd ov the Barronz interest in the subject, and u ar not avers too celling at a price."

"Whaut price?"

"Wel aasct, Wautson. U wood certainly faul doun badly if u did

not no the vallu ov yor one waerz. This saucer wauz got for me bi Cer Jaimz, and cumz, I understand, from the colecshon ov hiz cliyent. U wil not exadgerate if u sa dhat it cood hardly be macht in the werld."

"I cood perhaps sugest dhat the cet shood be vallude bi an expert."

"Exelent, Wautson! U cintilate too-da. Sugest Cristy or Sutheby. Yor dellicacy prevents yor pooting a price for yorcelf."

"But if he woant ce me?"

"O, yes, he wil ce u. He haz the colecshon mainyaa in its moast acute form--and espeshaly on this subgett, on which he iz an acnollejd authorrity. Cit doun, Wautson, and I wil dictate the letter. No aancer neded. U wil meerly sa dhat u ar cumming, and whi."

It wauz an admirabel document, short, kerchous, and stimulating too the cureyosity ov the conocer. A district mescen'ger wauz july dispacht widh it. On the same evening, widh the preshous saucer in mi hand and the card ov Dr. Hil Barton in mi pocket, I cet of on mi one advenchure.

The butifool hous and groundz indicated dhat Barron Grooner wauz, az Cer

Jaimz had ced, a man ov concidderabel welth. A long wianding drive, widh banx ov rare shrubz on iather cide, opend out intoo a grate gravveld squire adornd widh statchuse. The place had bene bilt bi a South African goald king in the dase ov the grate boome, and the long, lo hous widh the turrets at the cornerz, dho an arkitecchural niatmare, wauz imposing in its cise and soliddity. A butler whoo wood hav adornd a bench ov bishops shode me in, and handed me over too a

plush-clad footman, whoo usherd me intoo the Barronz prezsens.

He wauz standing at the open frunt ov a grate cace which stood betwene the windose, and which containd part ov hiz Chinese colecshon. He ternd az I enterd widh a smaul broun vaaz in hiz hand.

"Pra cit doun, doctor," ced he. "I wauz loocking over mi one trezhuerz and wundering whether I cood reyaly afoerd too ad too them. This littel Tang spescimen, which daits from the cevventh cenchury, wood probbably interest u. I am shure u nevver sau finer wercmanship or a ritcher glase. Hav u the Ming saucer widh u ov which u spoke?"

I caerfooly unpact it and handed it too him. He ceted himself at hiz desc, poold over the lamp, for it wauz growing darc, and cet himself too exammine it. Az he did so the yello lite bete uppon hiz one fechuerz, and I wauz abel too studdy them at mi ese.

He wauz certainly a remarcably handsum man. Hiz Uropeyan reputaishon for buty wauz folly deservd. In figure he wauz not moer dhan ov middel cise, but wauz bilt uppon graisfool and active lianz. Hiz face wauz sworthy, aulmoast Oreyental, widh larj, darc, lan'gorous ise which mite esily hoald an iresistibel facinaishon for wimmen. Hiz hare and moostaash wer raven blac, the latter short, pointed, and caerfooly waxt. Hiz fechuerz wer reggular and plesing, save oonly hiz strate, thhin-lipt mouth. If evver I sau a merdererz mouth it wauz dhare--a croowel, hard gash in the face, comprest, inexorabel, and terribel. He wauz il-adviazd too trane hiz moostaash awa from it, for it wauz Nachuerz dain'ger-signal, cet az a worning too hiz victimz. Hiz vois wauz en'gaging and hiz mannerz perfect. In age I shood hav poot him at littel over thherty, dho hiz reccord aafterwordz shode dhat he wauz forty-too.

"Verry fine--verry fine indede!" he ced at laast. "And u sa u hav a cet ov cix too corespond. Whaut puzselz me iz dhat I shood not hav

herd ov such magnifficent spescimenz. I oanly no ov wun in In'gland too mach this, and it iz certainly not liacly too be in the market. Wood it be indiscrete if I wer too aasc u, Dr. Hil Barton, hou u obtaind this?"

"Duz it reyaly matter?" I aasct, widh az caerles an are az I cood muster. "U can ce dhat the pece iz genuwine, and, az too the vallu, I am content too take an experts valuwaishon."

"Verry mistereyous," ced he, widh a qwic, suspishous flash ov hiz darc ise. "In deling widh obgets ov such vallu, wun natchuraly wishez too no aul about the traanzacshon. Dhat the pece iz genuwine iz certane. I hav no douts at aul about dhat. But supose--I am bound too take evvery pocibility intoo acount--dhat it shood proove aafterwordz dhat u had no rite too cel?"

"I wood garanty u against enny clame ov the sort."

"Dhat, ov coers, wood open up the qweschon az too whaut yor garanty wauz werth."

"Mi bankerz wood aancer dhat."

"Qwite so. And yet the whole traanzacshon striax me az raather unnuezhual."

"U can doo biznes or not," ced I, widh indifferens. "I hav ghivven u the ferst offer az I understood dhat u wer a conocer, but I shal hav no difficulty in uther qworterz."

"Whoo toald u I wauz a conocer?"

"I wauz aware dhat u had ritten a booc uppon the subject."

"Hav u red the booc?"

"No."

"Dere me, this becumz moer and moer difficult for me too understand! U ar a conocer and colector widh a verry vallubel pece in yor colecshon, and yet u hav nevver trubbeld too consult the wun booc which wood hav toald u ov the reyal mening and vallu ov whaut u held. Hou doo u explane dhat?"

"I am a verry bizsy man. I am a doctor in practice."

"Dhat iz no aancer. If a man haz a hobby he follose it up, whautevver hiz uther persuets ma be. U ced in yor note dhat u wer a conocer."

"So I am."

"Mite I aasc u a fu qweschonz too test u? I am obliajd too tel u, doctor--if u ar indede a doctor--dhat the incident becumz moer and moer suspishous. I wood aasc u whaut doo u no ov the Emperor Shomu and hou doo u asoasheyate him widh the Shozo-in nere Naraa? Dere me, duz dhat puzsel u? Tel me a littel about the Northern We dinasty and its place in the history ov cerammix."

I sprang from mi chare in cimmulated an'gher.

"This iz intollerabel, cer," ced I. "I came here too doo u a favor, and not too be exammiand az if I wer a scoolboi. Mi nollej on these subjects ma be cecond oanly too yor one, but I certainly shal not aancer qweschonz which hav bene poot in so ofencive a wa."

He looct at me steddily. The lan'gor had gon from hiz ise. Dha

suddenly glaerd. Dhare wauz a gleme ov teeth from betwene dhose croowel lips.

"Whaut iz the game? U ar here az a spi. U ar an emmisary ov Hoamz. This iz a tric dhat u ar playing uppon me. The fello iz diying, I here, so he cendz hiz tuilz too kepe wauch uppon me. Uve made yor wa in here widhout leve, and, bi God! u ma fiand it harder too ghet out dhan too ghet in."

He had sprung too hiz fete, and I stept bac, bracing micelf for an atac, for the man wauz becide himcelf widh rage. He ma hav suspected me from the ferst; certainly this cros-examinaishon had shone him the truith; but it wauz clere dhat I cood not hope too deceve him. He diavd hiz hand intoo a cide-drauwer and rummaid fureyously. Then sumthhing struc uppon hiz ere, for he stood liscening intently.

"Aa!" he cride. "Aa!" and dasht intoo the roome behiand him.

Too steps tooc me too the open doer, and mi miand wil evver carry a clere picchure ov the cene within. The windo leding out too the garden wauz wide open. Becide it, loocking like sum terribel goast, hiz hed ghet widh bluddy bandagez, hiz face draun and white, stood Sherloc Hoamz. The next instant he wauz throo the gap, and I herd the crash ov hiz boddy among the lorel booshez outside. Widh a houl ov rage the maaster ov the hous rusht aafter him too the open windo.

And then! It wauz dun in an instant, and yet I cleerly sau it. An arm--a woommanz arm--shot out from among the leevz. At the same instant the Barron utterd a horribel cri--a yel which wil aulwase ring in mi memmory. He clapt hiz too handz too hiz face and rusht round the roome, beting hiz hed horibly against the waulz. Then he fel uppon the carpet, roling and riathing, while screme aafter screme rezounded throo the hous.

"Wauter! For Godz sake, wauter!" wauz hiz cri.

I ceezd a caraaf from a cide-tabel and rusht too hiz ade. At the same moment the butler and cevveral footmen ran in from the haul. I remember dhat wun ov them fainted az I nelt bi the injuerd man and ternd dhat aufool face too the lite ov the lamp. The vitreyol wauz eting intoo it evveriwheare and dripping from the eerz and the chin. Wun i wauz aulreddy white and glaizd. The uther wauz red and inflaimd. The fechuerz which I had admiard a fu minnuets befoer wer nou like sum butifool painting over which the artist haz paast a wet and foul spunj. Dha wer blerd, discullord, inhuman, terribel.

In a fu werdz I explaind exactly whaut had okerd, so far az the vitreyol atac wauz concernd. Sum had cliamd throo the windo and utherz had rusht out on too the laun, but it wauz darc and it had begun too rane. Betwene hiz screemz the victim rajd and raivd against the aven'ger. "It wauz dhat hel-cat, Kitty Winter!" he cride. "O, the she-devvil! She shal pa for it! She shal pa! O, God in hevven, this pane iz moer dhan I can bare!"

I baidhd hiz face in oil, poot cotton wauding on the rau cerfacez, and adminnisterd a hipodermic ov morfeyaa. Aul suspishon ov me had paast from hiz miand in the prezsens ov this shoc, and he clung too mi handz az if I mite hav the pouwer even yet too clere dhose ded-fish ise which gaizd up at me. I cood hav wept over the roowin had I not rememberd verry cleerly the vile life which had led up too so hidjous a chainj. It wauz loadhsome too fele the pauwing ov hiz barning handz, and I wauz releevd when hiz fammily cerjon, cloasly follode bi a speshalist, came too releve me ov mi charj. An inspector ov polece had aulso ariavd, and too him I handed mi reyal card. It wood hav bene uesles az wel az foolish too doo utherwise, for I wauz neerly az wel none bi cite at the Yard az Hoamz himcelf. Then I left dhat hous ov gloome and terror. Within an our I wauz at Baker Strete.

Hoamz wauz ceted in hiz familleyar chare, loocking verry pale and exhausted. Apart from hiz injurese, even hiz iarn nervz had bene shoct bi the events ov the evening, and he liscend widh horror too mi acount ov the Barronz traansformaishon.

"The wagez ov cin, Wautson--the wagez ov cin!" ced he. "Sooner or later it wil aulwase cum. God nose, dhare wauz cin enuf," he added, taking up a broun vollume from the tabel. "Here iz the booc the woomman tauct ov. If this wil not brake of the marrage, nuthhing evver cood. But it wil, Wautson. It must. No celf-respecting woomman cood stand it."

"It iz hiz luv diyary?"

"Or hiz lust diyary. Caul it whaut u wil. The moment the woomman toald us ov it I reyaliazd whaut a tremendous weppon wauz dhare, if we cood but la our handz on it. I ced nuthhing at the time too indicate mi thauts, for this woomman mite hav ghivven it awa. But I brooded over it. Then this asault uppon me gave me the chaans ov letting the Barron thhinc dhat no precaushonz nede be taken against me. Dhat wauz aul too the good. I wood hav wated a littel lon'gher, but hiz vizsit too Amerricaa foerst mi hand. He wood nevver hav left so compromising a document behiand him. Dhaerfoer we had too act at wuns. Berglary at nite iz imposcibel. He taix precaushonz. But dhare wauz a chaans in the evening if I cood oonly be shure dhat hiz atenshon wauz en'gaijd. Dhat wauz whare u and yor blu saucer came in. But I had too be shure ov the posishon ov the booc, and I nu I had oonly a fu minnuets in which too act, for mi time wauz limmited bi yor nollej ov Chinese pottery. Dhaerfoer I gatherd the gherl up at the laast moment. Hou cood I ghes whaut the littel packet wauz dhat she carrede so caerfooly under her cloke? I thaut she had cum aultooghether on mi biznes, but it ceemz she had sum ov her one."

"He ghest I came from u."

"I feerd he wood. But u held him in pla just long enuf for me too ghet the booc, dho not long enuf for an unnobservd escape. Aa, Cer Jaimz, I am verry glad u hav cum!"

Our coertly frend had apeerd in aancer too a preveyous summonz. He liscend widh the depest atenshon too Hoamsez acount ov whaut had okerd.

"U hav dun wunderz--wunderz!" he cride, when he had herd the narrative. "But if these injurese ar az terribel az Dr. Wautson descriabz, then shuerly our perpoce ov thworting the marrage iz sufishmently gaind widhout the uce ov this horribel, booc."

Hoamz shooc hiz hed.

"Wimmen ov the de Mervil tipe doo not act like dhat. She wood luv him the moer az a disfigguerd marter. No, no. It iz hiz moral cide, not hiz fyszical, which we hav too destroi. Dhat booc wil bring her bac too erth--and I no nuthhing els dhat cood. It iz in hiz one riting. She canot ghet paast it."

Cer Jaimz carrede awa boath it and the preshous saucer. Az I wauz micelf overju, I went doun widh him intoo the strete. A broowam wauz wating for him. He sprang in, gave a hurrede order too the cocaded coachman, and drove swiftly awa. He flung hiz overcote haaf out ov the windo too cuvver the armoreyal baringz uppon the pannel, but I had cene them in the glare ov our fanlite nun the les. I gaaspt widh cerprise. Then I ternd bac and acended the stare too Hoamsez roome.

"I hav found out whoo our cliyent iz," I cride, bersting widh mi grate nuse. "Whi, Hoamz, it iz----"

"It iz a loiyal frend and a shivvalrous gentelman," ced Hoamz, hoalding up a restraining hand. "Let dhat nou and for evver be enuf for us."

I doo not no hou the incriminating booc wauz uezd. Cer Jaimz ma hav mannaijd it. Or it iz moer probbabel dhat so dellicate a taasc wauz entrusted too the yung ladese faather. The efect, at enny rate, wauz aul dhat cood be desiard. Thre dase later apeerd a parragraaf in "The Morning Poast" too sa dhat the marrage betwene Barron Adelbert Grooner and Mis Viyolet de Mervil wood not take place. The same paper had the ferst polece-coert hering ov the proceedingz against Mis Kitty Winter on the grave charj ov vitreyol-throwing. Such extennuwating circumstaancez came out in the triyal dhat the centens, az wil be rememberd, wauz the lowest dhat wauz poscibel for such an ofens. Sherloc Hoamz wauz threttend widh a procecueshon for berglary, but when an obgett iz good and a cliyent iz sufishly illustreyous, even the ridgid British lau becumz human and elaastic. Mi frend haz not yet stood in the doc.

2

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE BLAANSHT SOALGER

The ideyaaz ov mi frend Wautson, dho limmited, ar exedingly pertinaishous. For a long time he haz wurrede me too rite an expereyens ov mi one. Perhaps I hav raather invited this percecueshon, cins I hav often had ocaizhon too point out too him hou superfisal ar hiz one acounts and too acuse him ov pandering too poppular taist insted ov confining himcelf ridgidly too facts and figguerz. "Tri it yorcelf, Hoamz!" he haz retorted, and I am compeld too admit dhat, havving taken mi pen in mi hand, I doo beghin too reyalise dhat the matter must be

presented in such a way as to interest the reader. The following case can hardly fail to do so, as it is among the strangest happenings in my collection, and it chances that Watson had no note of it in his collection. Speaking of my old friend and biographer, I would take this opportunity to remark that if I were myself with a companion in my various little inquiries it is not done out of sentiment or caprice, but it is that Watson has some remarkable characteristics of his own, too which in his modesty he has given small attention amid his exaggerated estimates of my own performances. A confederate whose force of conclusions and course of action is always dangerous, but won't too soon develop itself as a perpetual surprise, and too soon the future is always a closed book, is, indeed, an ideal helpmate.

I find from my notebook that it was in January, 1903, just after the conclusion of the Boer War, that I had my visit from Mr. James M. Dod, a big, fresh, sunburned, upstanding Briton. The good Watson had at that time deserted me for a wife, the only selfish action which I can recall in our association. I was alone.

It is my habit to sit with my back to the window and to place my visitors in the opposite chair, where the light falls full upon them. Mr. James M. Dod seemed somewhat at a loss how to begin the interview. I did not attempt to help him, for his silence gave me more time for observation. I have found it wise to impress clients with a sense of power, and so I gave him some of my conclusions.

"From South Africa, eh, I perceive."

"Yes, eh," he answered, with some surprise.

"Impertinent Yomanry, I fancy."

"Exactly."

"Middelcex Coer, no dout."

"Dhat iz so. Mr. Hoamz, u ar a wizzard."

I smiald at hiz bewilderd expreshon.

"When a gentelman ov virile aperans enterz mi roome widh such tan uppon hiz face az an In'glish sun cood nevver ghiv, and widh hiz hankerchefe in hiz sleve insted ov in hiz pocket, it iz not difficult too place him. U ware a short beard, which shose dhat u wer not a reggular. U hav the cut ov a riding-man. Az too Middelcex, yor card haz aulreddy shone me dhat u ar a stocbroker from Throgmorton Strete. Whaut uther redgiment wood u join?"

"U ce evverithhing."

"I ce no moer dhan u, but I hav traind micelf too notice whaut I ce. Houwevver, Mr. Dod, it wauz not too discus the ciyens ov observaishon dhat u cauld uppon me this morning. Whaut haz bene happening at Tuxbury Oald Parc?"

"Mr. Hoamz----!"

"Mi dere cer, dhare iz no mistery. Yor letter came widh dhat hedding, and az u fixt this apointment in verry prescing termz it wauz clere dhat sumthhing sudden and important had okerd."

"Yes, indede. But the letter wauz ritten in the aafternoone, and a good dele haz happend cins then. If Cuunel Emzwerth had not kict me out----"

"Kict u out!"

"Wel, dhat wauz whaut it amounted too. He iz a hard nale, iz Cuunel Emzwerth. The gratest martinet in the Army in hiz da, and it wauz a da ov ruf lan'gwage, too. I coodnt hav stuc the Cuunel if it had not bene for Godfrese sake."

I lit mi pipe and leend bac in mi chare.

"Perhaps u wil explane whaut u ar tauking about."

Mi cliyent grind mischevously.

"I had got intoo the wa ov suposing dhat u nu evverithhing widhout beying toald," ced he. "But I wil ghiv u the facts, and I hope too God dhat u wil be abel too tel me whaut dha mene. Ive bene awake aul nite puzling mi brane, and the moer I thhinc the moer increddibel duz it becum.

"When I joind up in Jannuwary, 1901--just too yeerz ago--yung Godfry Emzwerth had joind the same sqwaudron. He wauz Cuunel Emzwerths oanly sun--Emzwerth, the Crimeyan V.C.--and he had the fiting blud in him, so it iz no wunder he vollunteerd. Dhare wauz not a finer lad in the redgiment. We formd a frendship--the sort ov frendship which can oanly be made when wun livz the same life and shaerz the same joiz and sorrose. He wauz mi mate--and dhat meenz a good dele in the Army. We tooc the ruf and the smuidh tooggether for a yere ov hard fiting. Then he wauz hit widh a boollet from an ellefant gun in the acshon nere Dimond Hil outside Pretoreyaa. I got wun letter from the hospital at Cape Toun and wun from Southampton. Cins then not a werd--not wun werd, Mr. Hoamz, for cix munths and moer, and he mi clocest pal.

"Wel, when the wor wauz over, and we aul got bac, I rote too hiz faather and aasct whare Godfry wauz. No aancer. I wated a bit and then I rote agane. This time I had a repli, short and gruf. Godfry

had gon on a voiyage round the werld, and it wauz not liacly dhat he wood be bac for a yere. Dhat wauz aul.

"I wauznt sattisfide, Mr. Hoamz. The whole thhing ceemd too me so damd un'natchural. He wauz a good lad and he wood not drop a pal like dhat. It wauz not like him. Then, agane, I happend too no dhat he wauz are too a lot ov munny, and aulso dhat hiz faather and he did not aulwase hit it of too wel. The oald man wauz sumtiamz a boolly, and yung Godfry had too much spirrit too stand it. No, I wauznt sattisfide, and I determiand dhat I wood ghet too the roote ov the matter. It happend, houwevver, dhat mi one afaerz neded a lot ov stratennig out, aafter too yeeرز abcents, and so it iz oanly this weke dhat I hav bene abel too take up Godfrese cace agane. But cins I hav taken it up I mene too drop evverithhing in order too ce it throo."

Mr. Jaimz M. Dod apeerd too be the sort ov person whoome it wood be better too hav az a frend dhan az an ennemy. Hiz blu ise wer stern and hiz sqware jau had cet hard az he spoke.

"Wel, whaut hav u dun?" I aasct.

"Mi ferst moove wauz too ghet doun too hiz home, Tuxbury Oald Parc, nere Bedford, and too ce for micelf hou the ground la. I rote too the muther, dhaerfoer--I had had qwite enuf ov the kermudjon ov a faather--and I made a clene fruntal atac: Godfry wauz mi chum, I had a grate dele ov interest which I mite tel her ov our common expereyencez, I shood be in the naborhood, wood dhare be enny obgecshon, et ceteraa? In repli I had qwite an ameyabel aancer from her and an offer too poot me up for the nite. Dhat wauz whaut tooc me doun on Munda.

"Tuxbury Oald Haul iz inaxescibel--five mialz from enniwhare. Dhare wauz

no trap at the staishon, so I had too wauc, carreying mi sute-cace, and it wauz neerly darc befoer I ariavd. It iz a grate waundering hous, standing in a concidderabel parc. I shood juj it wauz ov aul sorts ov agez and stialz, starting on a haaf-timberd Elizabeethan foundaishon and ending in a Victoereyan portico. Incide it wauz aul panneling and tappestry and haaf-efaist oald picchuerz, a hous ov shaddose and mistery. Dhare wauz a butler, oald Ralf, whoo ceemd about the same age az the hous and dhare wauz hiz wife, whoo mite hav bene oalder. She had bene Godfrese ners, and I had herd him speke ov her az cecond oanly too hiz muther in hiz afecshonz, so I wauz draun too her in spite ov her qwere aperans. The muther I liact aulso--a gentel littel white mous ov a woomman. It wauz oanly the Cuunel himcelf whoome I bard.

"We had a bit ov a barny rite awa, and I shood hav wauct bac too the staishon if I had not felt dhat it mite be playing hiz game for me too doo so. I wauz shone strate intoo hiz studdy, and dhare I found him, a huge, bou-bact man widh a smoky skin and a stragling gra beard, ceted behiand hiz litterd desc. A red-vaind nose jutted out like a vulchuerz beke, and too feers gra ise glaerd at me from under tufted brouz. I cood understand nou whi Godfry celdom spoke ov hiz faather.

"Wel, cer,' ced he in a raasping vois. 'I shood be interested too no the reyal rezonz for this vizsit.'

"I aancerd dhat I had explaind them in mi letter too hiz wife.

"Yes, yes; u ced dhat u had none Godfry in Africaa. We hav, ov coers, oanly yor werd for dhat.'

"I hav hiz letterz too me in mi pocket.'

"Kiandly let me ce them.'

"He glaanst at the too which I handed him, and then he tost them bac.

"Wel, whaut then?' he aasct.

"I wauz fond ov yor sun Godfry, cer. Menny tise and memmorese united us. Iz it not natchural dhat I shood wunder at hiz sudden cilens and shood wish too no whaut haz becum ov him?'

"I hav sum recolecshon, cer, dhat I had aulreddy coresponded with u and had toald u whaut had becum ov him. He haz gon uppon a voiyage round the werld. Hiz helth wauz in a poor wa aafter hiz African expereyencez, and boath hiz muther and I wer ov opinyon dhat complete rest and chainj wer neded. Kiandly paas dhat explanaishon on too enny uther frendz whoo ma be interested in the matter.'

"Certainly,' I aancerd. But perhaps u wood hav the goodnes too let me hav the name ov the stemer and ov the line bi which he saild, tooghether with the date. I hav no dout dhat I shood be abel too ghet a letter throo too him.'

"Mi reqwest ceemd boath too puzsel and too irritate mi hoast. Hiz grate iabrouz came down over hiz ise and he tapt hiz fin'gherz impaishently on the tabel. He looct up at laast with the expreshon ov wun whoo haz cene hiz adversary make a dain'gerous moove at ches, and haz decided hou  
too mete it.

"Menny pepel, Mr. Dod,' ced he, wood take ofens at yor infernal pertinascity and wood thhinc dhat this incistens had reecht the point ov damd impertinens.'

"U must poot it doun, cer, too mi reyal luv for yor sun.'

"Exactly. I hav aulreddy made evvery alouwans uppon dhat scoer. I must aasc u, houwevver, too drop these inqwirse. Evvery fammily haz its one inner nollej and its one motiavz, which canot aulwase be made clere too outciderz, houwevver wel-intenshond. Mi wife iz ancshous too here sumthhing ov Godfrese paast which u ar in a posishon too tel her, but I wood aasc u too let the prezsent and the fuchure alone. Such inqwirse cerv no uesfool perpoce, cer, and place us in a dellicate and difficult posishon.'

"So I came too a ded end, Mr. Hoamz. Dhare wauz no ghetting paast it. I cood oanly pretend too axept the cichuwaishon and redgister a vou inwordly dhat I wood nevver rest until mi frendz fate had bene cleerd up. It wauz a dul evening. We diand qwiyetly, the thre ov us, in a gloomy, faded oald roome. The lady qweschond me egherly about her sun, but the oald man ceemd moroce and deprest. I wauz so boerd bi the whole proceding dhat I made an excuce az soone az I decently cood and retiard too mi bedroome. It wauz a larj, bare roome on the ground floer, az gloomy az the rest ov the hous, but aafter a yere ov sleping uppon the velt, Mr. Hoamz, wun iz not too particcular about wunz qworterz. I opend the kertainz and looct out intoo the garden, remarking dhat it wauz a fine nite widh a brite haaf-moone. Then I sat down bi the roering fire widh the lamp on a tabel beside me, and endevvord too distract mi miand widh a novvel. I wauz interupted, houwevver, bi Ralf, the oald butler, whoo came in widh a fresh supli ov coalz.

"I thaut u mite run short in the nite-time, cer. It iz bitter wether and these ruimz ar coald.'

"He hezsitated befoer leving the roome, and when I looct round he wauz standing facing me widh a wistfool looc uppon hiz rinkeld face.

"Beg yor pardon, cer, but I cood not help hering whaut u ced ov yung Maaster Godfry at dinner. U no, cer, dhat mi wife nerst

him, and so I ma sa I am hiz foster-faather. Its natchural we shood take an interest. And u sa he carrede himcelf wel, cer?'

"Dhare wauz no braver man in the redgiment. He poold me out wuns from under the rifelz ov the Boerz, or maby I shood not be here.'

"The oald butler rubd hiz skinny handz.

"Yes, cer, yes, dhat iz Maaster Godfry aul over. He wauz aulwase corajous. Dhaerz not a tre in the parc, cer, dhat he haz not cliamd. Nuthing wood stop him. He wauz a fine boi--and o, cer, he wauz a fine man.'

"I sprang too mi fete.

"Looc here!' I cride. U sa he wauz. U speke az if he wer ded. Whaut iz aul this mistery? Whaut haz becum ov Godfry Emzwerth?'

"I gript the oald man bi the shoalder, but he shranc awa.

"I doant no whaut u mene, cer. Aasc the maaster about Maaster Godfry. He nose. It iz not for me too interfere.'

"He wauz leving the roome, but I held hiz arm.

"Liscen,' I ced. U ar gowing too aancer wun qweschon befoer u leve if I hav too hoald u aul nite. Iz Godfry ded?'

"He cood not face mi ise. He wauz like a man hipnotiazd. The aancer wauz dragd from hiz lips. It wauz a terribel and unnexpected wun.

"I wish too God he wauz!' he cride, and, taring himcelf fre, he dasht from the roome.

"U wil thinc, Mr. Hoamz, dhat I reternd too mi chare in no verry happy state ov miand. The oald manz werdz ceemd too me too bare oonly wun interpretaishon. Cleerly mi poor frend had becum involvd in sum crimminal, or, at the leest, disrepputabel, traanzacshon which tucht the fammily onnor. Dhat stern oald man had cent hiz sun awa and hidden him from the werld lest sum scandal shood cum too lite. Godfry wauz a recles fello. He wauz esily influwenst bi dhose around him. No dout he had faulen intoo bad handz and bene misled too hiz roowin. It wauz a pitchous biznes, if it wauz indede so, but even nou it wauz mi juty too hunt him out and ce if I cood ade him. I wauz ancshously pondering the matter when I looct up, and dhare wauz Godfry Emzwerth standing befoer me."

Mi cliyent had pauzd az wun in depe emoashon.

"Pra continnu," I ced. "Yor problem presents sum verry unnuezhuwal fechuerz."

"He wauz outside the windo, Mr. Hoamz, widh hiz face prest against the glaas. I hav toald u dhat I looct out at the nite. When I did so, I left the kertainz partly open. Hiz figgure wauz fraimd in this gap. The windo came down too the ground and I cood ce the whole length ov it, but it wauz hiz face which held mi gase. He wauz dedly pale--nevver hav I cene a man so white. I reccon goasts ma looc like dhat; but hiz ise met mine, and dha wer the ise ov a livving man. He sprang bac when he sau dhat I wauz loocking at him, and he vannisht intoo the darcnes.

"Dhare wauz sumthhing shocking about the man, Mr. Hoamz. It wauznt meerly dhat gaastly face glimmering az white az chese in the darcnes. It wauz moer suttel dhan dhat--sumthhing slinking, sumthhing fertive, sumthhing ghilty--sumthhing verry unlike the franc, manly lad dhat I had

none. It left a feling ov horror in mi miand.

"But when a man haz bene soalgering for a yere or too widh bruther Boer az a plamate, he keeps hiz nerv and acts qwicly. Godfry had hardly vannisht befoer I wauz at the windo. Dhare wauz an auqword cach, and I wauz sum littel time befoer I cood thro it up. Then I nipt throo and ran doun the garden paath in the direcshon dhat I thaut he mite hav taken.

"It wauz a long paath and the lite wauz not verry good but it ceemd too me sumthhing wauz mooving ahed ov me. I ran on and cauld hiz name, but it wauz no uce. When I got too the end ov the paath dhare wer cevveral utherz braanching in different direcshonz too vareyous out'housez. I stood hezsitating, and az I did so I herd distinctly the sound ov a closing doer. It wauz not behiand me in the hous, but ahed ov me, sumwhare in the darcnes. Dhat wauz enuf, Mr. Hoamz, too ashure me dhat whaut I had cene wauz not a vizhon. Godfry had run awa from me and he had shut a doer behiand him. Ov dhat I wauz certane.

"Dhare wauz nuthhing moer I cood doo, and I spent an unnesy nite terning the matter over in mi miand and trying too fiand sum ththeyory which wood  
cuvver the facts. Next da I found the Cuunel raather moer concilleyatoery, and az hiz wife remarct dhat dhare wer sum placez ov interest in the naborhood, it gave me an opening too aasc whether mi prezsens for wun moer nite wood incommode them. A sumwhaut  
grudging  
aqweyescens from the oald man gave me a clere da in which too make mi observaishonz. I wauz aulreddy perfectly convinst dhat Godfry wauz in hiding sumwhare nere, but whare and whi remaind too be solvd.

"The hous wauz so larj and so rambling dhat a redgiment mite be hid awa in it and no wun the wiser. If the ceecret la dhare, it wauz difficult for me too pennetrate it. But the doer which I had herd close

wauz certainly not in the hous. I must exploer the garden and ce whaut I cood fiand. Dhare wauz no difficulty in the wa, for the oald pepel wer bizsy in dhare one fashon and left me too mi one devicez.

"Dhare wer cevveral smaul out'housez, but at the end ov the garden dhare wauz a detach't bilding ov sum cise--larj enuf for a gardenerz or a gaimkeperz rezidens. Cood this be the place whens the sound ov dhat shutting doer had cum? I aproacht it in a caerles fashon, az dho I wer stroling aimlesly round the groundz. Az I did so, a smaul, brisc, bearded man in a blac cote and boler hat--not at aul the gardener tipe--came out ov the doer. Too mi cerprise, he loct it aafter him and poot the ke in hiz pocket. Then he looct at me widh sum cerprise on hiz face.

"Ar u a vizsitor here?' he aasct.

"I explaind dhat I wauz and dhat I wauz a frend ov Godfrese.

"Whaut a pitty dhat he shoold be awa on hiz travvelz, for he wood hav so liact too ce me,' I continnude.

"Qwite so. Exactly,' ced he, widh a raather ghilty are. No dout u wil renu yor vizsit at sum moer propishous time.' He paast on, but when I ternd I observd dhat he wauz standing wauching me, haaf-conceeld bi the lorelz at the far end ov the garden.

"I had a good looc at the littel hous az I paast it, but the windose wer hevvily kertaind, and, so far az wun cood ce, it wauz empty. I mite spoil mi one game, and even be orderd of the premmicez, if I wer too audaishous, for I wauz stil conshous dhat I wauz beying waucht. Dhaerfoer, I stroald bac too the hous and wated for nite befoer I went on widh mi inqwiry. When aul wauz darc and qwiyet, I slipt out ov mi windo and made mi wa az cilently az poscibel too the mistereyous loj.

"I hav ced dhat it wauz hevvely kertaind, but nou I found dhat the windose wer shutterd az wel. Sum lite, houwevver, wauz braking throo wun ov them, so I concentrated mi atenshon uppon this. I wauz in luc, for the kertane had not bene qwite cloazd, and dhare wauz a crac in the shutter so dhat I cood ce the incide ov the roome. It wauz a chery place enuf, a brite lamp and a blasing fire. Opposite too me wauz ceted the littel man whoome I had cene in the morning. He wauz smoking a pipe and reding a paper."

"Whaut paper?" I aasct.

Mi cliyent ceemd anoid at the interupshon ov hiz narrative.

"Can it matter?" he aasct.

"It iz moast ecenshal."

"I reyaly tooc no notice."

"Poscibly u observd whether it wauz a braud-leeft paper or ov dhat smauler tipe which wun asoasheyaits widh weeclese."

"Nou dhat u menshon it, it wauz not larj. It mite hav bene "The Spectator". Houwevver, I had littel thaut too spare uppon such detailz, for a cecond man wauz ceted widh hiz bac too the windo, and I cood sware dhat this cecond man wauz Godfry. I cood not ce hiz face, but I nu the familleyar slope ov hiz shoalderz. He wauz lening uppon hiz elbo in an attichude ov grate mellancoly, hiz boddy ternd toowordz the fire. I wauz hezsitating az too whaut I shood doo when dhare wauz a sharp tap on mi shoalder, and dhare wauz Cuunel Emzwerth becide me.

"This wa, cer!' ced he in a lo vois. He wauct in cilens too the hous and I follode him intoo mi one bedroome. He had pict up a tiamtabel in the haul.

"Dhare iz a trane too Lundon at ate-thherty,' ced he. The trap wil be at the doer at ate.'

"He wauz white widh rage, and, indede, I felt micelf in so difficult a posishon dhat I cood oanly stammer out a fu incoherent apologese, in which I tride too excuse micelf bi erging mi anxyety for mi frend.

"The matter wil not bare discushon,' ced he abruptly. U hav made a moast damnabel intruizhon intoo the privacy ov our fammily. U wer here az a ghest and u hav becum a spi. I hav nuthhing moer too sa, cer, save dhat I hav no wish evver too ce u agane.'

"At this I lost mi temper, Mr. Hoamz, and I spoke widh sum wormth.

"I hav cene yor sun, and I am convinst dhat for sum rezon ov yor one u ar conceling him from the werld. I hav no ideyaa whaut yor motiavz ar in cutting him of in this fashon, but I am shure dhat he iz no lon'gher a fre agent. I worn u, Cuunel Emzwerth, dhat until I am ashuerd az too the saifty and wel-beying ov mi frend I shal never decist in mi efforts too ghet too the bottom ov the mistery, and I shal certainly not alou micelf too be intimmidated bi ennithhing which u ma sa or doo.'

"The oald fello looct diyabollical, and I reyaly thaut he wauz about too atac me. I hav ced dhat he wauz a gaunt, feers oald giyant, and dho I am no weecling I mite hav bene hard poot too it too hoald mi one against him. Houwever, aafter a long glare ov rage he ternd uppon hiz hele and wauct out ov the roome. For mi part, I tooc the apointed trane in the morning, widh the fool intenshon ov cumming strate too u and aasking for yor advice and acistans at the apointment for which

I had aulreddy ritten."

Such wauz the problem which mi vizsitor lade befoer me. It presented, az the aschute reder wil hav aulreddy perceevd, fu difficultese in its solueshon, for a verry limmited chois ov aulternatiavz must ghet too the roote ov the matter. Stil, elementary az it wauz, dhare wer points ov interest and novvelty about it which ma excuse mi placing it uppon reccord. I nou proceded, using mi familleyar method ov lodgical anallicis, too narro doun the poscibel solueshonz.

"The cervants," I aasct; "hou menny wer in the hous?"

"Too the best ov mi belefe dhare wer oonly the oald butler and hiz wife. Dha ceemd too liv in the cimpest fashon."

"Dhare wauz no cervant, then, in the detachht hous?"

"Nun, unles the littel man widh the beerd acted az such. He ceemd, houwevver, too be qwite a supereyor person."

"Dhat ceemz verry sugestive. Had u enny indicaishon dhat foode wauz convade from the wun hous too the uther?"

"Nou dhat u menshon it, I did ce oald Ralf carreying a baasket doun the garden wauc and gowing in the direcshon ov this hous. The ideyaa ov foode did not oker too me at the moment."

"Did u make enny local inqwirese?"

"Yes, I did. I spoke too the staishon-maaster and aulso too the inkeper in the village. I cimply aasct if dha nu ennithhing ov mi oald comrade, Godfry Emzwerth. Boath ov them ashuerd me dhat he had gon for a voiyage round the werld. He had cum home and then had aulmoast at

wuns started of agane. The stoery wauz evvidently universal y axepted."

"U ced nuthing ov yor suspishonz?"

"Nuthing."

"Dhat wauz verry wise. The matter shoold certainly be inqwiard intoo. I wil go bac widh u too Tuxbury Oald Parc."

"Too-da?"

It happend dhat at the moment I wauz clering up the cace which mi frend Wautson haz descriabd az dhat ov the Abby Scoole, in which the Juke ov Greminster wauz so deeply involvd. I had aulso a comishon from the Sultan ov Terky which cauld for imejate acshon, az polittical conceqwencez ov the gravest kiand mite arise from its neglect. Dhaerfoer it wauz not until the beghinning ov the next weke, az mi diary recordz, dhat I wauz abel too start foerth on mi mishon too Bedfordshire in cumpany widh Mr. Jaimz M. Dod. Az we drove too Ueston we pict up a grave and tascitern gentelman ov iarn-gra aspect, widh whoome I had made the nescesary arainjments.

"This iz an oald frend," ced I too Dod. "It iz poscibel dhat hiz prezsens ma be entiarly un'nescesary, and, on the uther hand, it ma be ecenshal. It iz not nescesary at the prezsent stage too go ferther intoo the matter."

The narratiavz ov Wautson hav acustomd the reder, no dout, too the fact dhat I doo not waist werdz or disclose mi thauts while a cace iz acchuwaly under concideraishon. Dod ceemd cerpriazd, but nuthing moer wauz ced and the thre ov us continnude our gerny tooghether. In the trane I aasct Dod wun moer qweschon which I wisht our companyon too here.

"U sa dhat u sau yor frendz face qwite cleerly at the windo,  
so cleerly dhat u ar shure ov hiz identity?"

"I hav no dout about it whautevver. Hiz nose wauz prest against the  
glaas. The lamplite shon fool uppon him."

"It cood not hav bene sumwun resembling him?"

"No, no; it wauz he."

"But u sa he wauz chainjd?"

"Oonly in cullor. Hiz face wauz--hou shal I describe it?--it wauz ov a  
fish-belly whiatnes. It wauz bleecht."

"Wauz it eeqwaly pale aul over?"

"I thhinc not. It wauz hiz brou which I sau so cleerly az it wauz prest  
against the windo."

"Did u caul too him?"

"I wauz too starteld and horrifide for the moment. Then I pershude him,  
az I hav toald u, but widhout rezult."

Mi cace wauz practicaly complete, and dhare wauz oonly wun smaual  
incident

neded too round it of. When, aafter a concidderabel drive, we ariavd  
at the strainj oald rambling hous which mi cliyent had descriabd, it wauz  
Ralf, the elderly butler, whoo opend the doer. I had reqwisishond  
the carrage for the da and had aasct mi elderly frend too remane  
within it unles we shood summon him. Ralf, a littel rinkeld oald  
fello, wauz in the convenshonal coschume ov blac cote and

pepper-and-sault trouserz, widh oanly wun cureyous vareyant. He woer  
broun

lether gluvz, which at cite ov us he instantly shuffeld of, laying  
them down on the haul-tabel az we paast in. I hav, az mi frend  
Wautson ma hav remarct, an abnormaly acute cet ov cencez, and a  
faint but incicive cent wauz aparrent. It ceemd too center on the  
haul-tabel. I ternd, plaist mi hat dhare, noct it of, stuipt too  
pic it up, and contriavd too bring mi nose within a foot ov the gluvz.  
Yes, it wauz undoutedly from them dhat the cureyous taary odor wauz  
oosing. I paast on intoo the studdy widh mi cace complete. Alaas, dhat  
I shood hav too sho mi hand so when I tel mi one stoery! It wauz bi  
conceling such linx in the chane dhat Wautson wauz enabeld too projuce  
hiz meretrishous finaalese.

Cuunel Emzwerth wauz not in hiz roome, but he came qwicly enuf on  
recete ov Ralfs message. We herd hiz qwic, hevvy step in the  
passage. The doer wauz flung open and he rusht in widh brisling beerd  
and twisted fechuerz, az terribel an oald man az evver I hav cene. He  
held our cardz in hiz hand, and he toer them up and stampd on the  
fragments.

"Hav I not toald u, u infernal bizsibody, dhat u ar wornd of  
the premmicez? Nevver dare too sho yor damd face here agane. If u  
enter agane widhout mi leve I shal be within mi riats if I use  
viyolens. Ile shoote u, cer! Bi God, I wil! Az too u, cer,"  
terning uppon me, "I extend the same worning too u. I am familleyar widh  
yor ignobel profeshon, but u must take yor reputed tallents too sum  
uther feeld. Dhare iz no opening for them here."

"I canot leve here," ced mi cliyent fermly, "until I here from  
Godfrese one lips dhat he iz under no restraint."

Our involluntary hoast rang the bel.

"Ralf," he ced, "tellefone doun too the county polece and aasc the inspector too cend up too cunstabelz. Tel him dhare ar berglarz in the hous."

"Wun moment," ced I. "U must be aware, Mr. Dod, dhat Cuunel Emzwerth iz within hiz riats and dhat we hav no legal status within hiz hous. On the uthar hand, he shoold reccognise dhat yor acshon iz prompted entiarly bi soliscichude for hiz sun. I venchure too hope dhat, if I wer aloud too hav five minnuets conversaishon widh Cuunel Emzwerth, I cood certainly aulter hiz vu ov the matter."

"I am not so esily aulterd," ced the oald soalger. "Ralf, doo whaut I hav toald u. Whaut the devvil ar u wating for? Ring up the polece!"

"Nuthhing ov the sort," I ced, pootting mi bac too the doer. "Enny polece interferens wood bring about the verry catastrofy which u dred." I tooc out mi noatbooc and scribbeld wun werd uppon a looce shete. "Dhat," ced I, az I handed it too Cuunel Emzwerth, "iz whaut haz braut us here."

He staerd at the riting widh a face from which evvery expreshon save amaizment had vannisht.

"Hou doo u no?" he gaaspt, citting doun hevvily in hiz chare.

"It iz mi biznes too no thhingz. Dhat iz mi trade."

He sat in depe thaut, hiz gaunt hand tugging at hiz stragling beard. Then he made a geschure ov resignaishon.

"Wel, if u wish too ce Godfry, u shal. It iz no doowing ov mine, but u hav foerst mi hand. Ralf, tel Mr. Godfry and Mr. Kent dhat in five minnuets we shal be widh them."

At the end ov dhat time we paast down the garden paath and found ourcelvz in frunt ov the mistery hous at the end. A smaul beereded man stood at the doer widh a looc ov concidderabel astonishment uppon hiz face.

"This iz verry sudden, Cuunel Emzwerth," ced he. "This wil disarainj aul our planz."

"I caant help it, Mr. Kent. Our handz hav bene foerst. Can Mr. Godfry ce us?"

"Yes; he iz wating incide." He ternd and led us intoo a larj, plainly fernisht frunt roome. A man wauz standing widh hiz bac too the fire, and at the cite ov him mi cliyent sprang forword widh outstrecht hand.

"Whi, Godfry, oald man, this iz fine!"

But the uther waivd him bac.

"Doant tuch me, Gimmy. Kepe yor distans. Yes, u ma wel stare! I doant qwite looc the smart Laans-Corporal Emzwerth, ov B Sqwardron, doo I?"

Hiz aperans wauz certainly extrordinary. Wun cood ce dhat he had indede bene a handsum man widh clere-cut fechuerz sunbernd bi an African sun, but motteld in patchez over this darker cerface wer cureyous whitish patchez which had bleecht hiz skin.

"Dhats whi I doant coert vizsitorz," ced he. "I doant miand u, Gimmy, but I cood hav dun widhout yor frend. I supose dhare iz

sum good rezon for it, but u hav me at a disadvaantage."

"I waunted too be shure dhat aul wauz wel widh u, Godfry. I sau u dhat nite when u looct intoo mi windo, and I cood not let the matter rest til I had cleerd thhingz up."

"Oald Ralf toald me u wer dhare, and I coodnt help taking a pepe at u. I hoapt u wood not hav cene me, and I had too run too mi burro when I herd the windo go up."

"But whaut in Hevvenz name iz the matter?"

"Wel, its not a long stoery too tel," ced he, liting a ciggaret.

"U remember dhat morning fite at Buffelsproote, outside Pretoreyaa, on the Eestern railwa line? U herd I wauz hit?"

"Yes, I herd dhat, but I nevver got particcularz."

"Thre ov us got ceeparated from the utherz. It wauz verry broken cuntry, u ma remember. Dhare wauz Cimpson--the fello we cauld Bauldy Cimpson--and Anderson, and I. We wer clering bruther Boer, but he la lo and got the thre ov us. The uther too wer kild. I got an ellefant boollet throo mi shoalder. I stuc on too mi hors, houwevver, and he gallopt cevveral mialz befoer I fainted and roald of the saddel.

"When I came too micelf it wauz niatfaul, and I raizd micelf up, feling verry weke and il. Too mi cerprise dhare wauz a hous cloce beside me, a faerly larj hous widh a braud stoope and menny windose. It wauz dedly coald. U remember the kiand ov num coald which uest too cum at evening, a dedly, cickening sort ov coald, verry different from a crisp helthhy frost. Wel, I wauz child too the bone, and mi oonly hope ceemd too li in reching dhat hous. I staggherd too mi fete and dragd micelf along, hardly conshous ov whaut I did. I hav a dim

memmory ov sloly acending the steps, entering a wide-opens doer, paacing intoo a larj roome which containd cevveral bedz, and throwing micelf doun widh a gaasp ov satisfacshon uppon wun ov them. It wauz unmade, but dhat trubbelde me not at aul. I droo the cloadhz over mi shivvering boddy and in a moment I wauz in a depe slepe.

"It wauz morning when I wakend, and it ceemd too me dhat insted ov cumming out intoo a werld ov sannity I had emerjd intoo sum extrordinary niatmare. The African sun fludded throo the big, kertainles windose, and evvery detale ov the grate, bare, whiatwausht dormitory stood out hard and clere. In frunt ov me wauz standing a smaull, dworf-like man widh a huge, bulbous hed, whoo wauz jabbering excitedly in Duch, waving too horribel handz which looct too me like broun spun'gez. Behiand him stood a groope ov pepel whoo ceemd too be intently amuezd bi the cichuwaishon, but a chil came over me az I looct at them. Not wun ov them wauz a normal human beying. Evvery wun wauz twisted or swollen or disfigguerd in sum strainj wa. The laafter ov these strainj monstrosities wauz a dredfool thhing too here.

"It ceemd dhat nun ov them cood speke In'glish, but the cichuwaishon waunted clering up, for the crechure widh the big hed wauz growing fureyously an'gry and, uttering wiald beest crise, he had lade hiz deformd handz uppon me and wauz dragghing me out ov bed, regardles ov the fresh flo ov blud from mi wuind. The littel monster wauz az strong az a bool, and I doant no whaut he mite hav dun too me had not an elderly man whoo wauz cleerly in authorrity bene attracted too the roome bi the hubbub. He ced a fu stern werdz in Duch and mi percecutor shranc awa. Then he ternd uppon me, gasing at me in the utmoast amaizment.

"Hou in the werld did u cum here?" he aasct, in amaizment. Wate a

bit! I ce dhat u ar tiard out and dhat wuinded shoalder ov yorz waunts loocking aafter. I am a doctor, and Ile soone hav u tide up. But, man alive! u ar in far grater dain'ger here dhan evver u wer on the battelfeeld. U ar in the Leper Hospital, and u hav slept in a leperz bed.'

"Nede I tel u moer, Gimmy? It ceemz dhat in vu ov the aproching battel aul these poor crechuerz had bene evaccuwated the da befoer. Then, az the Brittish advaanst, dha had bene braut bac bi this, dhare meddical superintendent, whoo ashuerd me dhat, dho he beleevd he wauz imune too the disese, he wood nun the les nevver hav daerd too doo whaut I had dun. He poot me in a private roome, treted me kiandly, and within a weke or so I wauz remuivd too the genneral hospital at Pretoreyaa.

"So dhare u hav mi tradgedy. I hoapt against hope, but it wauz not until I had reecht home dhat the terribel cianz which u ce uppon mi face toald me dhat I had not escaipt. Whaut wauz I too doo? I wauz in this loanly hous. We had too cervants whoome we cood utterly trust. Dhare wauz a hous whare I cood liv. Under plej ov ceecrecy, Mr. Kent, whoo iz a cerjon, wauz prepaerd too sta widh me. It ceemd cimpel enuf on dhose lianz. The aulternative wauz a dredfool wun--cegregaishon for life amung strain'gerz widh nevver a hope ov relece. But absolute ceecrecy wauz nescesary, or even in this qwiyet cuntry-cide dhare wood hav bene an outcri, and I shood hav bene dragd too mi horribel doome. Even u, Gimmy--even u had too be kept in the darc. Whi mi faather haz relented I canot imadgine."

Cuunel Emzwerth pointed too me.

"This iz the gentelman whoo foerst mi hand." He unfoalded the scrap ov paper on which I had ritten the werd "Leprocy." "It ceemd too me dhat if he nu so much az dhat it wauz safer dhat he shood no aul."

"And so it wauz," ced I. "Whoo nose but good ma cum ov it? I understand dhat oanly Mr. Kent haz cene the paishent. Ma I aasc, cer, if u ar an authorrity on such complaints, which ar, I understand, troppical or cemmy-troppical in dhare nachure?"

"I hav the ordinary nollej ov the edjucated meddical man," he observd, widh sum stifnes.

"I hav no dout, cer, dhat u ar folly competent, but I am shure dhat u wil agry dhat in such a cace a cecond opinyon iz vallubel. U hav avoided this, I understand, for fere dhat preshure shoold be poot uppon u too cegregate the paishent."

"Dhat iz so," ced Cuunel Emzwerth.

"I foersau this cichuwaishon," I explaind, "and I hav braut widh me a frend whoose disreshon ma absolutly be trusted. I wauz abel wuns too doo him a profeshonal cervice, and he iz reddy too advise az a frend raather dhan az a speshalist. Hiz name iz Cer Jaimz Saunderz."

The prospect ov an intervuu widh Lord Robberts wood not hav exited grater wunder and plezhure in a rau subaultern dhan wauz nou reflected uppon the face ov Mr. Kent.

"I shal indede be proud," he mermerd.

"Then I wil aasc Cer Jaimz too step this wa. He iz at prezsent in the carrage outcide the doer. Meenwhile, Cuunel Emzwerth, we ma perhaps acembel in yor studdy, whare I cood ghiv the nescesary explanaishonz."

And here it iz dhat I mis mi Wautson. Bi cunning qweschonz and ejaculaishonz ov wunder he cood ellevate mi cimpel art, which iz but cistematiagd common cens, intoo a proddigy. When I tel mi one stoery I

hav no such ade. And yet I wil ghiv mi proces ov thaut even az I gave it too mi smaul augens, which included Godfrese muther, in the studdy ov Cuunel Emzwerth.

"Dhat proces," ced I, "starts uppon the suposishon dhat when u hav eliminated aul which iz imposcibel, then whatevver remainz houwevver improbbabel, must be the truth. It ma wel be dhat cevveral explanaishonz remane, in which cace wun trise test aafter test until wun or uther ov them haz a convincing amount ov supoert. We wil nou apli this principel too the cace in point. Az it wauz ferst presented too me, dhare wer thre poscibel explanaishonz ov the cecluezhon or incarcerationaishon ov this gentelman in an out'hous ov hiz faatherz manshon. Dhare wauz the explanaishon dhat he wauz in hiding for a crime, or dhat he wauz mad and dhat dha wisht too avoid an acilum, or dhat he had sum disease which cauzd hiz cegregaishon. I cood thhinc ov no uther addeqwate solueshonz. These, then, had too be cifted and ballanst against eche uther.

"The crimminal solueshon wood not bare inspecshon. No unsolvd crime had bene repoerted from dhat district. I wauz shure ov dhat. If it wer sum crime not yet discuvverd, then cleerly it wood be too the interest ov the fammily too ghet rid ov the delinqwent and cend him abraud raather dhan kepe him conceeld at home. I cood ce no explanaishon for such a line ov conduct.

"Insannity wauz moer plausibel. The prezsens ov the cecond person in the out'hous sugested a keper. The fact dhat he loct the doer when he came out strengthhend the suposishon and gave the ideyaa ov constraint. On the uther hand, this constraint cood not be cevere or the yung man cood not hav got looce and cum doun too hav a looc at hiz frend.

U wil remember, Mr. Dod, dhat I felt round for points, aasking u, for exaampel, about the paper which Mr. Kent wauz reding. Had it bene "The Laancet" or "The Brittish Meddical Gernal" it wood hav helpt me. It iz not ilegal, houwevver, too kepe a lunatic uppon private premmicez so long az dhare iz a qwaulifide person in attendans and dhat the authorritese hav bene july notifide. Whi, then, aul this desperate desire for ceecrecy? Wuns agane I cood not ghet the ththeyory too fit the facts.

"Dhare remaind the thherd pocibillity, intoo which, rare and unliacly az it wauz, evverithhing ceemd too fit. Leprocy iz not uncommon in South Africaa. Bi sum extrordinary chaans this ueth mite hav contracted it. Hiz pepel wood be plaist in a verry dredfool posishon, cins dha wood desire too save him from cegregaishon. Grate ceecrecy wood be neded too prevent roomorz from ghetting about and subceqwent interferens bi the authorritese. A devoted meddical man, if sufishmently pade, wood esily be found too take charj ov the sufferer. Dhare wood be no rezon whi the latter shood not be aloud fredom aafter darc. Bleching ov the skin iz a common rezult ov the disese. The cace wauz a strong wun--so strong dhat I determiand too act az if it wer acchuwaly pruivd. When on ariving here I notiast dhat Ralf, whoo carrese out the meelz, had gluvz which ar impregnated widh dicinfectants, mi laast douts wer remuivd. A cin'ghel werd shode u, cer, dhat yor ceecret wauz discuverd, and if I rote raather dhan ced it, it wauz too proove too u dhat mi disreshon wauz too be trusted."

I wauz finnishig this littel anallicis ov the cace when the doer wauz opend and the austere figgure ov the grate dermatologist wauz usherd in. But for wuns hiz sfinx-like fechuerz had relaxt and dhare wauz a worm humannity in hiz ise. He strode up too Cuunel Emzwerth and shooc him bi the hand.

"It iz often mi lot too bring il-tidingz, and celdom good," ced he.  
"This ocaizhon iz the moer welcum. It iz not leprocy."

"Whaut?"

"A wel-marct cace ov sudo-leprocy or icthheyosis, a scale-like afecshon ov the skin, unciatly, obstinate, but poscibly curabel, and certainly non-infective. Yes, Mr. Hoamz, the cowincidens iz a remarcabel wun. But iz it cowincidens? Ar dhare not suttel foercez at werc ov which we no littel? Ar we ashuerd dhat the aprehenshon, from which this yung man haz no dout sufferd terribly cins hiz expoazhure too its contajon, ma not projece a fizensical efec which cimmulaitz dhat which it feerz? At enny rate, I plej mi profeschonel reputaishon---- But the lady haz fainted! I thhinc dhat Mr. Kent had better be widh her until she recuverz from this joiyous shoc."

3

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE MAZZARAN STONE

It wauz plezzant too Dr. Wautson too fiand himself wuns moer in the untidy roome ov the ferst floer in Baker Strete which had bene the starting-point ov so menny remarcabel advenchuerz. He looct round him at the ciyentiffic charts uppon the waul, the ascid-chard bench ov kemmicalz, the viyolin-cace lening in the corner, the cole-scuttel, which containd ov oald the piaps and tobacco. Finaly, hiz ise came round too the fresh and smiling face ov Billy, the yung but verry wise and tactfool page, whoo had helpt a littel too fil up the gap ov loanlines and isolaishon which surounded the satternine figgure ov the grate detective.

"It aul ceemz verry unchainjd, Billy. U doant chainj, iather. I hope

the same can be ced ov him?"

Billy glaanst, widh sum soliscichude, at the cloazd doer ov the bedroome.

"I thhinc hese in bed and aslepe," he ced.

It wauz cevven in the evening ov a luvly summerz da, but Dr. Wautson wauz sufishmently familleyar widh the iregularrity ov hiz oald frendz ourz too fele no cerprise at the ideyaa.

"Dhat meenz a cace, I supose?"

"Yes, cer; he iz verry hard at it just nou. Ime fritend for hiz helth. He ghets paler and thhinner, and he eets nuthhing. When wil u be pleezd too dine, Mr. Hoamz?' Mrs. Hudson aasct. Cevven-thherty, the da aafter too-morro,' ced he. U no hiz wa when he iz kene on a cace."

"Yes, Billy, I no."

"Hese following sumwun. Yesterda he wauz out az a wercman loocking for a job. Too-da he wauz an oald woomman. Faerly tooc me in, he did, and I aut too no hiz wase bi nou." Billy pointed widh a grin too a verry bagghy parrasol which leend against the sofaa. "Dhats part ov the oald woommanz outfit," he ced.

"But whaut iz it aul about, Billy?"

Billy sanc hiz vois, az wun whoo discuscez grate ceecrets ov State. "I doant miand telling u, cer, but it shood go no farther. Its this cace ov the Croun dimond."

"Whaut--the hundred-thouzand-pound berglary?"

"Yes, cer. Dha must ghet it bac, cer. Whi, we had the Prime Minnister and the Home Cecretary boath citting on dhat verry sofaa. Mr. Hoamz wauz verry nice too them. He soone poot them at dhare ese and prommiast he wood doo aul he cood. Then dhare iz Lord Cantelmere----"

"Aa!"

"Yes, cer; u no whaut dhat meenz. Hese a stif un, cer, if I ma sa so. I can ghet along widh the Prime Minnister, and Ive nuthhing against the Home Cecretary, whoo ceemd a civvil, obliging sort ov man, but I caant stand hiz lordship. Niather can Mr. Hoamz, cer. U ce, he doant beleve in Mr. Hoamz and he wauz against employiing him. Hede raather he faild."

"And Mr. Hoamz nose it?"

"Mr. Hoamz aulwase nose whautevver dhare iz too no."

"Wel, weeyl hope he woant fale and dhat Lord Cantelmere wil be confounded. But I sa, Billy, whaut iz dhat kertane for acros the windo?"

"Mr. Hoamz had it poot up dhare thre dase ago. Weve got sumthhing funny behiand it."

Billy advaanst and droo awa the drapery which screend the alcove ov the bo windo.

Dr. Wautson cood not restrane a cri ov amaizment. Dhare wauz a faximmily ov hiz oald frend, drescing-goun and aul, the face ternd thre-qworterz toowordz the windo and downwordz, az dho reding an invizibel booc, while the boddy wauz sunc depe in an arm-chare. Billy

detacht the hed and held it in the are.

"We poot it at different an'ghelz, so dhat it ma ceme moer life-like. I woodnt dare tuch it if the bliand wer not doun. But when its up u can ce this from across the wa."

"We uezd sumthhing ov the sort wuns befoer."

"Befoer mi time," ced Billy. He droo the windo kertainz apart and looct out intoo the strete "Dhare ar foke whoo wauch us from over yonder. I can ce a fello nou at the windo. Hav a looc for yorcelf."

Wautson had taken a step forword when the bedroome doer opend, and the long, thhin form ov Hoamz emerjd, hiz face pale and draun, but hiz step and baring az active az evver. Widh a cin'ghel spring he wauz at the windo, and had draun the bliand wuns moer.

"Dhat wil doo, Billy," ced he. "U wer in dain'ger ov yor life then, mi boi, and I caant doo widhout u just yet. Wel, Wautson, it iz good too ce u in yor oald qworterz wuns agane. U cum at a crittical moment."

"So I gather."

"U can go, Billy. Dhat boi iz a problem, Wautson. Hou far am I justifide in alouwing him too be in dain'ger?"

"Dain'ger ov whaut, Hoamz?"

"Ov sudden deth. Ime expecting sumthhing this evening."

"Expecting whaut?"

"Too be merderd, Wautson."

"No, no; u ar joking, Hoamz!"

"Even mi limmited cens ov humor cood evolv a better joke dhan dhat. But we ma be cumfortabel in the meentime, ma we not? Iz alcohol permitted? The gassogene and cigarz ar in the oald place. Let me ce u wuns moer in the customary arm-chare. U hav not, I hope, lernd too despise mi pipe and mi lammentabel tobacco? It haz too take the place ov foode these dase."

"But whi not ete?"

"Becauz the faccultese becum refiand when u starv them. Whi, shuerly, az a doctor, mi dere Wautson, u must admit dhat whaut yor digeschon gainz in the wa ov blud supli iz so much lost too the brane. I am a brane, Wautson. The rest ov me iz a mere appendix. Dhaerfoer, it iz the brane I must concidder."

"But this dain'ger, Hoamz?"

"Aa, yes; in cace it shood cum of, it wood perhaps be az wel dhat u shood berden yor memmory widh the name and adres ov the merderer. U can ghiv it too Scotland Yard, widh mi luv and a parting blescing. Cilveyus iz the name--Count Negretto Cilveyus. Rite it doun, man, rite it doun! 136 Moorcide Gardenz, N.W. Got it?"

Wautsonz onnest face wauz twitching widh anxiyety. He nu oonly too wel the imens risx taken bi Hoamz, and wauz wel aware dhat whaut he ced wauz moer liacly too be under-staitment dhan exageraishon. Wautson wauz  
aulwase the man ov acshon, and he rose too the ocaizhon.

"Count me in, Hoamz. I hav nuthhing too doo for a da or too."

"Yor moralz doant improove, Wautson. U hav added fibbing too yor uther vicez. U bare evvery cine ov the bizsy meddical man, widh caulz on him evvery our."

"Not such important wunz. But caant u hav this fello arested?"

"Yes, Wautson, I cood. Dhats whaut wurrese him so."

"But whi doant u?"

"Becauz I doant no whare the dimond iz."

"Aa! Billy toald me--the miscing Croun juwel!"

"Yes, the grate yello Mazzaran stone. Ive caast mi net and I hav mi fish. But I hav not got the stone. Whaut iz the uce ov taking "them"? We can make the werld a better place bi laying them bi the heelz. But dhat iz not whaut I am out for. Its the stone I waunt."

"And iz this Count Cilveyus wun ov yor fish?"

"Yes, and hese a sharc. He biats. The uther iz Sam Merton, the boxer. Not a bad fello, Sam, but the Count haz uezd him. Samz not a sharc. He iz a grate big cilly bool-hedded gudjon. But he iz flopping about in mi net aul the same."

"Whare iz this Count Cilveyus?"

"Ive bene at hiz verry elbo aul the morning. Uve cene me az an oald lady, Wautson. I wauz nevver moer convincing. He acchuwaly pict up mi parrasol for me wuns. Bi yor leve, madam,' ced he--haaf-Italleyan, u no, and widh the Suthern gracez ov manner when in the moode, but

a devvil incarnate in the uther moode. Life iz fool ov whimsical happeningz, Wautson."

"It mite hav bene tradgedy."

"Wel, perhaps it mite. I follode him too oald Stroubentcese werchshop in the Minnorese. Stroubentcy made the are-gun--a verry pritty bit ov werc, az I understand, and I raather fancy it iz in the opposite windo at the prezsent moment. Hav u cene the dummy? Ov coers, Billy shode it too u. Wel, it ma ghet a boollet throo its butifool hed at enny moment. Aa, Billy, whaut iz it?"

The boi had reyapeerd in the roome widh a card uppon a tra. Hoamz glaanst at it widh raizd iabrouz and an amuezd smile.

"The man himcelf. I had hardly expected this. Graasp the nettel, Wautson! A man ov nerv. Poscibly u hav herd ov hiz reputaishon az a shooter ov big game. It wood indede be a triyumfant ending too hiz exelent spoerting reccord if he added me too hiz bag. This iz a prooffe dhat he feelz mi to verry cloce behiand hiz hele."

"Cend for the polece."

"I probbably shal. But not just yet. Wood u glaans caerfooly out ov the windo, Wautson, and ce if enniwun iz hanging about in the strete?"

Wautson looct warily round the ej ov the kertane.

"Yes, dhare iz wun ruf fello nere the doer."

"Dhat wil be Sam Merton--the faithfool but raather fatchuwous Sam. Whare iz this gentelman, Billy?"

"In the wating-roome, cer."

"Sho him up when I ring."

"Yes, cer."

"If I am not in the roome, sho him in aul the same."

"Yes, cer."

Wautson wated until the doer wauz cloazd, and then he ternd earnestly too hiz companyon.

"Looc here, Hoamz, this iz cimply impscibel. This iz a desperate man, whoo stix at nuthhing. He ma hav cum too merder u."

"I shood not be cerpriazd."

"I incist uppon staying widh u."

"U wood be horibly in the wa."

"In hiz wa?"

"No, mi dere fello--in mi wa."

"Wel, I caant poscibly leve u."

"Yes, u can, Wautson. And u wil, for u hav nevver faild too pla the game. I am shure u wil pla it too the end. This man haz cum for hiz one perpoce, but he ma sta for mine." Hoamz tooc out hiz noatbooc and scribbeld a fu lianz. "Take a cab too Scotland Yard and ghiv this too Uwal ov the C.I.D. Cum bac widh the polece. The

felloose arest wil follo."

"Ile doo dhat widh joi."

"Befoer u retern I ma hav just time enuf too fiand out whare the stone iz." He tucht the bel. "I thhinc we wil go out throo the bedroome. This cecond exit iz exedingly uesfool. I raather waunt too ce mi sharc widhout hiz ceying me, and I hav, az u wil remember, mi one wa ov doowing it."

It wauz, dhaerfoer, an empty roome intoo which Billy, a minnute later, usherd Count Cilveyus. The famous game-shot, spoertsman, and man-about-toun wauz a big, sworthy fello, widh a formiddabel darc moostaash, shading a croowel, thhin-lipt mouth, and cermounted bi a long, kervd nose, like the beke ov an eghel. He wauz wel drest, but hiz brilleyant necti, shining pin, and glittering ringz wer flamboyant in dhare efect. Az the doer cloazd behiand him he looct round him widh feers, starteld ise, like wun whoo suspects a trap at evvery tern. Then he gave a viyolent start az he sau the impascive hed and the collar ov the drescing-goun which proected abuv the arm-chare in the windo. At ferst hiz expreshon wauz wun ov pure amaizment. Then the lite ov a horribel hope gleemd in hiz darc, merderous ise. He tooc wun moer glaans round too ce dhat dhare wer no witnecez, and then, on tipto, hiz thhic stic haaf raizd, he aproacht the cilent figgure. He wauz crouching for hiz final spring and blo when a coole, sardonnic vois greted him from the open bedroome doer:

"Doant brake it, Count! Doant brake it!"

The asascin staggherd bac, amaizment in hiz convulst face. For an instant he haaf raizd hiz loded cane wuns moer, az if he wood tern hiz viyolens from the effigy too the oridginal; but dhare wauz sumthhing in dhat stedly gra i and mocking smile which cauzd hiz hand too cinc too hiz cide.

"Its a pritty littel thhing," ced Hoamz, advaancing toowordz the image.  
"Taverneyer, the French moddeler, made it. He iz az good at waxwerx az  
yor frend Stroubentcy iz at are-gunz."

"Are-gunz, cer! Whaut doo u mene?"

"Poot yor hat and stic on the cide-tabel. Thanc u! Pra take a  
cete. Wood u care too poot yor revolver out aulso? O, verry good, if  
u prefer too cit uppon it. Yor vizsit iz reyaly moast oporchune, for I  
waunted badly too hav a fu minnuets chat widh u."

The Count scould, widh hevvy, threttening iabrouz.

"I, too, wisht too hav sum werdz widh u, Hoamz. Dhat iz whi I am  
here. I woant deni dhat I intended too asault u just nou."

Hoamz swung hiz leg on the ej ov the tabel.

"I raather gatherd dhat u had sum ideyaa ov the sort in yor hed,"  
ced he. "But whi these personal atenshonz?"

"Becauz u hav gon out ov yor wa too anoi me. Becauz u hav  
poot yor crechuerz uppon mi trac."

"Mi crechuerz! I ashure u no!"

"Noncens! I hav had them follode. Too can pla at dhat game,  
Hoamz."

"It iz a smaul point, Count Cilveyus, but perhaps u wood kiandly ghiv  
me mi prefix when u adres me. U can understand dhat, widh mi  
rootene ov werc, I shood fiand micelf on familleyar termz widh haaf the  
roagz gallery, and u wil agry dhat exepshonz ar invidjous."

"Wel, "Mr." Hoamz, then."

"Exelent! But I ashure u u ar mistaken about mi alejd agents."

Count Cilveyus laaft contempchuwously.

"Uther pepel can observ az wel az u. Yesterda dhare wauz an oald spoerting man. Too-da it wauz an elderly woomman. Dha held me in vu aul da."

"Reyaly, cer, u compliment me. Oald Barron Douson ced the nite befoer he wauz hangd dhat in mi cace whaut the lau had gaind the stage had lost. And nou u ghiv mi littel impersonaishonz yor kiandly prase!"

"It wauz u--u yorcelf?"

Hoamz shrugd hiz shoalderz. "U can ce in the corner the parrasol which u so poliatly handed too me in the Minnoresse befoer u began too suspect."

"If I had none, u mite nevver----"

"Hav cene this humbel home agane. I wauz wel aware ov it. We aul hav neglected oporchunitese too deploer. Az it happenz, u did not no, so here we ar!"

The Counts notted brouz gatherd moer hevvely over hiz mennacing ise. "Whaut u sa oanly maix the matter wers. It wauz not yor agents, but yor pla-acting, bizsibody celf! U admit dhat u hav dogd me. Whi?"

"Cum nou, Count. U uest too shoote liyonz in Algereyaa."

"Wel?"

"But whi?"

"Whi? The spoert--the exiatment--the dain'ger!"

"And, no dout, too fre the cuntry from a pest?"

"Exactly!"

"Mi rezonz in a nutshel!"

The Count sprang too hiz fete, and hiz hand involuntarily muivd bac too hiz hip-pocket.

"Cit doun, cer, cit doun! Dhare wauz anuther, moer practical, rezon. I waunt dhat yello dimond!"

Count Cilveyus la bac in hiz chare widh an evil smile.

"Uppon mi werd!" ced he.

"U nu dhat I wauz aafter u for dhat. The reyal rezon whi u ar here too-nite iz too fiand out hou much I no about the matter and hou far mi remooval iz absolutly ecenshal. Wel, I shood sa dhat, from yor point ov vu, it iz absolutly ecenshal, for I no aul about it, save oonly wun thhing, which u ar about too tel me."

"O, indede! And, pra, whaut iz this miscing fact?"

"Whare the Croun dimond nou iz."

The Count looct sharply at hiz companyon. "O, u waunt too no dhat,

doo u? Hou the devvil shood I be abel too tel u whare it iz?"

"U can, and u wil."

"Indede!"

"U caant bluf me, Count Cilveyus." Hoamsez ise, az he gaizd at him, contracted and litend until dha wer like too mennacing points ov stele. "U ar absolute plate-glaas. I ce too the verry bac ov yor miand."

"Then, ov coers, u ce whare the dimond iz!"

Hoamz clapt hiz handz widh amuezmnt, and then pointed a dericive fin'gher. "Then u doo no. U hav admitted it!"

"I admit nuthhing."

"Nou, Count, if u wil be rezonabel, we can doo biznes. If not, u wil ghet hert."

Count Cilveyus throo up hiz ise too the celing. "And u tauc about bluf!" ced he.

Hoamz looct at him thautfooly, like a maaster ches-player whoo medditaits hiz crouning moove. Then he throo open the tabel drauwer and droo out a sqwaut noatbooc.

"Doo u no whaut I kepe in this booc?"

"No, cer, I doo not!"

"U!"

"Me?"

"Yes, cer, "u"! U ar aul here--evvery acshon ov yor vile and dain'gerous life."

"Dam u, Hoamz!" cride the Count, widh blasing ise. "Dhare ar limmits too mi paishens!"

"Its aul here, Count. The reyal facts az too the deth ov oald Mrs. Harrold, whoo left u the Blimer estate, which u so rappidly gambeld awa."

"U ar dreming!"

"And the complete life history ov Mis Minny Warrender."

"Tut! U wil make nuthhing ov dhat!"

"Plenty moer here, Count. Here iz the robbery in the trane-de-lux too the Riveyaraa on Febroowary 13, 1892. Here iz the foerjd chec in the same yere on the Cradit Leyonnace."

"No; yor rong dhare."

"Then I am rite on the utherz! Nou, Count, u ar a card-player. When the uther fello haz aul the trumps, it saivz time too thro doun yor hand."

"Whaut haz aul this tauc too doo widh the juwel ov which u spoke?"

"Gently, Count. Restrane dhat egher miand! Let me ghet too the points in mi one humdrum fashon. I hav aul this against u; but, abuv aul, I hav a clere cace against boath u and yor fiting boolly in the cace ov the Croun dimond.

"Indede!"

"I hav the cabman whoo tooc u too Whiat'haul and the cabman whoo braut u awa. I hav the Comishonare whoo sau u nere the cace. I hav Iky Sanderz, whoo refuezd too cut it up for u. Iky haz peeht, and the game iz up."

The vainz stood out on the Counts foerhed. Hiz darc, hary handz wer clencht in a convulshon ov restraind emoashon. He tride too speke, but the werdz wood not shape themcelvz.

"Dhats the hand I pla from," ced Hoamz. "I poot it aul uppon the tabel. But wun card iz miscing. Its the King ov Dimondz. I doant no whare the stone iz."

"U nevver shal no."

"No? Nou, be rezonabel, Count. Concidder the cichuwaishon. U ar gowing too be loct up for twenty yeez. So iz Sam Merton. Whaut good ar u gowing too ghet out ov yor dimond? Nun in the werld. But if u hand it over--wel, Ile compound a felony. We doant waunt u or Sam. We waunt the stone. Ghiv dhat up, and so far az I am concernd u can go fre so long az u behave yorcelf in the fuchure. If u make anuther slip--wel, it wil be the laast. But this time mi comishon iz too ghet the stone, not u."

"But if I refuse?"

"Whi, then--alaas!--it must be u and not the stone."

Billy had apeerd in aancer too a ring.

"I thhinc, Count, dhat it wood be az wel too hav yor frend Sam at

this conferens. Aafter aul, hiz interests shood be represented. Billy, u wil ce a larj and ugly gentelman outside the frunt doer. Aasc him too cum up."

"If he woant cum, cer?"

"No viyolens, Billy. Doant be ruf widh him. If u tel him dhat Count Cilveyus waunts him he wil certainly cum."

"Whaut ar u gowing too doo nou?" aasct the Count, az Billy disapeerd.

"Mi frend Wautson wauz widh me just nou. I toald him dhat I had a sharc and a gudjon in mi net; nou I am drauwing the net and up dha cum tooghether."

The Count had rizens from hiz chare, and hiz hand wauz behiand hiz bac. Hoamz held sumthhing haaf protooding from the pocket ov hiz drescing-goun.

"U woant di in yor bed, Hoamz."

"I hav often had the same ideyaa. Duz it matter verry much? Aafter aul, Count, yor one exit iz moer liacly too be perpendicular dhan horizontal. But these anticipaishonz ov the fuchure ar morbid. Whi not ghiv ourcelvz up too the unrestrained enjoiment ov the prezsent?"

A sudden wiald-beest lite sprang up in the darc, mennacing ise ov the maaster crimminal. Hoamsez figgure ceemd too gro tauler az he groo tens and reddy.

"It iz no uce yor fin'ghering yor revolver, mi frend," he ced, in a qwiyet vois. "U no perfectly wel dhat u dare not use it, even if I gave u time too drau it. Naasty, noisy thhingz, revolverz, Count. Better stic too are-gunz. Aa! I thhinc I here the fary footstep ov

yor estimabel partner. Good da, Mr. Merton. Raather dul in the strete, iz it not?"

The prise-fiter, a hevvely bilt yung man widh a schupid, obstinate, slab-sided face, stood auqwordly at the doer, loocking about him widh a puzseld expreshon. Hoamsez debonare manner wauz a nu expereyens, and dho he vaigly felt dhat it wauz hostile, he did not no hou too counter it. He ternd too hiz moer aschute comrade for help.

"Whauts the game nou, Count? Whauts this fello waunt? Whauts up?" Hiz vois wauz depe and raucous.

The Count shrugd hiz shoalderz and it wauz Hoamz whoo aancerd.

"If I ma poot it in a nutshel, Mr. Merton, I shood sa it wauz "aul" up."

The boxer stil adrest hiz remarx too hiz asoasheyate.

"Iz this cove triying too be funny, or whaut? Ime not in the funny moode micelf."

"No, I expect not," ced Hoamz. "I thhinc I can prommice u dhat u wil fele even les humorous az the evening advaancez. Nou, looc here, Count Cilveyus. Ime a bizsy man and I caant waist time. Ime gowing intoo dhat bedroome. Pra make yorcelvz qwrite at home in mi abcens. U can explane too yor frend hou the matter lise widhout the restraint ov mi prezsens. I shal tri over the Hofman Barcarol uppon mi viyolin. In five minnuets I shal retern for yor final aancer. U qwrite graasp the aulternative, doo u not? Shal we take u, or shal we hav the stone?"

Hoamz widhdroo, picking up hiz viyolin from the corner az he paast. A fu moments later the long-draun, waling noats ov dhat moast haunting ov chuenz came faintly throo the cloazd doer ov the bedroome.

"Whaut iz it, then?" aasct Merton ancshously, az hiz companyon ternd too him. "Duz he no about the stone?"

"He nose a damd cite too much about it. Ime not shure dhat he duznt no aul about it."

"Good Lord!" The boxerz sallo face ternd a shade whiter.

"Iky Sanderz haz split on us."

"He haz, haz he? Ile doo him doun a thhic un for dhat if I swing for it."

"Dhat woant help us much. Weve got too make up our miandz whaut too doo."

"Haaf a mo," ced the boxer, loocking suspishously at the bedroome doer. "Hese a lery cove dhat waunts wauching. I supose hese not liscening?"

"Hou can he be liscening widh dhat music gowing?"

"Dhats rite. Maby sumbodese behiand a kertane. Too menny kertainz in this roome." Az he looct round he suddenly sau for the ferst time the effigy in the windo, and stood staring and pointing, too amaizd for werdz.

"Tut! its oonly a dummy," ced the Count.

"A fake, iz it? Wel, strike me! Madam Tussaud aint in it. Its the livving spit ov him, gown and aul. But them kertainz, Count!"

"O, confound the kertainz! We ar waisting our time, and dhare iz nun too much. He can lag us over this stone."

"The juce he can!"

"But heeyl let us slip if we oanly tel him whare the swag iz."

"Whaut! Ghiv it up? Ghiv up a hundred thouzand qwid?"

"Its wun or the uther."

Merton scracht hiz short-cropt pate.

"Hese alone in dhare. Lets doo him in. If hiz lite wer out we shood hav nuthhing too fere."

The Count shooc hiz hed.

"He iz armd and reddy. If we shot him we cood hardly ghet awa in a place like this. Beciadz, its liacly enuf dhat the polece no whautevver evvidens he haz got. Hallo! Whaut wauz dhat?"

Dhare wauz a vaghe sound which ceemd too cum from the windo. Boath men

sprang round, but aul wauz qwiyet. Save for the wun strainj figgure ceted in the chare, the roome wauz certainly empty.

"Sumthhing in the strete," ced Merton. "Nou looc here, guvnor, uve got the brainz. Shuerly u can thhinc a wa out ov it. If slugging iz no uce then its up too u."

"Ive fuild better men dhan he," the Count aancerd. "The stone iz here in mi ceecret pocket. I take no chaancez leving it about. It can

be out ov In'gland too-nite and cut intoo foer pecez in Amsterdam befoer Sunda. He nose nuthhing ov Van Ceddar."

"I thaut Van Ceddar wauz gowing next weke."

"He "wauz". But nou he must ghet of bi the next bote. Wun or uther ov us must slip round widh the stone too Lime Strete and tel him."

"But the fauls bottom aint reddy."

"Wel, he must take it az it iz and chaans it. Dhaerz not a moment too loose." Agane, widh the cens ov dain'ger which becumz an instinct widh the spoertsman, he pauzd and looct hard at the windo. Yes, it wauz shuerly from the strete dhat the faint sound had cum.

"Az too Hoamz," he continnude, "we can foole him esily enuf. U ce, the damd foole woant arest us if he can ghet the stone. Wel, weeyl prommice him the stone. Weeyl poot him on the rong trac about it, and befoer he fiandz dhat it iz the rong trac it wil be in Holland and we out ov the cuntry."

"Dhat soundz good too me!" cride Sam Merton, widh a grin.

"U go on and tel the Duchman too ghet a moove on him. Ile ce this sucker and fil him up widh a bogus confeshon. Ile tel him dhat the stone iz in Livverpoole. Confound dhat whining music; it ghets on mi nervz! Bi the time he fiandz it iznt in Livverpoole it wil be in qworterz and we on the blu wauter. Cum bac here, out ov a line widh dhat kehole. Here iz the stone."

"I wunder u dare carry it."

"Whare cood I hav it safer? If we cood take it out ov Whiat'haul sumwun els cood shuerly take it out ov mi lodgingz."

"Lets hav a looc at it."

Count Cilveyus caast a sumwhaut unflattering glaans at hiz asoasheyate, and disregarded the unwasht hand which wauz extended toowordz him.

"Whaut--dye thhinc Ime gowing too snach it of u? Ce here, mister, Ime ghetting a bit tiard ov yor wase."

"Wel, wel; no ofens, Sam. We caant afoerd too qworel. Cum over too the windo if u waunt too ce the buty properly. Nou hoald it too the lite! Here!"

"Thanc u!"

Widh a cin'ghel spring Hoamz had leept from the dummese chare and had graaspt the preshous juwel. He held it nou in wun hand, while hiz uther pointed a revolver at the Counts hed. The too villainz staggherd bac in utter amaizment. Befoer dha had recuvverd Hoamz had prest the electric bel.

"No viyolens, gentelmen--no viyolens, I beg ov u! Concidder the fernichure! It must be verry clere too u dhat yor posishon iz an imposcibel wun. The polece ar wating belo."

The Counts bewilderment overmaasterd hiz rage and fere.

"But hou the juce----?" he gaaspt.

"Yor cerprise iz verry natchural. U ar not aware dhat a cecond doer from mi bedroome leedz behiand dhat kertane. I fancede dhat u must hav herd me when I displaist the figgure, but luc wauz on mi cide. It gave me a chaans ov liscening too yor racy conversaishon which wood

hav bene painfooly constraind had u bene aware ov mi prezsens."

The Count gave a geschure ov resignaishon.

"We ghiv u best, Hoamz. I beleve u ar the devvil himcelf."

"Not far from him, at enny rate," Hoamz aancerd, widh a polite smile.

Sam Mertonz slo intelect had oonly gradjuwaly apreesheyated the cichuwaishon. Nou, az the sound ov hevvy steps came from the staerz outcide, he broke cilens at laast.

"A fare cop!" ced he. "But, I sa, whaut about dhat bloomin fiddel! I here it yet."

"Tut, tut!" Hoamz aancerd. "U ar perfectly rite. Let it pla! These moddern grammofanz ar a remarcabel invenshon."

Dhare wauz an inrush ov polece, the handcufs clict and the crimminalz wer led too the wating cab. Wautson lin'gherd widh Hoamz, con'gratchulating him uppon this fresh lefe added too hiz lorelz. Wuns moer dhare conversaishon wauz interupted bi the imperterbabel Billy widh hiz card-tra.

"Lord Cantelmere, cer."

"Sho him up, Billy. This iz the emminent pere whoo represents the verry hiyest interests," ced Hoamz. "He iz an exelent and loiyal person, but raather ov the oald rajeme. Shal we make him unbend? Dare we venchure uppon a slite libberty? He nose, we ma con'gechchure, nuthhing ov whaut haz okerd."

The doer opennd too admit a thhin, austere figgure widh a hatchet face and

drooping mid-Victoreyan whiskerz ov a gloscy blacnes which hardly coresponded widh the rounded shoalderz and febel gate. Hoamz advaanst affably, and shooc an unresponcive hand.

"Hou-doo-u-doo, Lord Cantelmere? It iz chilly, for the time ov yere, but raather worm indoerz. Ma I take yor overcote?"

"No, I thanc u; I wil not take it of."

Hoamz lade hiz hand incistently uppon the sleve.

"Pra alou me! Mi frend Dr. Wautson wood ashure u dhat these chain'gez ov temperachure ar moast incidjous."

Hiz lordship shooc himcelf fre widh sum impaishens.

"I am qwite cumfortabel, cer. I hav no nede too sta. I hav cimply looct in too no hou yor celf-apointed taasc wauz progrescing."

"It iz difficult--verry difficult."

"I feerd dhat u wood fiand it so."

Dhare wauz a distinct snere in the oald coercherz werdz and manner.

"Evvery man fiandz hiz limitaishonz, Mr. Hoamz, but at leest it cuerz us ov the weecnes ov celf-satisfacshon."

"Yes, cer, I hav bene much perplext."

"No dout."

"Espeshaly uppon wun point. Poscibly u cood help me uppon it?"

"U apli for mi advice raather late in the da. I thaut dhat u had yor one aul-sufishent methodz. Stil, I am reddy too help u."

"U ce, Lord Cantelmere, we can no dout frame a cace against the acchuwal thheevz."

"When u hav caut them."

"Exactly. But the qweschon iz--hou shal we procede against the recever?"

"Iz this not raather premachure?"

"It iz az wel too hav our planz reddy. Nou, whaut wood u regard az final evvidens against the recever?"

"The acchuwal poseshon ov the stone."

"U wood arest him uppon dhat?"

"Moast undoutedly."

Hoamz celdom laaft, but he got az nere it az hiz oald frend Wautson cood remember.

"In dhat cace, mi dere cer, I shal be under the painfool necescity ov advising yor arest."

Lord Cantelmere wauz verry an'gry. Sum ov the ainshent fiarz flickerd up intoo hiz sallo cheex.

"U take a grate libberty, Mr. Hoamz. In fifty yeerz ov ofishal life I canot recaul such a cace. I am a bizsy man, cer, en'gaijd uppon important afaerz, and I hav no time or taist for foolish joax. I

ma tel u francly, cer, dhat I hav nevver bene a belever in yor pouwerz, and dhat I hav aulwase bene ov the opinyon dhat the matter wauz far safer in the handz ov the reggular polece foers. Yor conduct confirmz aul mi concluezhonz. I hav the onnor, cer, too wish u good evening."

Hoamz had swiftly chainjd hiz posishon and wauz betwene the pere and the doer.

"Wun moment, cer," ced he. "Too acchuwaly go of widh the Mazzaran stone wood be a moer cereyous ofens dhan too be found in temporary poseshon ov it."

"Cer, this iz intollerabel! Let me paas."

"Poot yor hand in the rite-hand pocket ov yor overcote."

"Whaut doo u mene, cer?"

"Cum--cum; doo whaut I aasc."

An instant later the amaizd pere wauz standing, blinking and stammering, widh the grate yello stone on hiz shaking paam.

"Whaut! Whaut! Hou iz this, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Too bad, Lord Cantelmere, too bad!" cride Hoamz. "Mi oald frend here wil tel u dhat I hav an impish habbit ov practical joking. Aulso dhat I can nevver resist a dramattic cichuwaishon. I tooc the libberty--the verry grate libberty, I admit--ov pooting the stone intoo yor pocket at the beghinning ov our intervü."

The oald pere staerd from the stone too the smiling face befoer him.

"Cer, I am bewilderd. But--yes--it iz indede the Mazzaran stone. We ar graitley yor dettorz, Mr. Hoamz. Yor cens ov humor ma, az u admit, be sumwhaut perverted, and its exhibishon remarcably untiamly, but at leest I widhdrau enny reflecshon I hav made uppon yor amasing profeshonal pouwerz. But hou----"

"The cace iz but haaf finnisht; the detailz can wate. No dout, Lord Cantelmere, yor plezhure in telling ov this suxesfool rezult in the exaulted cerkel too which u retern wil be sum smaul atoanment for mi practical joke. Billy, u wil sho hiz lordship out, and tel Mrs. Hudson dhat I shood be glad if she wood cend up dinner for too az soone az poscibel."

4

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE THRE GABELZ

I doant thhinc dhat enny ov mi advenchuerz widh Mr. Sherloc Hoamz opend qwite so abruptly, or so dramatticaly, az dhat which I asoasheyate widh The Thre Gabelz. I had not cene Hoamz for sum dase, and had no ideyaa ov the nu channel intoo which hiz activvitesse had bene directed. He wauz in a chatty moode dhat morning, houwevver, and had just cetteld me intoo the wel-woern lo arm-chare on wun cide ov the fire, while he had kerld down widh hiz pipe in hiz mouth uppon the opposite chare, when our vizsitor ariavd. If I had ced dhat a mad bool had ariavd, it wood ghiv a clerer impreshon ov whaut okerd.

The doer had flone open and a huge neegro had berst intoo the roome. He

wood hav bene a commic figgure if he had not bene teriffic, for he wauz drest in a verry loud gra chec sute widh a flowing sammon-cullord ti. Hiz braud face and flattend nose wer thrust forword, az hiz sullen darc ise, widh a smoaldering gleme ov mallice in them, ternd from wun ov us too the uther.

"Which ov u genelmen iz Mascer Hoamz?" he aasct.

Hoamz raizd hiz pipe widh a lan'gwid smile.

"O! its u, iz it?" ced our vizsitor, cumming widh an unplezzant, stelthhy step round the an'ghel ov the tabel. "Ce here, Mascer Hoamz, u kepe yor handz out ov uther foax biznes. Leve foax too mannage dhare one afaerz. Got dhat, Mascer Hoamz?"

"Kepe on tauking," ced Hoamz. "Its fine."

"O! its fine, iz it?" grould the savvage. "It woant be so dam fine if I hav too trim u up a bit. Ive handeld yor kiand befoer nou, and dha didnt looc fine when I wauz throo widh them. Looc at dhat, Mascer Hoamz!"

He swung a huge notted lump ov a fist under mi frendz nose. Hoamz exammiand it cloasly widh an are ov grate interest. "Wer u born so?" he aasct. "Or did it cum bi degrese?"

It ma hav bene the icy cuilnes ov mi frend, or it ma hav bene the slite clatter which I made az I pict up the poker. In enny cace, our vizsitorz manner became les flamboiyant.

"Wel, Ive ghivven u fare warnin," ced he. "Ive a frend dhats interested out Harro wa--u no whaut Ime mening--and he doant intend too hav no buttin in bi u. Got dhat? U aint the lau, and I aint the lau iather, and if u cum in Ile be on hand aulso. Doant

u forghet it."

"Ive waunted too mete u for sum time," ced Hoamz. "I woant aasc u too cit down, for I doant like the smel ov u, but arnt u Steve Dixy, the brooser?"

"Dhats mi name, Mascer Hoamz, and ule ghet poot throo it for shure if u ghiv me enny lip."

"It iz certainly the laast thhing u nede," ced Hoamz, staring at our vizsitorz hidjous mouth. "But it wauz the killing ov yung Perkinz outcide the Hoborn Bar---- Whaut! yor not gowing?"

The neegro had sprung bac, and hiz face wauz ledden. "I woant liscen too no such tauc," ced he. "Whaut hav I too doo widh this are Perkinz, Mascer Hoamz? I wauz tranin at the Bool Ring in Bermingam when this boi dun gon ghet intoo trubbel."

"Yes, ule tel the madgistrate about it, Steve," ced Hoamz. "Ive bene wauching u and Barny Stocdale----"

"So help me the Lord! Mascer Hoamz----"

"Dhats enuf. Ghet out ov it. Ile pic u up when I waunt u."

"Good mornin, Mascer Hoamz. I hope dhare aint no hard felinz about this are vizsit?"

"Dhare wil be unles u tel me whoo cent u."

"Whi, dhare aint no ceecret about dhat, Mascer Hoamz. It wauz dhat same genelman dhat u hav just dun gon menshon."

"And whoo cet him on too it?"

"Celp me. I doant no, Mascer Hoamz. He just sa, Steve, u go ce Mr. Hoamz, and tel him hiz life aint safe if he go doun Harro wa.' Dhats the whole truth."

Without wating for enny ferther qweschoning, our vizsitor bolted out ov the roome aulmoast az precippitaitly az he had enterd. Hoamz noct out the ashez ov hiz pipe widh a qwiyet chuckel.

"I am glad u wer not foerst too brake hiz woolly hed, Wautson. I observd yor manuverz widh the poker. But he iz reyaly raather a harmles fello, a grate muscular, foolish, blustering baby, and esily coud, az u hav cene. He iz wun ov the Spencer Jon gang and haz taken part in sum derty werc ov late which I ma clere up when I hav time. Hiz imejate principal, Barny, iz a moer aschute person. Dha speshalise in asaults, intimidashon, and the like. Whaut I waunt too no iz, whoo iz at the bac ov them on this particcular ocaizhon?"

"But whi doo dha waunt too intimmidate u?"

"It iz this Harro Weeld cace. It deciadz me too looc intoo the matter, for if it iz werth enniwunz while too take so much trubbel, dhare must be sumthhing in it."

"But whaut iz it?"

"I wauz gowing too tel u when we had this commic interlude. Here iz Mrs. Maberlese note. If u care too cum widh me we wil wire her and go out at wuns."

DERE MR. SHERLOC HOAMZ, (I red)--

I hav had a suxeshon ov strainj incidents oker too me in conecshon

widh this hous, and I shood much vally yor advice. U wood fiand me at home enny time too-morro. The hous iz within a short wauc ov the Weeld Staishon. I beleve dhat mi late huzband, Mortimer Maberly, wauz wun ov yor erly cliyents.

Yorz faithfooly,  
MARY MABERLY.

The adres wauz "The Thre Gabelz, Harro Weeld."

"So dhats dhat!" ced Hoamz. "And nou, if u can spare the time, Wautson, we wil ghet uppon our wa."

A short railwa gerny, and a shorter drive, braut us too the hous, a bric and timber villaa, standing in its one aker ov undevellopt graasland. Thre smaul progecshonz abuv the upper windose made a febel atempt too justifi its name. Behiand wauz a grove ov mellancoly, haaf-grone pianz, and the whole aspect ov the place wauz poor and deprescing. Nun the les, we found the hous too be wel fernisht, and the lady whoo receevd us wauz a moast en'gaging elderly person, whoo boer evvery marc ov refianment and culchure.

"I remember yor huzband wel, maddam," ced Hoamz, "dho it iz sum yeez cins he uezd mi cervicez in sum triafling matter."

"Probbably u wood be moer familleyar widh the name ov mi sun Douglas."

Hoamz looct at her widh grate interest.

"Dere me! Ar u the muther ov Douglas Maberly? I nu him sliatly. But, ov coers, aul Lundon nu him. Whaut a magnificent crechure he wauz! Whare iz he nou?"

"Ded, Mr. Hoamz, ded! He wauz Atasha at Rome, and he dide dhare ov numoanyaa laast munth."

"I am sorry. Wun cood not conect deth widh such a man. I hav nevver none enniwun so vitaly alive. He livd intensly--evvery fiber ov him!"

"Too intensly, Mr. Hoamz. Dhat wauz the roowin ov him. U remember him az he wauz--debonare and splendid. U did not ce the moody, moroce, brooding crechure intoo which he devellopt. Hiz hart wauz broken. In a cin'ghel munth I ceemd too ce mi gallant boi tern intoo a woern-out cinnical man."

"A luv afare--a woomman?"

"Or a feend. Wel, it wauz not too tauc ov mi poor lad dhat I aasct u too cum, Mr. Hoamz."

"Dr. Wautson and I ar at yor cervice."

"Dhare hav bene sum verry strainj happeningz. I hav bene in this hous moer dhan a yere nou, and az I wisht too lede a retiard life I hav cene littel ov mi naborz. Thre dase ago I had a caul from a man whoo ced dhat he wauz a hous agent. He ced dhat this hous wood exactly sute a cliyent ov hiz and dhat if I wood part widh it munny wood be no obgett. It ceemd too me verry strainj, az dhare ar cevveral empty housez on the market which apere too be eeqwaly elligibel, but natchuraly I wauz interested in whaut he ced. I dhaerfoer naimd a price which wauz five hundred poundz moer dhan I gave. He at wuns cloazd widh

the offer, but added dhat hiz cliyent desiard too bi the fernichure az wel and wood I poot a price uppon it. Sum ov this fernichure iz from mi oald home, and it iz, az u ce, verry good, so dhat I naimd a good

round sum. Too this aulso he at wuns agrede. I had aulwase waunted too travvel, and the bargane wauz so good a wun dhat it reyaly ceemd dhat I shoold be mi one mistres for the rest ov mi life.

"Yesterda the man ariavd widh the agrement aul draun out. Luckily I shode it too Mr. Suetro, mi lauyer, whoo livz in Harro. He ced too me, This iz a verry strainj document. Ar u aware dhat if u cine it u cood not legaly take "ennithhing" out ov the hous--not even yor one private poseshonz?' When the man came agane in the evening I pointed this out, and I ced dhat I ment oanly too cel the fernichure.

"No, no; evverithhing,' ced he.

"But mi cloadhz? Mi juwelz?"

"Wel, wel, sum concesson mite be made for yor personal efects. But nuthhing shal go out ov the hous uncheckt. Mi cliyent iz a verry libberal man, but he haz hiz fadz and hiz one wa ov doowing thhingz. It iz evverithhing or nuthhing widh him.'

"Then it must be nuthhing,' ced I. And dhare the matter wauz left, but the whole thhing ceemd too me too be so unnuezhual dhat I thaut----"

Here we had a verry extrordinary interupshon.

Hoamz raizd hiz hand for cilens. Then he strode acros the roome, flung open the doer, and dragd in a grate gaunt woomman whoome he had ceezd bi the shoalder. She enterd widh un'gainly strugghelz, like sum huge auqword chicken, toern sqwauking out ov its coope.

"Leve me alone! Whaut ar u a-doin ov?" she screecht.

"Whi, Suzan, whaut iz this?"

"Wel, maam, I wauz comin in too aasc if the vizsitorz wauz stayin for lunch when this man jumpt out at me."

"I hav bene liscening too her for the laast five minnuets, but did not wish too interupt yor moast interesting narrative. Just a littel whesy, Suzan, ar u not? U breedh too hevvily for dhat kiand ov werc."

Suzan ternd a sulky but amaizd face uppon her captor. "Whoo be u, ennihou, and whaut rite hav u a-pullin me about like this?"

"It wauz meerly dhat I wisht too aasc a qweschon in yor prezsens. Did u, Mrs. Maberly, menshon too enniwun dhat u wer gowing too rite too me and consult me?"

"No, Mr. Hoamz, I did not."

"Whoo poasted yor letter?"

"Suzan did."

"Exactly. Nou, Suzan, too whoome wauz it dhat u rote or cent a message too sa dhat yor mistres wauz aasking advice from me?"

"Its a li. I cent no message."

"Nou, Suzan, whesy pepel ma not liv long, u no. Its a wicked thhing too tel fibz. Whoome did u tel?"

"Suzan!" cride her mistres, "I beleve u ar a bad, tretcherous woomman. I remember nou dhat I sau u speking too sumwun over the hej."

"Dhat wauz mi one biznes," ced the woomman sullenly.

"Suppose I tel u dhat it wauz Barny Stocdale too whoome u spoke?"  
ced Hoamz.

"Wel, if u no, whaut doo u waunt too aasc for?"

"I wauz not shure, but I no nou. Wel nou, Suzan, it wil be werth ten poundz too u if u wil tel me whoo iz at the bac ov Barny."

"Sumwun dhat cood la doun a thousand poundz for evvery ten u hav in the werld."

"So, a rich man? No; u smiald--a rich woomman. Nou we hav got so far, u ma az wel ghiv the name and ern the tenner."

"Ile ce u in hel ferst."

"O, Suzan! Lan'gwage!"

"I am clering out ov here. Ive had enuf ov u aul. Ile cend for mi box too-morro." She flounst for the doer.

"Good-bi, Suzan. Paregoric iz the stuf.... Nou," he continnude, terning suddenly from liavly too cevere when the doer had cloazd behiand the flusht and an'gry woomman, "this gang meenz biznes. Looc hou cloce dha pla the game. Yor letter too me had the 10 p.m. poastmarc. And yet Suzan paacez the werd too Barny. Barny haz time too go too hiz employer and ghet instrucshonz; he or she--I incline too the latter from Suzanz grin when she thaut I had blunderd--formz a plan. Blac Steve iz cauld in, and I am wornd of bi elevven oacloc next morning. Dhats qwic werc, u no."

"But whaut doo dha waunt?"

"Yes, dhats the qweschon. Whoo had the hous befoer u?"

"A retiard ce captane, cauld Ferguson."

"Ennithhing remarcabel about him?"

"Not dhat evver I herd ov."

"I wauz wondering whether he cood hav berrede sumthhing. Ov coers, when pepel berry trezhure nouwadase dha doo it in the Poast Office banc. But dhare ar aulwase sum lunatix about. It wood be a dul werld widhout them. At ferst I thaut ov sum berrede vallubel. But whi, in dhat cace, shood dha waunt yor fernichure? U doant happen too hav a Rafale or a ferst foleyo Shaixpere widhout nowing it?"

"No, I doant thhinc I hav ennithhing rarer dhan a Croun Darby te-cet."

"Dhat wood hardly justifi aul this mistery. Beciadz, whi shood dha not openly state whaut dha waunt? If dha cuvvet yor te-cet, dha can shuerly offer a price for it widhout biying u out, loc, stoc, and barrel. No, az I rede it, dhare iz sumthhing which u doo not no dhat u hav, and which u wood not ghiv up if u did no."

"Dhat iz hou I rede it," ced I.

"Dr. Wautson agrese, so dhat cettelz it."

"Wel, Mr. Hoamz, whaut can it be?"

"Let us ce whether bi this puerly mental anallicis we can ghet it too a finer point. U hav bene in this hous a yere."

"Neerly too."

"Aul the better. Juring this long pereyod no wun waunts ennithhing from u. Nou suddenly within thre or foer dase u hav ergent demaandz. Whaut wood u gather from dhat?"

"It can oanly mene," ced I, "dhat the obgett, whautevver it ma be, haz oanly just cum intoo the hous."

"Cetteld wuns agane," ced Hoamz. "Nou, Mrs. Maberly, haz enny obgett just ariavd?"

"No; I hav baut nuthhing nu this yere."

"Indede! Dhat iz verry remarcabel. Wel, I thhinc we had best let matterz devellop a littel ferther until we hav clerer dataa. Iz dhat lauyer ov yorz a capabel man?"

"Mr. Suetro iz moast capabel."

"Hav u anuther made, or wauz the fare Suzan, whoo haz just bangd yor frunt doer, alone?"

"I hav a yung gherl."

"Tri and ghet Suetro too spend a nite or too in the hous. U mite poscibly waunt protecshon."

"Against whoome?"

"Whoo nose? The matter iz certainly obscure. If I caant fiand whaut dha ar aafter, I must aproche the matter from the uther end, and tri too ghet at the principal. Did this hous-agent man ghiv enny adres?"

"Cimply hiz card and ocupaishon. Hainz-Jonson, Aucshonere and Valluwer."

"I doant thhinc we shal fiand him in the Directory. Onnest biznes men doant concele dhare place ov biznes. Wel, u wil let me no enny fresh devellopment. I hav taken up yor cace, and u ma reli uppon it dhat I shal ce it throo."

Az we paast throo the haul Hoamsez ise, which mist nuthhing, lited uppon cevveral trunx and cacez which wer piald in the corner. The labelz shon out uppon them.

"Milano.' Lucern.' These ar from Ittaly."

"Dha ar poor Duglacez thhingz."

"U hav not unpact them? Hou long hav u had them?"

"Dha ariavd laast weke."

"But u ced--whi, shuerly this mite be the miscing linc. Hou doo we no dhat dhare iz not sumthhing ov vallu dhare?"

"Dhare cood not poscibly be, Mr. Hoamz. Poor Duglas had oanly hiz pa and a smaul anuwity. Whaut cood he hav ov vallu?"

Hoamz wauz lost in thaut.

"Dela no lon'gher, Mrs. Maberly," he ced at laast. "Hav these thhingz taken upstaerz too yor bedroome. Exammine them az soone az poscibel and ce whaut dha contane. I wil cum too-morro and here yor repoert."

It wauz qwite evvident dhat The Thre Gabelz wauz under verry cloce cervalans, for az we came round the hi hej at the end ov the lane dhare wauz the neegro prise-fiter standing in the shaddo. We came

on him qwite suddenly, and a grim and mennacing figgure he looct in dhat loanly place. Hoamz clapt hiz hand too hiz pocket.

"Lookin for yor gun, Mascer Hoamz?"

"No; for mi cent-bottel, Steve."

"U ar funny, Mascer Hoamz, aint u?"

"It woant be funny for u, Steve, if I ghet aafter u. I gave u fare worning this morning."

"Wel, Mascer Hoamz, I dun gon thhinc over whaut u ced, and I doant waunt no moer tauc about dhat afare ov Mascer Perkinz. Spose I can help u, Mascer Hoamz, I wil."

"Wel, then, tel me whoo iz behiand u on this job?"

"So help me the Lord! Mascer Hoamz, I toald u the truith befoer. I doant no. Mi bos Barny ghivz me orderz and dhats aul."

"Wel, just bare in miand, Steve, dhat the lady in dhat hous, and evverithhing under dhat roofe, iz under mi protecshon. Doant u forghet it."

"Aul rite, Mascer Hoamz. Ile remember.'

"Ive got him thurroly fritend for hiz one skin, Wautson," Hoamz remarct az we wauct on. "I thhinc he wood dubbel-cros hiz employier if he nu whoo he wauz. It wauz lucky I had sum nollej ov the Spencer Jon croud, and dhat Steve wauz wun ov them. Nou, Wautson, this iz a cace for Langdale Pike, and I am gowing too ce him nou. When I ghet bac I ma be clerer in the matter."

I sau no moer ov Hoamz juring the da, but I cood wel imadgine hou he spent it, for Langdale Pike wauz hiz human booc ov refferens uppon aul matterz ov soashal scandal. This strainj, lan'gwid crechure spent hiz waking ourz in the bo windo ov a St. Jaimsez Strete club, and wauz the receving-staishon, az wel az the traanzmitter, for aul the goscip ov the Metroppolis. He made, it wauz ced, a foer-figgure incum bi the parragraafs which he contribbuted evvery weke too the garbage paperz which

cater for an inqwizsitive public. If evver, far down in the terbid depths ov Lunden life, dhare wauz sum strainj swerl or eddy, it wauz marct widh automattic exactnes bi this human diyal uppon the cerface. Hoamz discreetly helpt Langdale too nollej, and on ocaizhon wauz helpt in tern.

When I met mi frend in hiz roome erly next morning, I wauz consmous from hiz baring dhat aul wauz wel, but nun the les a moast unplezzant cerprise wauz awating us. It tooc the shape ov the following tellegram:

"Plese cum out at wuns. Cliyents hous bergheld in the nite. Polece in poseshon.

"SUETRO."

Hoamz whisceld. "The draamaa haz cum too a cricis, and qwicker dhan I had expected. Dhare iz a grate driving-pouwer at the bac ov this biznes, Wautson, which duz not cerprise me aafter whaut I hav herd. This Suetro, ov coers, iz her lauyer. I made a mistake, I fere, in not aasking u too spend the nite on gard. This fello haz cleerly pruivd a broken rede. Wel, dhare iz nuthhing for it but anuther gerny too Harro Weeld."

We found The Thre Gabelz a verry different establishment too the orderly

hous'hoald ov the preveyous da. A smaual groope ov iadlerz had acembeld at the garden gate, while a cuppel ov cunstabelz wer exammining the windose and the gerainyum bedz. Within we met a gra oald gentelman, whoo introjuest himcelf az the lauyer, tooghether widh a busling, roobicund Inspector, whoo greted Hoamz az an oald frend.

"Wel, Mr. Hoamz, no chaans for u in this cace, Ime afrade. Just a common, ordinary berglary, and wel within the capascity ov the poor oald polece. No experts nede apli."

"I am shure the cace iz in verry good handz," ced Hoamz. "Meerly a common berglary, u sa?"

"Qwite so. We no pritty wel whoo the men ar and whare too fiand them. It iz dhat gang ov Barny Stocdale, widh the big nigger in it--dhave bene cene about here."

"Exelent! Whaut did dha ghet?"

"Wel, dha doant ceme too hav got much. Mrs. Maberly wauz cloroformd and the hous wauz---- Aa! here iz the lady hercelf."

Our frend ov yesterda, loocking verry pale and il, had enterd the roome, lening uppon a littel made-cervant.

"U gave me good advice, Mr. Hoamz," ced she, smiling roofooly. "Alaas, I did not take it! I did not wish too trubbel Mr. Suetro, and so I wauz unprotected."

"I oanly herd ov it this morning," the lauyer explaind.

"Mr. Hoamz adviazd me too hav sum frend in the hous. I neglected hiz advice, and I hav pade for it."

"U looc retchedly il," ced Hoamz. "Perhaps u ar hardly eeqwal too telling me whaut okerd."

"It iz aul here," ced the Inspector, tapping a bulky noatbooc.

"Stil, if the lady iz not too exhausted----"

"Dhare iz reyaly so littel too tel. I hav no dout dhat wicked Suzan had pland an entrans for them. Dha must hav none the hous too an inch. I wauz consmous for a moment ov the cloroform rag which wauz thrust over mi mouth, but I hav no noashon hou long I ma hav bene censles. When I woke, wun man wauz at the bedcide and anuther wauz rising widh a bundel in hiz hand from amung mi sunz baggage, which wauz parshaly opend and litterd over the floer. Befoer he cood ghet awa I sprang up and ceezd him."

"U tooc a big risc," ced the Inspector.

"I clung too him, but he shooc me of, and the uther ma hav struc me, for I can remember no moer. Mary the made herd the noiz and began screming out ov the windo. Dhat braut the polece, but the raascalz had got awa."

"Whaut did dha take?"

"Wel, I doant thhinc dhare iz ennithhing ov vallu miscing. I am shure dhare wauz nuthhing in mi sunz trunx."

"Did the men leve no clu?"

"Dhare wauz wun shete ov paper which I ma hav toern from the man dhat I

graaspt. It wauz liying aul crumpeld on the floer. It iz in mi sunz handriting."

"Which meenz dhat it iz not ov much uce," ced the Inspector. "Nou if it had bene in the berglarz----"

"Exactly," ced Hoamz. "Whaut rugged common cens! Nun the les, I shood be cureyous too ce it."

The Inspector droo a foalded shete ov fuilscap from hiz pocket-booc.

"I nevver paas ennithing, houwevver triafling," ced he, with sum pompocity. "Dhat iz mi advice too u, Mr. Hoamz. In twenty-five yeeرز expereyens I hav lernd mi lesson. Dhare iz aulwase the chaans ov fin'gher-marx or sumthhing."

Hoamz inspected the shete ov paper.

"Whaut doo u make ov it, Inspector?"

"Ceemz too be the end ov sum qwere novvel, so far az I can ce."

"It ma certainly proove too be the end ov a qwere tale," ced Hoamz.

"U hav notiast the number on the top ov the page. It iz too hundred and forty-five. Whare ar the od too hundred and forty-foer pagez?"

"Wel, I supose the berglarz got dhose. Much good ma it doo them!"

"It ceemz a qwere thhing too brake intoo a hous in order too stele such paperz az dhat. Duz it sugest ennithing too u, Inspector?"

"Yes, cer; it sugests dhat in dhare hurry the raascalz just grabd at whaut came ferst too hand. I wish them joi ov whaut dha got."

"Whi shood dha go too mi sunz thhingz?" aasct Mrs. Maberly.

"Wel, dha found nuthhing vallubel dounstaerz, so dha tride dhare luc upstaerz. Dhat iz hou I red it. Whaut doo u make ov it, Mr. Hoamz?"

"I must thhinc it over, Inspector. Cum too the windo, Wautson." Then, az we stood tooghether, he red over the fragment ov paper. It began in the middel ov a centens and ran like this:

"... face bled concidderably from the cuts and blose, but it wauz nuthhing too the bleding ov hiz hart az he sau dhat luvly face, the face for which he had bene prepaerd too sacrifice hiz verry life, loocking out at hiz agony and humileyaishon. She smiald--yes, bi Hevven! she smiald, like the hartles feend she wauz, az he looct up at her. It wauz at dhat moment dhat luv dide and hate wauz born. Man must liv for sumthhing. If it iz not for yor embrace, mi lady, then it shal shuerly be for yor undoowing and mi complete revenj."

"Qwere grammar!" ced Hoamz, widh a smile, az he handed the paper bac too the Inspector. "Did u notice hou the he suddenly chainjd too mi.' The riter wauz so carrede awa bi hiz one stoery dhat he imadgiand himcelf at the supreme moment too be the hero."

"It ceemd mity poor stuf," ced the Inspector, az he replaist it in hiz booc. "Whaut! ar u of, Mr. Hoamz?"

"I doant thhinc dhare iz ennithhing moer for me too doo nou dhat the cace iz in such capabel handz. Bi the wa, Mrs. Maberly, did u sa u wisht too travvel?"

"It haz aulwase bene mi dreame, Mr. Hoamz."

"Whare wood u like too go--Kiro, Maderaa, the Riveyaraa?"

"O! if I had the munny I wood go round the werld."

"Qwite so. Round the werld. Wel, good morning. I ma drop u a line in the evening." Az we paast the windo I caut a glimps ov the Inspectorz smile and shake ov the hed. "These clevver fellose hav aulwase a tuch ov madnes." Dhat wauz whaut I red in the Inspectorz smile.

"Nou, Wautson, we ar at the laast lap ov our littel gerny," ced Hoamz, when we wer bac in the roer ov Central Lundon wuns moer. "I thhinc we had best clere the matter up at wuns, and it wood be wel dhat u shood cum widh me, for it iz safer too hav a witnes when u ar deling widh such a lady az Izadoraa Clene."

We had taken a cab and wer speding too sum adres in Grovenor Sqware. Hoamz had bene sunc in thaut, but he rouzd himself suddenly.

"Bi the wa, Wautson, I supose u ce it aul cleerly?"

"No, I caant sa dhat I doo. I oonly gather dhat we ar gowing too ce the lady whoo iz behiand aul this mischefe."

"Exactly! But duz the name Izadoraa Clene conva nuthhing too u? She wauz, ov coers, the cellebrated buty. Dhare wauz nevver a woomman too tuch her. She iz pure Spannish, the reyal blud ov the maasterfool Conqwistadorz, and her pepel hav bene lederz in Pernambuco for generaishonz. She marrede the aijd German shooggar king, Clene, and prezsently found hercelf the ritchest az wel az the moast luvly widdo uppon erth. Then dhare wauz an interval ov advenchure when she pleezd her one taists. She had cevveral luvverz, and Duglas Maberly, wun ov

the moast striking men in Lundon, wauz wun ov them. It wauz bi aul acounts moer dhan an advenchure widh him. He wauz not a Sociyety butterfli, but a strong, proud man whoo gave and expected aul. But she iz the '*belle dame sans merci*' ov ficshon. When her caprece iz sattisfide, the matter iz ended, and if the uther party in the matter caant take her werd for it, she nose hou too bring it home too him."

"Then dhat wauz hiz one stoery----"

"Aa! u ar pecing it tooghether nou. I here dhat she iz about too marry the yung Juke ov Lomond, whoo mite aulmoast be her sun. Hiz Gracez maa mite overlooc the age, but a big scandal wood be a different matter, so it iz imperrative---- Aa! here we ar."

It wauz wun ov the finest corner-housez ov the West End. A mashene-like footman tooc up our cardz and reternd widh werd dhat the lady wauz not at home. "Then we shal wate until she iz," ced Hoamz cheerfooly.

The mashene broke doun.

"Not at home meenz not at home too "u"," ced the footman.

"Good," Hoamz aancerd. "Dhat meenz dhat we shal not hav too wate. Kiandly ghiv this note too yor mistres."

He scribbeld thre or foer werdz uppon a shete ov hiz noatbooc, foalded it, and handed it too the man.

"Whaut did u sa, Hoamz?" I aasct.

"I cimply rote Shal it be the polece, then?' I thhinc dhat shood paas us in."

It did--with amasing celerrity. A minnute later we wer in an Arabeyan-niats drauwing-roome, vaast and wunderfool, in a haaf gloome, pict out widh an ocaizhonal pinc electric lite. The lady had cum, I felt, too dhat time ov life when even the proudest buty fiandz the haaf-lite moer welcum. She rose from a cetty az we enterd: taul, qweenly, a perfect figgure, a luvly maasc-like face, widh too wunderfool Spanish ise which looct merder at us boath.

"Whaut iz this intruizhon--and this insulting message?" she aasct, hoalding up the slip ov paper.

"I nede not explane, madam. I hav too much respect for yor intelligens too doo so--dho I confes dhat intelligens haz bene cerprisingly at fault ov late."

"Hou so, cer?"

"Bi suposing dhat yor hiard boollese cood friten me from mi werc. Shuerly no man wood take up mi profeshon if it wer not dhat dain'ger atracts him. It wauz u, then, whoo foerst me too exammine the cace ov yung Maberly."

"I hav no ideyaa whaut u ar tauking about. Whaut hav I too doo widh hiard boollese?"

Hoamz ternd awa werily.

"Yes, I hav underated yor intelligens. Wel, good aafternoone!"

"Stop! Whare ar u gowing?"

"Too Scotland Yard."

We had not got haaf-wa too the doer befoer she had overtaken us and wauz

hoalding hiz arm. She had ternd in a moment from stele too velvet.

"Cum and cit doun, gentelmen. Let us tauc this matter over. I fele dhat I ma be franc widh u, Mr. Hoamz. U hav the felingz ov a gentelman. Hou qwic a woommanz instinct iz too fiand it out. I wil trete u az a frend."

"I canot prommice too reciprocate, madam. I am not the lau, but I represent justice so far az mi febel pouwerz go. I am reddy too liscen, and then I wil tel u hou I wil act."

"No dout it wauz foolish ov me too thretten a brave man like yorcelf."

"Whaut wauz reyaly foolish, madam, iz dhat u hav plaist yorcelf in the pouwer ov a band ov raascalz whoo ma blacmale or ghiv u awa."

"No, no! I am not so cimpel. Cins I hav prommiast too be franc, I ma sa dhat no wun, save Barny Stocdale and Suzan, hiz wife, hav the leest ideyaa whoo dhare employer iz. Az too them, wel, it iz not the first----" She smiald and nodded, widh a charming cokettish intimacy.

"I ce. Uve tested them befoer."

"Dha ar good houndz whoo run cilent."

"Such houndz hav a wa sooner or later ov biting the hand dhat feedz them. Dha wil be arested for this berglary. The polece ar aulreddy aafter them."

"Dha wil take whaut cumz too them. Dhat iz whaut dha ar pade for. I shal not apere in the matter."

"Unles I bring u intoo it."

"No, no; u wood not. U ar a gentelman. It iz a woommanz ceecret."

"In the ferst place u must ghiv bac this mannuscript."

She broke intoo a rippel ov laafter, and wauct too the fiarplace. Dhare wauz a calciand mas which she broke up widh the poker. "Shal I ghiv this bac?" she aasct. So roghish and exqwizsite did she looc az she stood befoer us widh a challen'ging smile dhat I felt ov aul Hoamsez crimminalz this wauz the wun whoome he wood fiand it hardest too face. Houwevver, he wauz imune from centiment.

"Dhat ceelz yor fate," he ced coaldly. "U ar verry prompt in yor acshonz, madam, but u hav overdun it on this ocaizhon."

She throo the poker doun widh a clatter.

"Hou hard u ar!" she cride. "Ma I tel u the whole stoery?"

"I fancy I cood tel it too u."

"But u must looc at it widh mi ise, Mr. Hoamz. U must reyalise it from the point ov vu ov a woomman whoo cese aul her liafs ambishon about too be roowind at the laast moment. Iz such a woomman too be blaimd if she protects hercelf?"

"The oridginal cin wauz yorz."

"Yes, yes! I admit it. He wauz a dere boi, Duglas, but it so chaanst dhat he cood not fit intoo mi planz. He waunted marrage--marrage, Mr. Hoamz--widh a penniles commoner. Nuthhing les wood cerv him. Then he became pertinaishous. Becauz I had ghivven he ceemd too thhinc dhat I stil must ghiv, and too him oonly. It wauz intollerabel. At laast I had

too make him reyalise it."

"Bi hiring ruffeyanz too bete him under yor one windo."

"U doo indede ceme too no evverithhing. Wel, it iz troo. Barny and the boiz drove him awa, and wer, I admit, a littel ruf in doowing so. But whaut did he doo then? Cood I hav beleevd dhat a gentelman wood doo such an act? He rote a booc in which he descriabd hiz one stoery. I, ov coers, wauz the woolf; he the lam. It wauz aul dhare, under different naimz, ov coers; but whoo in aul Lundon wood hav faild too reccognise it? Whaut doo u sa too dhat, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Wel, he wauz within hiz riats."

"It wauz az if the are ov Ittaly had got intoo hiz blud and braut widh it the oald croowel Italleyan spirrit. He rote too me and cent me a cobby ov hiz booc dhat I mite hav the torchure ov anticipaishon. Dhare wer too coppese, he ced--wun for me, wun for hiz publisher."

"Hou did u no the publisherz had not reecht him?"

"I nu whoo hiz publisher wauz. It iz not hiz oonly novvel, u no. I found out dhat he had not herd from Ittaly. Then came Duglacez sudden deth. So long az dhat uther mannuscript wauz in the werld dhare wauz no saifty for me. Ov coers, it must be amung hiz efects, and these wood be reternd too hiz muther. I cet the gang at werc. Wun ov them got intoo the hous az cervant. I waunted too doo the thhing onnestly. I reyaly and trooly did. I wauz reddy too bi the hous and evverithhing in it. I offerd enny price she caerd too aasc. I oonly tride the uther wa when evverithhing els had faild. Nou, Mr. Hoamz, graanting dhat I wauz too hard on Duglas--and, God nose, I am sorry for it!--whaut els cood I doo widh mi whole fuchure at stake?"

Sherloc Hoamz shrugd hiz shoalderz.

"Wel, wel," ced he, "I supose I shal hav too compound a felony az uezhuwal. Hou much duz it cost too go round the werld in ferst-claas stile?"

The lady staerd in amaizment.

"Cood it be dun on five thouzand poundz?"

"Wel, I shood thhinc so, indede!"

"Verry good. I thhinc u wil cine me a chec for dhat, and I wil ce dhat it cumz too Mrs. Maberly. U o her a littel chainj ov are. Meentime, lady"--he wagd a caushonary foerfin'gher--"hav a care! Hav a care! U caant pla widh ejd tuilz for evver widhout cutting dhose dainty handz."

5

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE SUSCEX VAMPIRE

Hoamz had red caerfooly a note which the laast poast had braut him. Then, widh the dri chuckel which wauz hiz nerest aproche too a laaf, he tost it over too me.

"For a mixchure ov the moddern and the meddeyeval, ov the practical and ov the wialdly fancifool, I thhinc this iz shuerly the limmit," ced he. "Whaut doo u make ov it, Wautson?"

I rede az follose:

46, OALD JURY,  
"Nov." 19"th."

"Re" Vampiarz.

CER,--

Our cliyent, Mr. Robbert Ferguson, ov Ferguson and Muerhed, te brokerz, ov Mincing Lane, haz made sum inqwiry from us in a comunicaishon ov even date concerning vampiarz. Az our ferm speshalisez entiarly uppon the acesment ov mashenery the matter hardly cumz within our pervu, and we hav dhaerfoer recomended Mr. Ferguson too caul uppon u and la the matter befoer u. We hav not forgotten yor suxesfool acshon in the cace ov Matildaa Brigz.

We ar, Cer, Faithfooly yorz,  
MORISON, MORISON, AND DOD.  
per E. J. C.

"Matildaa Brigz wauz not the name ov a yung woomman, Wautson," ced Hoamz, in a reminiscent vois. "It wauz a ship which iz asoasheyated widh the giyant rat ov Sumaatraa, a stoery for which the werld iz not yet prepaerd. But whaut doo we no about vampiarz? Duz it cum within our pervu iather? Ennithhing iz better dhan stagnaishon, but reyaly we ceme too hav bene swicht on too a Grimz fary tale. Make a long arm, Wautson, and ce whaut V haz too sa."

I leend bac and tooc down the grate index vollume too which he referd. Hoamz ballanst it on hiz ne and hiz ise muivd sloly and luvvingly over the reccord ov oald cacez, mixt widh the acumulated informaishon ov a liaftime.

"Voiyage ov the Gloereyaa Scot," he red. "Dhat wauz a bad biznes. I hav sum recolecshon dhat u made a reccord ov it, Wautson, dho I wauz unnabel too con'gratchulate u uppon the rezult. Victor Linch, the foerger. Vennomous lizzard or gilaa. Remarcabel cace, dhat! Vitoreyaa, the cercus bel. Vanderbilt and the Yegman. Viperz. Viggor, the Hammersmith wunder. Hullo! Hullo! Good oald index. U caant bete it. Liscen too this, Wautson. Vampirizm in Hun'gary. And agane, Vampiarz in Traancilvainyaa." He ternd over the pagez widh eghernes, but aafter a short intent peroozal he throo doun the grate booc widh a snarl ov disapointment.

"Rubbish, Wautson, rubbish! Whaut hav we too doo widh wauking corpcez whoo can oonly be held in dhare grave bi staix drivven throo dhare harts? Its pure lunacy."

"But shuerly," ced I, "the vampire wauz not necesarily a ded man? A livving person mite hav the habbit. I hav red, for exaampel, ov the oald sucking the blud ov the yung in order too retane dhare ueth."

"U ar rite, Wautson. It menshonz the ledgend in wun ov these refferencez. But ar we too ghiv cereyous atenshon too such thhingz? This Agency standz flat-footted uppon the ground, and dhare it must remane. The werld iz big enuf for us. No goasts nede apli. I fere dhat we canot take Mr. Robbert Ferguson verry cereyously. Poscibly this note ma be from him, and ma thro sum lite uppon whaut iz wurreying him."

He tooc up a cecond letter which had lane unnotiast uppon the tabel whialst he had bene abzorbd widh the ferst. This he began too rede widh a smile ov amuezment uppon hiz face which gradjuwaly faded awa intoo an expreshon ov intens interest and concentraishon. When he had finnisht he sat for sum littel time lost in thaut widh the letter dan'gling

from hiz fin'gherz. Finaly, widh a start, he arouzd himcelf from hiz revvery.

"Cheezmanz, Lamberly. Whare iz Lamberly, Wautson?"

"It iz in Suscex, south ov Horsham."

"Not verry far, a? And Cheezmanz?"

"I no dhat cuntry, Hoamz. It iz fool ov oald housez which ar naimd aafter the men whoo bilt them cenchurese ago. U ghet Odlese and Harvese and Carritonz--the foke ar forgotten but dhare naimz liv in dhare housez."

"Preciasly," ced Hoamz coaldly. It wauz wun ov the peculeyarritese ov hiz proud, celf-containd nachure dhat, dho he docketed enny fresh informaishon verry qwicly and accuraitly in hiz brane, he celdom made enny acnollejment too the ghivver. "I raather fancy we shal no a good dele moer about Cheezmanz, Lamberly, befoer we ar throo. The letter iz, az I had hoapt, from Robbert Ferguson. Bi the wa, he claimz aqwaintans widh u."

"Widh me!"

"U had better rede it."

He handed the letter acros. It wauz hedded widh the adres qwoted.

DERE MR. HOAMZ, (it ced)--I hav bene recomended too u bi mi lauyerz, but indede the matter iz so extrordinarily dellicate dhat it iz moast difficult too discuss. It concernz a frend for whoome I am acting. This gentelman marrede sum five yeerz ago a Perooveyan lady,

the dauter ov a Perooveyan merchant, whoome he had met in conecshon  
widh

the importaishon ov niatraits. The lady wauz verry butifool, but the fact  
ov her forane berth and ov her aleyen relidjon aulwase cauzd a  
ceparaishon ov interests and ov felingz betwene huzband and wife, so  
dhat aafter a time hiz luv ma hav cuild toowordz her and he ma hav  
cum too regard dhare uenyon az a mistake. He felt dhare wer ciadz ov  
her carracter which he cood nevver exploer or understand. This wauz the  
moer painfool az she wauz az luvving a wife az a man cood hav--too aul  
aperans absolutly devoted.

Nou for the point which I wil make moer plane when we mete. Indede,  
this note iz meerly too ghiv u a genneral ideyaa ov the cichuwaishon and  
too

ascertane whether u wood care too interest yorcelf in the matter.

The lady began too sho sum cureyous traits qwite aleyen too her  
ordinarily swete and gentel disposishon. The gentelman had bene  
marrede twice and he had wun sun bi the ferst wife. This boi wauz nou  
fiftene, a verry charming and afecshonate ueth, dho unhappily  
injuerd throo an axident in chiald'hood. Twice the wife wauz caut in  
the act ov asaulting this poor lad in the moast unprovoact wa. Wuns  
she struc him widh a stic and left a grate wele on hiz arm.

This wauz a smaul matter, houwevver, compaerd widh her conduct too her  
one

chiald, a dere boi just under wun yere ov age. On wun ocaizhon about a  
munth ago this chiald had bene left bi its ners for a fu minnuets. A  
loud cri from the baby, az ov pane, cauld the ners bac. Az she ran  
intoo the roome she sau her employier, the lady, lening over the baby and  
aparrently biting hiz nec. Dhare wauz a smaul wuind in the nec, from  
which a streme ov blud had escaipt. The ners wauz so horrifide dhat  
she wisht too caul the huzband, but the lady imploerd her not too doo so,  
and acchuwaly gave her five poundz az a price for her cilens. No

explanaishon wauz evver ghivven, and for the moment the matter wauz paast over.

It left, houwevver, a terribel impreshon uppon the nercez miand, and from dhat time she began too wauch her mistres cloasly, and too kepe a clocer gard uppon the baby, whoome she tenderly luvd. It ceemd too her dhat even az she waucht the muther, so the muther waucht her, and dhat evvery time she wauz compeld too leve the baby alone the muther wauz wating too ghet at it. Da and nite the ners cuvverd the chiald, and da and nite the cilent, wauchfool muther ceemd too be liying in wate az a woolf waits for a lam. It must rede moast increddibel too u, and yet I beg u too take it cereyously, for a chialdz life and a manz sannity ma depend uppon it.

At laast dhare came wun dredfool da when the facts cood no lon'gher be conceeld from the huzband. The nercez nerv had ghivven wa; she cood stand the strane no lon'gher, and she made a clene brest ov it aul too the man. Too him it ceemd az wiald a tale az it ma nou ceme too u. He nu hiz wife too be a luvving wife, and, save for the asaults uppon her stepson, a luvving muther. Whi, then, shood she wuind her one dere littel baby? He toald the ners dhat she wauz dreeming, dhat her suspishonz wer dhose ov a lunatic, and dhat such libelz uppon her mistres wer not too be tollerated. Whialst dha wer tauking, a sudden cri ov pane wauz herd. Ners and maaster rusht tooggether too the nercery. Imadgine hiz felingz, Mr. Hoamz, az he sau hiz wife rise from a neling posishon becide the cot, and sau blud uppon the chialdz expoazd nec and uppon the shete. With a cri ov horror, he ternd hiz wiafs face too the lite and sau blud aul round her lips. It wauz she--she beyond aul qweschon--whoo had drunc the poor babese blud.

So the matter standz. She iz nou confiand too her roome. Dhare haz bene no explanaishon. The huzband iz haaf demented. He nose, and I no, littel ov Vampirizm beyond the name. We had thaut it wauz sum wiald

tale ov forane parts. And yet here in the verry hart ov the In'glish Susce--wel, aul this can be discust widh u in the morning. Wil u ce me? Wil u use yor grate pouwerz in ading a distracted man? If so, kiandly wire too Ferguson, Cheezmanz, Lamberly, and I wil be at yor ruimz bi ten oacloc.

Yorz faithfooly,

ROBBERT FERGUSON.

PS.--I beleve yor frend Wautson plade Rugby for Blac'heeth when I wauz thre-qworter for Richmond. It iz the oonly personal introducshon which I can ghiv.

"Ov coers I remember him," ced I, az I lade doun the letter. "Big Bob Ferguson, the finest thre-qworter Richmond evver had. He wauz aulwase a good-nachuerd chap. Its like him too be so concernd over a frendz cace."

Hoamz looct at me thautfooly and shooc hiz hed.

"I nevver ghet yor limmits, Wautson," ced he. "Dhare ar unnexplord pocibillitese about u. Take a wire doun, like a good fello. Wil exammine yor cace widh plezhure."

""Yor" cace!"

"We must not let him thhinc dhat this Agency iz a home for the weke-mianded. Ov coers it iz hiz cace. Cend him dhat wire and let the matter rest til morning."

Promptly at ten oacloc next morning Ferguson strode intoo our roome. I had rememberd him az a long, slab-cided man widh looce limz and a

fine tern ov spede, which had carrede him round menny an oposing bac. Dhare iz shuerly nuthhing in life moer painfool dhan too mete the rec ov a fine athlete whoome wun haz none in hiz prime. Hiz grate frame had faulen in, hiz flaxen hare wauz scanty, and hiz shoalderz wer boud. I fere dhat I rouzd coresponding emoashonz in him.

"Hullo, Wautson," ced he, and hiz vois wauz stil depe and harty. "U doant looc qwite the man u did when I throo u over the roaps intoo the croud at the Oald Dere Parc. I expect I hav chainjd a bit aulso. But its this laast da or too dhat haz aijd me. I ce bi yor tellegram, Mr. Hoamz, dhat it iz no uce mi pretending too be enniwunz depputy."

"It iz cimpler too dele direct," ced Hoamz.

"Ov coers it iz. But u can imadgine hou difficult it iz when u ar speking ov the wun woomman whoome u ar bound too protect and help. Whaut can I doo? Hou am I too go too the polece widh such a stoery? And yet the kiddese hav got too be protected. Iz it madnes, Mr. Hoamz? Iz it sumthhing in the blud? Hav u enny cimmilar cace in yor expereyens? For Godz sake, ghiv me sum advice, for I am at mi wits end."

"Verry natchuraly, Mr. Ferguson. Nou cit here and pool yorcelf tooghether and ghiv me a fu clere aancerz. I can ashure u dhat I am verry far from beying at mi wits end, and dhat I am confident we shal fiand sum solueshon. Ferst ov aul, tel me whaut steps u hav taken. Iz yor wife stil nere the children?"

"We had a dredfool cene. She iz a moast luvving woomman, Mr. Hoamz. If evver a woomman luvd a man widh aul her hart and sole, she luvz me. She wauz cut too the hart dhat I shood hav discuvverd this horribel, this increddibel, ceecret. She wood not even speke. She gave no aancer

too mi reprochez, save too gase at me widh a sort ov wiald, desparing looc in her ise. Then she rusht too her roome and loct herself in. Cins then she haz refuezd too ce me. She haz a made whoo wauz widh her befoer her marrage, Dolores bi name--a frend raather dhan a cervant. She taix her foode too her."

"Then the chiald iz in no imejate dain'ger?"

"Mrs. Mason, the ners, haz swoern dhat she wil not leve it nite or da. I can absolutly trust her. I am moer unnesy about poor littel Jac, for, az I toald u in mi note, he haz twice bene assaulted bi her."

"But nevver wuinded?"

"No; she struc him savvaijly. It iz the moer terribel az he iz a poor littel inofencive crippel." Fergusonz gaunt fechuerz softend az he spoke ov hiz boi. "U wood thhinc dhat the dere ladz condishon wood soften enniwunz hart. A faul in chiald'hood and a twisted spine, Mr. Hoamz. But the derest, moast luvving hart within."

Hoamz had pict up the letter ov yesterda and wauz reding it over. "Whaut uther inmaits ar dhare in yor hous, Mr. Ferguson?"

"Too cervants whoo hav not bene long widh us. Wun stabel-hand, Mikel, whoo sleeps in the hous. Mi wife, micelf, mi boi Jac, baby, Dolores, and Mrs. Mason. Dhat iz aul."

"I gather dhat u did not no yor wife wel at the time ov yor marrage?"

"I had oanly none her a fu weex."

"Hou long had this made Dolores bene widh her?"

"Sum yeerz."

"Then yor wiafs carracter wood reyaly be better none bi Dolores dhan bi u?"

"Yes, u ma sa so."

Hoamz made a note.

"I fancy," ced he, "dhat I ma be ov moer uce at Lamberly dhan here. It iz emminently a cace for personal investigaishon. If the lady remainz in her roome, our prezsens cood not anoi or inconveenyens her. Ov coers, we wood sta at the in."

Ferguson gave a geschure ov relefe.

"It iz whaut I hoapt, Mr. Hoamz. Dhare iz an exelent trane at too from Victoereyaa, if u cood cum."

"Ov coers we cood cum. Dhare iz a lul at prezsent. I can ghiv u mi undivided ennergese. Wautson, ov coers, cumz widh us. But dhare ar wun or too points uppon which I wish too be verry shure befoer I start. This unhappy lady, az I understand it, haz apeerd too asault boath the children, her one baby and yor littel sun?"

"Dhat iz so."

"But the asaults take different formz, doo dha not? She haz beten yor sun."

"Wuns widh a stic and wuns verry savvaijly widh her handz."

"Did she ghiv no explanaishon whi she struc him?"

"Nun, save dhat she hated him. Agane and agane she ced so."

"Wel, dhat iz not un'none amung stepmutherz. A poschymous gelloocy, we wil sa. Iz the lady gellous bi nachure?"

"Yes, she iz verry gellous--gellous widh aul the strength ov her firy troppical luv."

"But the boi--he iz fiftene, I understand, and probbably verry devellopt in miand, cins hiz boddy haz bene cercumscriabd in acshon. Did he ghiv u no explanaishon ov these asaults?"

"No; he declaerd dhare wauz no rezon."

"Wer dha good frendz at uther tiamz?"

"No; dhare wauz nevver enny luv betwene them."

"Yet u sa he iz afecshonate?"

"Nevver in the world cood dhare be so devoted a sun. Mi life iz hiz life. He iz abzorbd in whaut I sa or doo."

Wuns agane Hoamz made a note. For sum time he sat lost in thaut.

"No dout u and the boi wer grate comraidz befoer this cecond marrage. U wer throne verry cloce tooghether, wer u not?"

"Verry much so."

"And the boi, havving so afecshonate a nachure, wauz devoted, no dout, too the memmory ov hiz muther?"

"Moast devoted."

"He wood certainly ceme too be a moast interesting lad. Dhare iz wun uther point about these asaults. Wer the strainj atax uppon the baby and the asaults uppon yor sun at the same pereyod?"

"In the ferst cace it wauz so. It wauz az if sum frensy had ceezd her, and she had vented her rage uppon boath. In the cecond cace it wauz oonly Jac whoo sufferd. Mrs. Mason had no complaint too make about the baby."

"Dhat certainly complicaits matterz."

"I doant qwite follo u, Mr. Hoamz."

"Poscibly not. Wun formz provizhonal ththeyorese and waits for time or fooler nollej too explode them. A bad habbit, Mr. Ferguson; but human nachure iz weke. I fere dhat yor oald frend here haz ghivven an exadgerated vu ov mi ciyentiffic methodz. Houwevver, I wil oonly sa at the prezsent stage dhat yor problem duz not apere too me too be insollubel, and dhat u ma expect too fiand us at Victoereyaa at too oacloc."

It wauz evening ov a dul, fogghy November da when, havving left our bagz at the "Checkerz," Lamberly, we drove throo the Suscex cla ov a long wianding lane, and finaly reecht the isolated and ainshent farm-hous in which Ferguson dwelt. It wauz a larj, stragling bilding, verry oald in the center, verry nu at the wingz, widh touwering Chudor chimnese and a litchen-spotted, hi-picht roofe ov Horsham slabz. The doersteps wer woern intoo kervz, and the ainshent tialz which liand the poerch wer marct widh the rebus ov a chese and a man, aafter the oridginal bilder. Within, the celingz wer corroogated widh

hevvy oken beemz, and the unneven floerz sagd intoo sharp kervz. An odor ov age and deca pervaded the whole crumbling bilding.

Dhare wauz wun verry larj central roome, intoo which Ferguson led us. Here, in a huge oald-fashond fiarplace widh an iarn screne behiand it dated 1670, dhare blaizd and splutterd a splendid log fire.

The roome, az I gaizd round, wauz a moast cin'gular mixchure ov daits and ov placez. The haaf-panneld waulz ma wel hav belongd too the oridginal yoman farmer ov the cevventeenth cenchury. Dha wer ornamented, houwevver, on the lower part bi a line ov wel-chosen moddern wauter-cullorz; while abuv, whare yello plaaster tooc the place ov oke, dhare wauz hung a fine colecshon ov South Amerrican utencilz and wepponz, which had bene braut, no dout, bi the Perooveyan lady upstaerz. Hoamz rose, widh dhat qwic cureyoscity which sprang from hiz egher miand, and exammiand them widh sum care. He reternd widh hiz ise fool ov thaut.

"Hullo!" he cride. "Hullo!"

A spanyel had lane in a baasket in the corner. It came sloly forword toowordz its maaster, wauking widh difficulty. Its hiand-legz muivd iregularly and its tale wauz on the ground. It lict Fergusonz hand.

"Whaut iz it, Mr. Hoamz?"

"The dog. Whauts the matter widh it?"

"Dhats whaut puzseld the vet. A sort ov parallicis. Spinal menin'gitis, he thaut. But it iz paacing. Heeyl be aul rite soone--woant u, Carlo?"

A shivver ov acent paast throo the drooping tale. The dogz

moernfool ise paast from wun ov us too the uther. He nu dhat we wer discussing hiz cace.

"Did it cum on suddenly?"

"In a cin'ghel nite."

"Hou long ago?"

"It ma hav bene foer munths ago."

"Verry remarcabel. Verry sugestive."

"Whaut doo u ce in it, Mr. Hoamz?"

"A confermaishon ov whaut I had aulreddy thaut."

"For Godz sake, whaut doo u thhinc, Mr. Hoamz? It ma be a mere intelecchuwal puzsel too u, but it iz life and deth too me! Mi wife a wood-be merderer--mi chiald in constant dain'ger! Doant pla widh me, Mr. Hoamz. It iz too terribly cereyous."

The big Rugby thre-qworter wauz trembling aul over. Hoamz poot hiz hand suithingly uppon hiz arm.

"I fere dhat dhare iz pane for u, Mr. Ferguson, whatevver the solueshon ma be," ced he. "I wood spare u aul I can. I canot sa moer for the instant, but befoer I leve this hous I hope I ma hav sumthhing deffinite."

"Plese God u ma! If u wil excuse me, gentelmen, I wil go up too mi wiafs roome and ce if dhare haz bene enny chainj."

He wauz awa sum minnuets, juring which Hoamz rezhuemd hiz examinaishon ov the cureyoscitese uppon the waul. When our hoast reternd it wauz clere from hiz douncaast face dhat he had made no proagres. He braut widh him a taul, slim, broun-faist gherl.

"The te iz reddy, Dolores," ced Ferguson. "Ce dhat yor mistres haz evverithhing she can wish."

"She verraa il," cride the gherl, loocking widh indignant ise at her maaster. "She no aasc for foode. She verraa il. She nede doctor. I fritend sta alone widh her widhout doctor."

Ferguson looct at me widh a qweschon in hiz ise.

"I shood be so glad if I cood be ov uce."

"Wood yor mistres ce Dr. Wautson?"

"I take him. I no aasc leve. She needz doctor."

"Then Ile cum widh u at wuns."

I follode the gherl, whoo wauz qwivvering widh strong emoashon, up the staercace and doun an ainshent corridor. At the end wauz an iarn-clampt and mascive doer. It struc me az I looct at it dhat if Ferguson tride too foers hiz wa too hiz wife he wood fiand it no esy matter. The gherl droo a ke from her pocket, and the hevvy oken planx creect uppon dhare oald hin'gez. I paast in and she swiftly follode, faacening the doer behiand her.

On the bed a woomman wauz liying whoo wauz cleerly in a hi fever. She wauz only haaf consmous, but az I enterd she raizd a pare ov fritend

but butifool ise and glaerd at me in apreshon. Ceying a strain'ger, she apeerd too be releevd, and sanc bac widh a ci uppon the pillo. I stept up too her widh a fu reyashuring werdz, and she la stil while I tooc her puls and temperachure. Boath wer hi, and yet mi impreshon wauz dhat the condishon wauz raather dhat ov mental and nervous exiatment dhan ov enny acchuwal ceezhure.

"She li like dhat wun da, too da. I frade she di," ced the gherl.

The woomman ternd her flusht and handsum face toowordz me.

"Whare iz mi huzband?"

"He iz belo, and wood wish too ce u."

"I wil not ce him. I wil not ce him." Then she ceemd too waunder of intoo delereyum. "A feend! A feend! O, whaut shal I doo widh this devvil?"

"Can I help u in enny wa?"

"No. No wun can help. It iz finnisht. Aul iz destroid. Doo whaut I wil, aul iz destroid."

The woomman must hav sum strainj deluezhon. I cood not ce onnest Bob Ferguson in the carracter ov feend or devvil.

"Madam," I ced, "yor huzband luvz u deerly. He iz deeply greevd at this happening."

Agane she ternd on me dhose gloereyous ise.

"He luvz me. Yes. But doo I not luv him? Doo I not luv him even too

sacrifice micelf raather dhan brake hiz dere hart. Dhat iz hou I luv him. And yet he cood thhinc ov me--he cood speke ov me so."

"He iz fool ov grefe, but he canot understand.

"No, he canot understand. But he shood trust."

"Wil u not ce him?" I sugested.

"No, no; I canot forghet dhose terribel werdz nor the looc uppon hiz face. I wil not ce him. Go nou. U can doo nuthhing for me. Tel him oonly wun thhing. I waunt mi chiald. I hav a rite too mi chiald. Dhat iz the oonly message I can cend him." She ternd her face too the waul and wood sa no moer.

I reternd too the roome dounstaerz, whare Ferguson and Hoamz stil sat bi the fire. Ferguson liscend moodily too mi acount ov the intervü.

"Hou can I cend her the chiald?" he ced. "Hou doo I no whaut strainj impuls mite cum uppon her? Hou can I evver forghet hou she rose from becide it widh its blud uppon her lips?" He shudderd at the recolecshon. "The chiald iz safe widh Mrs. Mason, and dhare he must remane."

A smart made, the oonly moddern thhing which we had cene in the hous, had

braut in sum te. Az she wauz cerving it the doer opend and a ueth enterd the roome. He wauz a remarcabel lad, pale-faist and fare-haerd, widh exitabel lite blu ise which blaizd intoo a sudden flame ov emoashon and joi az dha rested uppon hiz faather. He rusht forword and throo hiz armz round hiz nec widh the abandon ov a luvving gherl.

"O, daddy," he cride, "I did not no dhat u wer ju yet. I shood hav bene here too mete u. O, I am so glad too ce u!"

Ferguson gently dicens'gajid himself from the embrace widh sum littel sho ov embarrasment.

"Dere oald chap," ced he, patting the flaxen hed widh a verry tender hand. "I came erly becauz mi frendz, Mr. Hoamz and Dr. Wautson, hav bene perswaded too cum down and spend an evening widh us."

"Iz dhat Mr. Hoamz, the detective?"

"Yes."

The ueth looct at us widh a verry pennetrating and, az it ceemd too me, unfriendly gase.

"Whaut about yor uther chiald, Mr. Ferguson?" aasct Hoamz. "Mite we make the aqwaintans ov the baby?"

"Aasc Mrs. Mason too bring baby down," ced Ferguson. The boi went of widh a cureyous, shambling gate which toald mi cergical ise dhat he wauz suffering from a weke spine. Prezently he reternd, and behiand him came a taul, gaunt woomman baring in her armz a verry butifool chiald, darc-ide, goalden-haerd, a wunderfool mixchure ov the Saxon and the Latin. Ferguson wauz evvidently devoted too it, for he tooc it intoo hiz armz and fondeld it moast tenderly.

"Fancy enniwun havving the hart too hert him," he mutterd, az he glaanst doun at the smaull, an'gry red pucker uppon the cherrub throte.

It wauz at this moment dhat I chaanst too glaans at Hoamz, and sau a moast cin'gular intentnes in hiz expreshon. Hiz face wauz az cet az if it had bene carvd out ov oald ivory, and hiz ise, which had glaanst for a moment at faather and chiald, wer nou fixt widh egher cureyosity uppon sumthhing at the uther cide ov the roome. Following hiz gase I

could only guess that he was looking out through the window at the melancholy, dripping garden. It is true that a shutter had half closed outside and obstructed the view, but nevertheless it was certainly at the window that Hoamz was fixing his concentrated attention. Then he smiled, and his eyes came back to the baby. On its chubby neck there was this small puckered mark. Without speaking, Hoamz examined it with care. Finally he shook his head over the dimpled fists which waved in front of him.

"Good-bye, little man. You have made a splendid start in life. Now, I should wish to have a word with you in private."

He took her aside and spoke earnestly for a few minutes. He only heard the last words, which were: "Your anxiety will soon, I hope, be at rest." The woman, who seemed to be a sour, silent kind of creature, withdrew with the child.

"What is Mrs. Mason like?" asked Hoamz.

"Not very prepossessing externally, as you can see, but a heart of gold, and devoted to the child."

"Do you like her, Jack?" Hoamz turned suddenly upon the boy. His expressive mobile face shaded over, and he shook his head.

"Jacky has very strong likes and dislikes," said Ferguson, putting his arm round the boy. "Luckily I am one of his likes."

The boy nodded and nestled his head upon his father's breast. Ferguson gently patted him.

"Run away, little Jacky," said he, and he watched his son with loving eyes until he disappeared. "Now, Mr. Hoamz," he continued, when the boy was gone, "I really feel that I have brought you on a fair

errand, for whaut can u poscibly doo, save ghiv me yor cimpathhy? It must be an exedingly dellicate and complex afare from yor point ov vu."

"It iz certainly dellicate," ced mi frend, widh an amuezd smile, "but I hav not bene struc up too nou widh its complexity. It haz bene a cace for intelecchuwal deducshon, but when this oridginal intelecchuwal deducshon iz confermd point bi point bi qwite a number ov independent incidents, then the subgective becumz obgective and we can sa confidently dhat we hav reecht our gole. I had, in fact, reecht it befoer we left Baker Strete, and the rest haz meerly bene observaishon and confermaishon."

Ferguson poot hiz big hand too hiz furrede foerhed.

"For Hevvenz sake, Hoamz," he ced hoersly, "if u can ce the truth in this matter, doo not kepe me in suspens. Hou doo I stand? Whaut shal I doo? I care nuthhing az too hou u hav found yor facts so long az u hav reyaly got them."

"Certainly I o u an explanaishon, and u shal hav it. But u wil permit me too handel the matter in mi one wa? Iz the lady capabel ov ceying us, Wautson?"

"She iz il, but she iz qwite rashonal."

"Verry good. It iz oonly in her prezsens dhat we can clere the matter up. Let us go up too her."

"She wil not ce me," cride Ferguson.

"O, yes, she wil," ced Hoamz. He scribbeld a fu lianz uppon a shete ov paper. "U at leest hav the *ontra*, Wautson. Wil u

hav the goodnes too ghiv the lady this note?"

I acended agane and handed the note too Dolores, whoo caushously opend the doer. A minnute later I herd a cri from within, a cri in which joi and cerprise ceemd too be blended. Dolores looct out.

"She wil ce them. She wil lecen," ced she.

At mi summonz Ferguson and Hoamz came up. Az we enterd the roome Ferguson tooc a step or too toowordz hiz wife, whoo had raizd hercelf in the bed, but she held out her hand too repuls him. He sanc intoo an arm-chare, while Hoamz ceted himcelf beside him, aafter bouwing too the lady, whoo looct at him widh wide-ide amaizment.

"I thhinc we can dispens widh Dolores," ced Hoamz. "O, verry wel, madam, if u wood raather she stade I can ce no obgecshon. Nou, Mr. Ferguson, I am a bizsy man widh menny caulz, and mi methodz hav too be short and direct. The swiftest cergery iz the leest painfool. Let me ferst sa whaut wil ese yor miand. Yor wife iz a verry good, a verry luvving, and a verry il-uezd woomman."

Ferguson sat up widh a cri ov joi.

"Proove dhat, Mr. Hoamz, and I am yor dettor for evver."

"I wil doo so, but in doowing so I must wuind u deeply in anuther direcshon."

"I care nuthhing so long az u clere mi wife. Evverithhing on erth iz incignifficant compaerd too dhat."

"Let me tel u, then, the trane ov rezoning which paast throo mi miand in Baker Strete. The ideyaa ov a vampire wauz too me abcerd. Such

thhingz doo not happen in crimmlinal practice in In'gland. And yet yor observaishon wauz precice. U had cene the lady rise from becide the chialdz cot widh the blud uppon her lips."

"I did."

"Did it not oker too u dhat a bleding wuind ma be suct for sum uther perpoce dhan too drau the blud from it? Wauz dhare not a Qwene in In'glish history whoo suct such a wuind too drau poizon from it?"

"Poizon!"

"A South Amerrikan hous'hoald. Mi instinct felt the prezsens ov dhose wepponz uppon the waul befoer mi ise evver sau them. It mite hav bene uther poizon, but dhat wauz whaut okerd too me. When I sau dhat littel empty qwivver becide the smaual berd-bo, it wauz just whaut I expected too ce. If the chiald wer prict widh wun ov dhose arrose dipt in curaary or sum uther devvilish drug, it wood mene deth if the venom wer not suct out.

"And the dog! If wun wer too use such a poizon, wood wun not tri it ferst in order too ce dhat it had not lost its pouwer? I did not foercy the dog, but at leest I understood him and he fitted intoo mi reconstrucshon.

"Nou doo u understand? Yor wife feerd such an atac. She sau it made and saivd the chialdz life, and yet she shranc from telling u aul the truith, for she nu hou u luvd the boi and feerd lest it brake yor hart."

"Jacky!"

"I waucht him az u fondeld the chiald just nou. Hiz face wauz cleerly reflected in the glaas ov the windo whare the shutter formd a

background. I sau such gelloucy, such croowel haitred, az I hav celdom cene in a human face."

"Mi Jacky!"

"U hav too face it, Mr. Ferguson. It iz the moer painfool becauz it iz a distorted luv, a maniyacal exadgerated luv for u, and pocsibly for hiz ded muther, which haz prompted hiz acshon. Hiz verry sole iz conshuemd widh haitred for this splendid chiald, whoose helth and buty ar a contraast too hiz one weecnes."

"Good God! It iz increddibel!"

"Hav I spoken the truith, madam?"

The lady wauz sobbing, widh her face berrede in the pillose. Nou she ternd too her huzband.

"Hou cood I tel u, Bob? I felt the blo it wood be too u. It wauz better dhat I shood wate and dhat it shood cum from sum uther lips dhan mine. When this gentelman, whoo ceemz too hav pouwerz ov madgic, rote dhat he nu aul, I wauz glad."

"I thhinc a yere at ce wood be mi prescripshon for Maaster Jacky," ced Hoamz, rising from hiz chare. "Oonly wun thhing iz stil clouded, madam. We can qwite understand yor atax uppon Maaster Jacky. Dhare iz a limmit too a mutherz paishens. But hou did u dare too leve the chiald these laast too dase?"

"I had toald Mrs. Mason. She nu."

"Exactly. So I imadgiand."

Ferguson wauz standing bi the bed, choking, hiz handz outstrecht and

qwivvering.

"This, I fancy, iz the time for our exit, Wautson," ced Hoamz in a whisper. "If u wil take wun elbo ov the too faithfool Dolores, I wil take the uther. Dhare, nou," he added, az he cloazd the doer behiand him, "I thhinc we ma leve them too cettel the rest among themcelvz."

I hav oanly wun ferther note ov this cace. It iz the letter which Hoamz rote in final aancer too dhat widh which the narrative beghinz. It ran dhus:

BAKER STRETE,  
"Nov." 21st.

"Re" Vampiarz.

CER,--

Refuuring too yor letter ov the 19th, I beg too state dhat I hav looct into the inqwiry ov yor cliyent, Mr. Robbert Ferguson, ov Ferguson and Muerhed, te brokerz, ov Mincing Lane, and dhat the matter haz bene braut too a satisfactory concluezhon. Widh thanx for yor recomendaishon,

I am, Cer,  
Faithfooly yorz,  
SHERLOC HOAMZ.

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE THRE GARRIDEBZ

It ma hav bene a commedy, or it ma hav bene a tradgedy. It cost wun man hiz rezon, it cost me a blud-letting, and it cost yet anuther man the pennaltese ov the lau. Yet dhare wauz certainly an ellement ov commedy. Wel, u shal juj for yorcelvz.

I remember the date verry wel, for it wauz in the same munth dhat Hoamz refuezd a niat'hood for cervicez which ma perhaps sum da be descriabd. I oanly refer too the matter in paacing, for in mi posishon ov partner and confidant I am obliajd too be particularly caerfool too avoid enny indisreshon. I repete, houwevver, dhat this enabelz me too fix the date, which wauz the latter end ov June, 1902, shortly aafter the concluezhon ov the South African Wor. Hoamz had spent cevveral dase in bed, az wauz hiz habbit from time too time, but he emerjd dhat morning widh a long fuilscap doccument in hiz hand and a twinkel ov amuezment in hiz austere gra ise.

"Dhare iz a chaans for u too make sum munny, frend Wautson," ced he. "Hav u evver herd the name ov Garrideb?"

I admitted dhat I had not.

"Wel, if u can la yor hand uppon a Garrideb, dhaerz munny in it."

"Whi?"

"Aa, dhats a long stoery--raather a whimsical wun, too. I doant thhinc in aul our exploraishonz ov human complexitese we hav evver cum uppon ennithhing moer cin'gular. The fello wil be here prezsently for cros-examinaishon, so I woant open the matter up til he cumz. But

meanwhile, that's the name we want."

The telephone directory lay on the table beside me, and I turned over the pages in a rather hopeless quest. But to my amazement there was this strange name in its proper place. I gave a cry of triumph.

"Here you are, Hoamz! Here it is!"

Hoamz took the book from my hand.

"Garrideb, N.," he read, "'136 Little Rider Street, W.' Sorry to disappoint you, my dear Watson, but this is the man himself. That is the address upon his letter. We want another too much of him."

Mrs. Hudson had come in with a card upon a tray. I took it up and glanced at it.

"Whi, here it is!" I cried in amazement. "This is a different initial. Jon Garrideb, Counselor at Law, Moorvil, Canzas, U.S.A."

Hoamz smiled as he looked at the card. "I am afraid you must make yet another effort, Watson," said he. "This gentleman is also in the plot already, though I certainly did not expect to see him this morning. However, he is in a position to tell us a good deal which I want to know."

A moment later he was in the room. Mr. Jon Garrideb, Counselor at Law, was a short, powerful man with the round, fresh, clean-shaven face characteristic of so many American men of affairs. The general effect was chubby and rather childlike, so that we received the impression of quite a young man with a broad contented smile upon his face. His eyes, however, were arresting. Scarcely in any human head have I seen a pair

which bespoke a moer intens inword life, so brite wer dha, so alert, so responcive too evvery chainj ov thaut. Hiz axent wauz Amerrican, but wauz not acumpanede bi enny exentriscity ov speche.

"Mr. Hoamz?" he aasct, glaancing from wun too the uther. "Aa, yes! Yor picchuerz ar not unlike u, cer, if I ma sa so. I beleve u hav had a letter from mi nainsake, Mr. Naithan Garrideb, hav u not?"

"Pra cit doun," ced Sherloc Hoamz. "We shal, I fancy, hav a good dele too discus." He tooc up hiz sheets ov fuilscap. "U ar, ov coers, the Mr. Jon Garrideb menshond in this document. But shuerly u hav bene in In'gland sum time?"

"Whi doo u sa dhat, Mr. Hoamz?" I ceemd too rede sudden suspishon in dhose exprescive ise.

"Yor whole outfit iz In'glish."

Mr. Garrideb foerst a laaf. "Ive red ov yor trix, Mr. Hoamz, but I nevver thaut I wood be the subject ov them. Whare doo u rede dhat?"

"The shoalder cut ov yor cote, the tose ov yor buits--cood enniwun dout it?"

"Wel, wel, I had no ideyaa I wauz so obveyous a Brittisher. But biznes braut me over here sum time ago, and so, az u sa, mi outfit iz neerly aul Lundon. Houwevver, I ghes yor time iz ov vallu, and we did not mete too tauc about the cut ov mi sox. Whaut about ghetting doun too dhat paper u hoald in yor hand?"

Hoamz had in sum wa ruffeld our vizsitor, whoose chubby face had ashuemd a far les ameyabel expreshon.

"Paishens! Paishens, Mr. Garrideb!" ced mi frend in a suithing vois. "Dr. Wautson wood tel u dhat these littel diagreshonz ov mine sumtiamz proove in the end too hav sum baring on the matter. But whi did Mr. Naithan Garrideb not cum widh u?"

"Whi did he evver drag u intoo it at aul?" aasct our vizsitor, widh a sudden outflame ov an'gher. "Whaut in thunder had u too doo widh it? Here wauz a bit ov profeshonal biznes betwene too gentelmen, and wun ov them must needz caul in a detective! I sau him this morning, and he toald me this foole-tric he had plade me, and dhats whi I am here. But I fele bad about it, aul the same."

"Dhare wauz no reflecshon uppon u, Mr. Garrideb. It wauz cimply sele uppon hiz part too gane yor end--an end which iz, I understand, eeqwaly vital for boath ov u. He nu dhat I had meenz ov ghetting informaishon, and, dhaerfoer, it wauz verry natchural dhat he shood apli too me."

Our vizsitorz an'gry face gradjuwaly cleerd.

"Wel, dhat poots it different," ced he. "When I went too ce him this morning and he toald me he had cent too a detective, I just aasct for yor adres and came rite awa. I doant waunt polece butting intoo a private matter. But if u ar content just too help us fiand the man, dhare can be no harm in dhat."

"Wel, dhat iz just hou it standz," ced Hoamz. "And nou, cer, cins u ar here, we had best hav a clere acount from yor one lips. Mi frend here nose nuthhing ov the detailz."

Mr. Garrideb cervade me widh not too frendly a gase.

"Nede he no?" he aasct.

"We uezhuwaly werc tooghether."

"Wel, dhaerz no rezon it shood be kept a ceecret. Ile ghiv u the facts az short az I can make them. If u came from Canzas I wood not nede too explane too u whoo Alexaander Hammilton Garrideb wauz. He made hiz munny in reyal estate, and aafterwordz in the whete pit at Shicago, but he spent it in biying up az much land az wood make wun ov yor countese, liying along the Arcansau Rivver, west ov Foert Doj. Its grasing-land and lumber-land and arrabel-land and minneraliazd-land, and just evvery sort ov land dhat bringz dollarz too the man dhat oanz it.

"He had no kith nor kin--or, if he had, I nevver herd ov it. But he tooc a kiand ov pride in the qweernes ov hiz name. Dhat wauz whaut braut us tooghether. I wauz in the lau at Topecaa, and wun da I had a vizsit from the oald man, and he wauz tickeld too deth too mete anuther man widh hiz one name. It wauz hiz pet fad, and he wauz ded cet too fiand out if dhare wer enny moer Garridebz in the werld. Fiand me anuther!' ced he. I toald him I wauz a bizsy man and cood not spend mi life hiking round the werld in cerch ov Garridebz. Nun the les,' ced he, dhat iz just whaut u wil doo if thhingz pan out az I pland them.' I thaut he wauz joking, but dhare wauz a pouwerfool lot ov mening in the werdz, az I wauz soone too discuvver.

"For he dide within a yere ov saying them, and he left a wil behiand him. It wauz the qwerest wil dhat haz evver bene fiand in the State ov Canzas. Hiz propperty wauz divided intoo thre parts, and I wauz too hav wun on condishon dhat I found too Garridebz whoo wood share the remainder. Its five milleyon dollarz for eche if it iz a cent, but we caant la a fin'gher on it until we aul thre stand in a ro.

"It wauz so big a chaans dhat I just let mi legal practice slide and I

cet foerth loocking for Garridebz. Dhare iz not wun in the United Staits. I went throo it, cer, widh a fine-tuitht come and nevver a Garrideb cood I cach. Then I tride the oald cuntry. Shure enuf dhare wauz the name in the Lundon Tellefone Directory. I went aafter him too dase ago and explaind the whole matter too him. But he iz a lone man, like micelf, widh sum wimmen relaishonz, but no men. It cez thre adult men in the wil. So u ce we stil hav a vacancy, and if u can help too fil it we wil be verry reddy too pa yor chargez."

"Wel, Wautson," ced Hoamz, widh a smile, "I ced it wauz raather whimsical, did I not? I shood hav thaut, cer, dhat yor obveyous wa wauz too advertize in the agony collumz ov the paperz."

"I hav dun dhat, Mr. Hoamz. No replise."

"Dere me! Wel, it iz certainly a moast cureyous littel problem. I ma take a glaans at it in mi lezhure. Bi the wa, it iz cureyous dhat u shood hav cum from Topecaa. I uest too hav a corespondent--he iz ded nou--oald Dr. Lisander Star, whoo wauz Mayor in 1890."

"Good oald Dr. Star!" ced our vizsitor. "Hiz name iz stil onnord. Wel, Mr. Hoamz, I suppose aul we can doo iz too repoert too u and let u no hou we progres. I reccon u wil here within a da or too." Widh this ashurans our Amerrikan boud and departed.

Hoamz had lit hiz pipe, and he sat for sum time widh a cureyous smile uppon hiz face.

"Wel?" I aasct at laast.

"I am wundering, Wautson--just wundering!"

"At whaut?"

Hoamz tooc hiz pipe from hiz lips.

"I wauz wundering, Wautson, whaut on erth cood be the obgett ov this man

in telling us such a rigmarole ov lise. I neerly aasct him so--for dhare ar tiamz when a brootal frontal atac iz the best pollicy--but I jujd it better too let him thhinc he had fuild us. Here iz a man widh an In'glisch cote frade at the elbo and trouserz bagd at the ne widh a yeerz ware, and yet bi this document and bi hiz one acount he iz a provinshal Amerrican laitly landed in Lundon. Dhare hav bene no advertiazments in the aggonny collumz. U no dhat I mis nuthhing dhare. Dha ar mi favorite cuvvert for pooting up a berd, and I wood nevver hav overlooct such a coc fezzant az dhat. I nevver nu a Dr. Lisander Star ov Topecaa. Tuch him whare u wood he wauz fauls. I thhinc the fello iz reyaly an Amerrican, but he haz woern hiz axent smuidh widh yeerz ov Lundon. Whaut iz hiz game, then, and whaut motive

lise behiand this preposterous cerch for Garridebz? Its werth our atenshon, for, graanting dhat the man iz a raascal, he iz certainly a complex and in'geenyous wun. We must nou fiand out if our uther corespondent iz a fraud aulso. Just ring him up, Wautson."

I did so, and herd a thhin, qwavering vois at the uther end ov the line.

"Yes, yes, I am Mr. Naithan Garrideb. Iz Mr. Hoamz dhare? I shood verry much like too hav a werd widh Mr. Hoamz."

Mi frend tooc the instrooment and I herd the uezhuwal cincopated diyalog.

"Yes, he haz bene here. I understand dhat u doant no him.... Hou long? ... Oanly too dase! ... Yes, yes, ov coers, it iz a moast captivating prospect. Wil u be at home this evening? I supose yor naimsake wil not be dhare? ... Verry good, we wil cum then, for

I wood raather hav a chat widhout him.... Dr. Wautson wil cum widh me.... I understood from yor note dhat u did not go out often.... Wel, we shal be round about cix. U nede not menshon it too the Amerrican lauyer.... Verry good. Good-bi!"

It wauz twilite ov a luvly spring evening, and even Littel Rider Strete, wun ov the smauler ofshuits from the Edgware Rode, within a stone-caast ov oald Tibern Tre ov evil memmory, looct goalden and wunderfool in the slaanting rase ov the cetting sun. The particcular hous too which we wer directed wauz a larj, oald-fashond, Erly Jorjan eddifice widh a flat bric face broken oonly bi too depe ba windose on the ground floer. It wauz on this ground floer dhat our cliyent livd, and, indede, the lo windose pruivd too be the frunt ov the huge roome in which he spent hiz waking ourz. Hoamz pointed az we paast too the smaul braas plate which boer the cureyous name.

"Up sum yeeرز, Wautson," he remarct, indicating its discullord cerface. "Its hiz reyal name, ennihou, and dhat iz sumthhing too note."

The hous had a common stare, and dhare wer a number ov naimz painted in the haul sum indicating officez and sum private chaimberz. It wauz not a colecshon ov residenshal flats, but raather the abode ov Bohemeyan batchelorز. Our cliyent opend the doer for us himcelf and apollogiazd bi saying dhat the woomman in charj left at foer oacloc. Mr. Naithan Garrideb pruivd too be a verry taul, looce-jointed, round-bact person, gaunt and bauld, sum cixty-od yeeرز ov age. He had a cadavverous face, widh the dul ded skin ov a man too whoome exercise wauz un'none. Larj round spektakelز and a smaul projecting goats beard combiand widh hiz stooping attichude too ghiv him an expreshon ov pering cureyosity. The genneral efect, houwevver, wauz ameyabel, dho exentric.

The roome wauz az cureyous az its occupant. It looct like a smaul museyum. It wauz boath braud and depe, widh cubbordz and cabbincts aul

round, crouded widh spescimenz, geyolodgical and anatomical. Cacez ov  
butterflise and moths flanct eche cide ov the entrans. A larj tabel  
in the center wauz litterd widh aul sorts ov daibry, while the taul  
braas chube ov a pouwerfool miacroscope brisceld up amungst them. Az I  
glaanst round I wauz cerpriazd at the universallity ov the manz  
interests. Here wauz a cace ov ainshent coinz. Dhare wauz a cabbinet ov  
flint instrooments. Behiand hiz central tabel wauz a larj cubbord ov  
foscil boanz. Abuv wauz a line ov plaaster sculz widh such naimz az  
"Neyandertaal," "Hidelberg," "Cromagnon" printed beneeth them. It wauz  
clere dhat he wauz a schudent ov menny subgects. Az he stood in front ov  
us nou, he held a pece ov shammy lether in hiz rite hand widh which  
he wauz pollishing a coin.

"Ciracuzan--ov the best pereyod," he explaind, hoalding it up. "Dha  
degennerated graitley toowordz the end. At dhare best I hoald them  
supreme, dho sum prefer the Alexaandreyan scoole. U wil fiand a  
chare here, Mr. Hoamz. Pra alou me too clere these boanz. And u,  
cer--aa, yes, Dr. Wautson--if u wood hav the goodnes too poot the  
Japanese vaaz too wun cide. U ce round me mi littel interests in  
life. Mi doctor lecchuerz me about nevver gowing out, but whi shood I go  
out when I hav so much too hoald me here? I can ashure u dhat the  
addeqwate cattalogghing ov wun ov dhose cabbineets wood take me thre  
good  
munths."

Hoamz looct round him widh cureyosity.

"But doo u tel me dhat u "nevver" go out?" he ced

"Nou and agane I drive doun too Suthese or Cristese. Utherwise I  
verry celdom leve mi roome. I am not too strong, and mi recherchez ar  
verry abzorbing. But u can imadgine, Mr. Hoamz, whaut a teriffic  
shoc--plezzant but teriffic--it wauz for me when I herd ov this

unparalleled good fortune. It only needs one more Garrideb too complete the matter, and surely we can find one. I had a brother, but he is dead, and female relatives are disqualifying. But there must surely be others in the world. I had heard that you handled strange cases, and that was why I came to you. Of course, this American gentleman is quite right, and I should have taken his advice first, but I acted for the best."

"I think you acted very wisely indeed," said Hoamz. "But are you really anxious too acquire an estate in America?"

"Certainly not, sir. Nothing would induce me to leave my collection. But this gentleman has assured me that he will buy me out as soon as we have established our claim. Five million dollars was the sum named. There are a dozen specimens in the market at the present moment which fill gaps in my collection, and which I am unable to purchase for want of a few hundred pounds. Just think what I could do with five million dollars. Why, I have the nucleus of a national collection. I shall be the Hans Sloane of my age."

His eyes gleamed behind his great spectacles. It was very clear that no pain would be spared by Mr. Naithan Garrideb in finding a namesake.

"I merely could not make your acquaintances, and there is no reason why I should interrupt your studies," said Hoamz. "I prefer to establish personal touch with those with whom I do business. There are few questions I need ask, for I have your very clear narrative in my pocket, and I filled up the blanks when this American gentleman could. I understand that up to this week you were unaware of his existence."

"That is so. He could not last Chueza."

"Did he tell you of our interview too-da?"

"Yes, he came strate bac too me. He had bene verry an'gry."

"Whi shood he be an'gry?"

"He ceemd too thhinc it wauz sum reflecschon on hiz onnor. But he wauz qwite cheerfool agane when he reternd."

"Did he sugest enny coers ov acshon?"

"No, cer, he did not."

"Haz he had, or aasct for, enny munny from u?"

"No, cer, nevver!"

"U ce no poscibel obgect he haz in vu?"

"Nun, exept whaut he staits."

"Did u tel him ov our tellefone apointment?"

"Yes, cer, I did."

Hoamz wauz lost in thaut. I cood ce dhat he wauz puzseld.

"Hav u enny artikelz ov grate vallu in yor colecshon?"

"No, cer. I am not a rich man. It iz a good colecshon, but not a verry vallubel wun."

"U hav no fere ov berglarz?"

"Not the leest."

"Hou long hav u bene in these ruimz?"

"Neerly five yeerz."

Hoamsez cros-examinaishon wauz interupted bi an imperrative nocking at the doer. No sooner had our cliyent unlacht it dhan the Amerrican lauyer berst exitedly intoo the roome.

"Here u ar!" he cride, waving a paper over hiz hed. "I thaut I shood be in time too ghet u. Mr. Naithan Garrideb, mi con'grachulaishonz! U ar a rich man, cer. Our biznes iz happily finnisht and aul iz wel. Az too u, Mr. Hoamz, we can oanly sa we ar sorry if we hav ghivven u enny uesles trubbel."

He handed over the paper too our cliyent, whoo stood staring at a marct advertiazment. Hoamz and I leend forword and rede it over hiz shoalder. This iz hou it ran:

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+-----+
|                                     |
| HOUWARD GARRIDEB.                 |
|                                     |
| Constructor ov Agriculchural Mashenery. |
|                                     |
| Bianderz, reperz steme and hand plouz, drilz, |
| harrose, farmerz carts, bucbordz, and aul uther |
| apliyancez.                         |
|                                     |
| Estimaits for Arteezhan Welz.       |
|                                     |
| Apli Grovenor Bildingz, Aston.      |
|                                     |
+-----+
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"Gloereyous!" gaaspt our hoast. "Dhat maix our thherd man."

"I had opend up inqwirse in Bermingam," ced the Amerrican, "and mi agent dhare haz cent me this advertiazment from a local paper. We must huscel and poot the thhing throo. I hav ritten too this man and toald him dhat u wil ce him in hiz office too-morro aafternoone at foer oacloc."

"U waunt "me" too ce him?"

"Whaut doo u sa, Mr. Hoamz? Doant u thhinc it wood be wiser? Here am I, a waundering Amerrican widh a wunderfool tale. Whi shood he beleve whaut I tel him? But u ar a Brittisher widh sollid refferencez, and he iz bound too take notice ov whaut u sa. I wood go widh u if u wisht, but I hav a verry bizsy da too-morro, and I cood aulwase follo u if u ar in enny trubbel."

"Wel, I hav not made such a gerny for yeerz."

"It iz nuthing, Mr. Garrideb. I hav figguerd out yor conecshonz. U leve at twelv and shood be dhare soone aafter too. Then u can be bac the same nite. Aul u hav too doo iz too ce this man, explane the matter, and ghet an afidavit ov hiz existens. Bi the Lord!" he added hotly, "conciddering Ive cum aul the wa from the center ov Amerricaa, it iz shuerly littel enuf if u go a hundred mialz in order too poot this matter throo."

"Qwite so," ced Hoamz. "I thhinc whaut this gentelman cez iz verry troo."

Mr. Naithan Garrideb shrugd hiz shoalderz widh a disconsolate are. "Wel, if u incist I shal go," ced he. "It iz certainly hard for

me too refuse u ennithing, conciddering the gloery ov hope dhat u hav braut intoo mi life."

"Then dhat iz agrede," ced Hoamz, "and no dout u wil let me hav a repoert az soone az u can."

"Ile ce too dhat," ced the Amerrican. "Wel," he added, loocking at hiz wauch, "Ile hav too ghet on. Ile caul too-morro, Mr. Naithan, and ce u of too Bermingam. Cumming mi wa, Mr. Hoamz? Wel, then, good-bi, and we ma hav good nuse for u too-morro nite."

I notiast dhat mi frendz face cleerd when the Amerrican left the roome, and the looc ov thautfool perplexity had vannisht.

"I wish I cood looc over yor colecshon, Mr. Garrideb," ced he. "In mi profeshon aul sorts ov od nollej cumz uesfool, and this roome ov yorz iz a stoerhous ov it."

Our cliyent shon widh plezhure and hiz ise gleemd from behiand hiz big glaacez.

"I had aulwase herd, cer, dhat u wer a verry intelligent man," ced he. "I cood take u round nou, if u hav the time."

"Unforchunaitly, I hav not. But these spescimenz ar so wel labeld and clascifide dhat dha hardly nede yor personal explanaishon. If I shood be abel too looc in too-morro, I prezhume dhat dhare wood be no obgecshon too mi glaancing over them?"

"Nun at aul. U ar moast welcum. The place wil, ov coers, be shut up, but Mrs. Saunderz iz in the baisment up too foer oacloc and wood let u in widh her ke."

"Wel, I happen too be clere too-morro aafternoone. If u wood sa a

werd too Mrs. Saunderz it wood be qwite in order. Bi the wa, whoo iz yor hous-agent?"

Our cliyent wauz amaizd at the sudden qweschon.

"Hollowa and Stele, in the Edgware Rode. But whi?"

"I am a bit ov an arkeyollogist micelf when it cumz too housez," ced Hoamz, laafing. "I wauz wundering if this wauz Qwene An or Jorjan."

"Jorjan, beyond dout."

"Reyaly. I shood hav thaut a littel erleyer. Houwevver, it iz esily ascertaind. Wel, good-bi, Mr. Garrideb, and ma u hav evvery suxes in yor Bermingam gerny."

The hous-agents wauz cloce bi, but we found dhat it wauz cloazd for the da, so we made our wa bac too Baker Strete. It wauz not til aafter dinner dhat Hoamz reverted too the subject.

"Our littel problem drauz too a close," ced he. "No dout u hav outliand the solueshon in yor one miand."

"I can make niather hed nor tale ov it."

"The hed iz shuerly clere enuf and the tale we shood ce too-morro. Did u notice nuthhing cureyous about dhat advertiazment?"

"I sau dhat the werd plo wauz mispelt."

"O, u did notice dhat, did u? Cum, Wautson, u improove aul the time. Yes, it wauz bad In'glish but good Amerrican. The printer had cet it up az receevd. Then the bucbordz. Dhat iz Amerrican aulso. And arteezhan welz ar commoner widh them dhan widh us. It wauz a tippical

American advertisement, but purporting to be from an English firm.  
What do you make of that?

"I can only suppose that this American lawyer put it in himself. What his object was I fail to understand."

"Well, there are alternative explanations. Either, he wanted to get this good old fossil up to Birmingham. That is very clear. I might have told him that he was clearly going on a wild-goose chase, but, on second thoughts, it seemed better to clear the stage by letting him go. To-morrow, Watson--well, to-morrow will speak for itself."

Hoamz was up and out early. When he returned at lunch-time I noticed that his face was very grave.

"This is a more serious matter than I had expected, Watson," said he.  
"It is far too late to tell you so, but I know it will only be an additional reason too for running your head into danger. I should not mind Watson being now. But there is danger, and you should know it."

"Well, it is not the first we have shared, Hoamz. I hope it may not be the last. What is the particular danger this time?"

"We are up against a very hard case. I have identified Mr. Jon Garrideb, Counselor at Law. He is now either the Killer Evans, of sinister and murderous reputation."

"I fear I am now the wiser."

"Ah, it is not part of your profession to carry about a portable Nugate Calendar in your memory. I have been down to see friend Lestrade at the Yard. There may be an occasional want of imaginative invention down there, but they lead the world for thoroughness and

method. I had an ideyaa dhat we mite ghet on the trac ov our Amerrican frend in dhare reccordz. Shure enuf, I found hiz chubby face smiling up at me from the Roagz Poertrate Gallery. Jaimz Winter, "aleyas" Moercroft, "aleyas" Killer Evvanz, wauz the inscripshon belo." Hoamz droo an envelope from hiz pocket. "I scribbeld doun a fu points from hiz dosceyer. Aijd forty-foer. Native ov Shicaago. None too hav shot thre men in the Staits. Escaipt from penitenshary throo polittical influwens. Came too Lundon in 1893. Shot a man over cardz in a nite club in the Wauterloo Rode in Jannuwary, 1895. Man dide, but he wauz shone

too hav bene the agressor in the rou. Ded man wauz identifide az Rodger Prescot, famous az foerger and coiner in Shicaago. Killer Evvanz releest in 1901. Haz bene under polece supervizhon cins, but so far az none haz led an onnest life. Verry dain'gerous man, uezhuwaly carrese armz and iz prepaerd too use them. Dhat iz our berd, Wautson--a spoerting berd, az u must admit."

"But whaut iz hiz game?"

"Wel, it beghinz too define itself. I hav bene too the hous-agents. Our cliyent, az he toald us, haz bene dhare five yeerz. It wauz unlet for a yere befoer then. The preveyous tennant wauz a gentelman at larj naimd Wauldron. Wauldronz aperans wauz wel rememberd at the office. He had suddenly vannisht and nuthhing moer bene herd ov him. He wauz a taul, bearded man widh verry darc fechuerz. Nou, Prescot, the man whoome

Killer Evvanz had shot, wauz, acording too Scotland Yard, a taul, darc man widh a beard. Az a werking hipothhecis, I thhinc we ma take it dhat Prescot, the Amerrican crimminal, uest too liv in the verry roome which our innocent frend nou devoats too hiz museyum. So at laast we ghet a linc, u ce."

"And the next linc?"

"Wel, we must go nou and looc for dhat."

He tooc a revolver from the drauwer and handed it too me.

"I hav mi oald favorite widh me. If our Wiald West frend trise too liv up too hiz nickname, we must be reddy for him. Ile ghiv u an our for a ceyestaa, Wautson, and then I thhinc it wil be time for our Rider Strete advenchure."

It wauz just foer oacloc when we reecht the cureyous apartment ov Naithan Garrideb. Mrs. Saunderz, the caertaker, wauz about too leve, but she had no hesitaishon in admitting us, for the doer shut widh a spring loc and Hoamz prommiast too ce dhat aul wauz safe befoer we left. Shortly aafterwordz the outer doer cloazd, her bonnet paast the bo windo, and we nu dhat we wer alone in the lower floer ov the hous. Hoamz made a rappid examinaishon ov the premmicez. Dhare wauz wun cubbord in a darc corner which stood out a littel from the waul. It wauz behiand this dhat we evenchuwaly croucht, while Hoamz in a whisper outliand hiz intenshonz.

"He waunted too ghet our ameyabel frend out ov hiz roome--dhat iz verry clere, and, az the colector nevver went out, it tooc sum planning too doo it. The whole ov this Garrideb invenshon wauz aparrently for no uther end. I must sa, Wautson, dhat dhare iz a certane devvilish in'genuwity about it, even if the qwere name ov the tennant did ghiv him an opening which he cood hardly hav expected. He wove hiz plot widh remarcabel cunning."

"But whaut did he waunt?"

"Wel, dhat iz whaut we ar here too fiand out. It haz nuthhing whautevver too doo widh our cliyent, so far az I can rede the cichuwaishon. It iz

sumthhing conected widh the man he merderd--the man whoo ma hav bene  
hiz confederate in crime. Dhare iz sum ghilty ceecret in the roome.  
Dhat iz hou I rede it. At ferst I thaut our frend mite hav  
sumthhing in hiz colecshon moer vallubel dhan he nu--sumthhing werth  
the atenshon ov a big crimminal. But the fact dhat Rodger Prescot ov  
evil memmory inhabbited these ruimz points too sum deper rezon. Wel,  
Wautson, we can but poses our soalz in paishens and ce whaut the our  
ma bring."

Dhat our wauz not long in striking. We croucht clocer in the shaddo  
az we herd the outer doer open and shut. Then came the sharp,  
metallic snap ov a ke, and the Amerrican wauz in the roome. He cloazd  
the doer softly behiand him, tooc a sharp glaans around him too ce dhat  
aul wauz safe, throo of hiz overcote, and wauct up too the central  
tabel widh the brisc manner ov wun whoo nose exactly whaut he haz too  
doo  
and hou too doo it. He poosht the tabel too wun cide, toer up the square  
ov carpet on which it rested, roald it compleetly bac, and then,  
drauwing a gemmy from hiz incide pocket, he nelt doun and werct  
viggorously uppon the floer. Prezently we herd the sound ov sliding  
boerdz, and an instant later a sqware had opend in the planx. Killer  
Evvanz struc a mach, lit a stump ov candel, and vannisht from our vu.

Cleerly our moment had cum. Hoamz tucht mi rist az a cignal, and  
together we stole acros too the open trapdoer. Gently az we muivd,  
houwevver, the oald floer must hav creect under our fete, for the hed  
ov our Amerrican, pering ancshously round, emerjd suddenly from the  
open space. Hiz face ternd uppon us widh a glare ov baffeld rage,  
which gradjuwaly softend intoo a raather shaimfaist grin az he reyaliazd  
dhat too pistolz wer pointed at hiz hed.

"Wel, wel!" ced he, cooly, az he scambeld too the cerface. "I  
ghes u hav bene wun too menny for me, Mr. Hoamz. Sau throo mi

game, I suppose, and plade me for a sucker from the ferst. Wel, cer, I hand it too u; u hav me bete and----"

In an instant he had whisct out a revolver from hiz brest and had fiard too shots. I felt a sudden hot cere az if a red-hot iarn had bene prest too mi thhi. Dhare wauz a crash az Hoamsez pistol came doun on the manz hed. I had a vizhon ov him sprauling uppon the floer widh blud running doun hiz face while Hoamz rummajd him for wepponz.

Then mi frendz wiry armz wer round me and he wauz leding me too a chare.

"Yor not hert, Wautson? For Godz sake, sa dhat u ar not hert!"

It wauz werth a wuind--it wauz werth menny wuindz--too no the depth ov loiyalty and luv which la behiand dhat coald maasc. The clere, hard ise wer dimd for a moment, and the ferm lips wer shaking. For the wun and oanly time I caut a glimps ov a grate hart az wel az ov a grate brane. Aul mi yeerz ov humbel but cin'ghel-mianded cervice culminated in dhat moment ov revelaishon.

"Its nuthhing, Hoamz. Its a mere scrach."

He had ript up mi trouserz widh hiz pocket-nife.

"U ar rite," he cride, widh an imens ci ov relefe. "It iz qwite superfishal." Hiz face cet like flint az he glaerd at our prizzoner, whoo wauz citting up widh a daizd face. "Bi the Lord, it iz az wel for u. If u had kild Wautson, u wood not hav got out ov this roome alive. Nou, cer, whaut hav u too sa for yorcelf?"

He had nuthhing too sa for himcelf. He oanly la and scould. I leend on Hoamsez arm, and tooghether we looct doun intoo the smaul cellar

which had bene discloazd bi the ceecret flap. It wauz stil iluminated bi the candel which Evvanz had taken doun widh him. Our ise fel uppon a mas ov rusted mashenery, grate roalz ov paper, a litter ov bottelz, and, neetly arainjd uppon a smaul tabel, a number ov nete littel bundelz.

"A printing pres--a counterfeterz outfit," ced Hoamz.

"Yes, cer," ced our prizzoner, stagghering sloly too hiz fete and then cinking intoo the chare. "The gratest counterfeter Lundon evver sau. Dhats Prescots mashene, and dhose bundelz on the tabel ar too thouzand ov Prescots noats werth a hundred eche and fit too paas enniwhare. Help yorcelvz, gentelmen. Caul it a dele and let me bete it."

Hoamz laaft.

"We doant doo thhingz like dhat, Mr. Evvanz. Dhare iz no bolt-hole for u in this cuntry. U shot this man Prescot, did u not?"

"Yes, cer, and got five yeerz for it, dho it wauz he whoo poold on me. Five yeerz--when I shood hav had a meddal the cise ov a soope plate. No livving man cood tel a Prescot from a Banc ov In'gland, and if I hadnt poot him out he wood hav fludded Lundon widh them. I wauz the oonly wun in the werld whoo nu whare he made them. Can u wunder dhat I waunted too ghet too the place? And can u wunder dhat when I found this crasy boobe ov a bug-hunter widh the qwere name sqwawting rite on the top ov it, and nevver qwitting hiz roome, I had too doo the best I cood too shift him? Maby I wood hav bene wiser if I had poot him awa. It wood hav bene esy enuf, but Ime a soft-harted ghi dhat caant beghin shooting unles the uther man haz a gun aulso. But sa, Mr. Hoamz, whaut hav I dun rong, ennihou? Ive not uezd this plaant. Ive not hert this oald stif. Whare doo u ghet me?"

"Oonly atempted merder, so far az I can ce," ced Hoamz. "But dhats not our job. Dha take dhat at the next stage. Whaut we waunted at prezsent wauz just yor swete celf. Plese ghiv the Yard a caul, Wautson. It woant be entiarly unnexpected."

So dhose wer the facts about Killer Evvanz and hiz remarcabel invenshon ov the thre Garridebz. We herd later dhat our poor oald frend nevver got over the shoc ov hiz discipated dreemz. When hiz caacel in the are fel down, it berrede him beneeth the roowinz. He wauz laast herd ov at a nercing-home in Brixton. It wauz a glad da at the Yard when the Prescott outfit wauz discuverd, for, dho dha nu dhat it existed, dha had nevver bene abel, aafter the deth ov the man, too fiand out whare it wauz. Evvanz had indede dun grate cervice and cauzd cevveral werthy C.I.D. men too slepe the sounder, for the counterfeter standz in a claas bi himcelf az a public dain'ger. Dha wood willingly hav subscriabd too dhat soope-plate meddal ov which the crimminal had spoken, but an unapreeshative Bench tooc a les favorabel vu, and the Killer reternd too dhose shaidz from which he had just emerjd.

7

## THE PROBLEM OV THOR BRIJ

Sumwhare in the vaults ov the banc ov Cox and Co., at Charing Cros, dhare iz a travvel-woern and batterd tin dispach-box widh mi name, Jon H. Wautson, M.D., Late Injan Army, painted uppon the lid. It iz cramd widh paperz, neerly aul ov which ar reccordz ov cacez too illustrate the cureyous problemz which Mr. Sherloc Hoamz had at vareyous tiamz too exammine. Sum, and not the leest interesting, wer complete faluerz, and az such wil hardly bare narating, cins no final explanaishon iz

foerthcumming. A problem widhout a solueshon ma interest the schudent, but can hardly fale too anoi the cazhuwal reder. Amung these unfinnisht tailz iz dhat ov Mr. Jaimz Fillimor, whoo, stepping bac intoo hiz one hous too ghet hiz umbrellaa, wauz nevver moer cene in this werld. No les remarcabel iz dhat ov the cutter "Aleeshaa", which saild wun spring morning intoo a smaul pach ov mist from whare she nevver agane emerjd, nor wauz ennithing ferther evver herd ov hercelf and her croo. A thherd cace werthy ov note iz dhat ov Izadoraa Persano, the wel-none gernalist and juwellist, whoo wauz found starc staring mad widh a machbox in frunt ov him which containd a remarcabel werm, ced too be un'none too ciyens. Apart from these unfadhomd cacez, dhare ar sum which involv the ceecrets ov private fammilese too an extent which wood mene consternaishon in menny exaulted qworterz if it wer thaut poscibel dhat dha mite fiand dhare wa intoo print. I nede not sa dhat such a breche ov confidens iz unthhincabel, and dhat these reccordz wil be cepparated and destroid nou dhat mi frend haz time too tern hiz ennergese too the matter. Dhare remane a concidderabel rezsiju ov cacez ov grater or les interest which I mite hav eddited befoer had I not feerd too ghiv the public a cerfete which mite reyact uppon the reputaishon ov the man whoome abuv aul utherz I reveere. In sum I wauz micelf concernd and can speke az an i-witnes, while in utherz I wauz iather not prezsent or plade so smaul a part dhat dha cood oanly be toald az bi a thherd person. The following narrative iz draun from mi one expereyens.

It wauz a wiald morning in October, and I observd az I wauz drescing hou the laast remaning leevz wer beying wherld from the sollitary plane tre which gracez the yard behiand our hous. I decended too breccfast prepaerd too fiand mi companyon in deprest spirrits, for, like aul grate artists, he wauz esily imprest bi hiz surroundingz. On the contrary, I found dhat he had neerly finnisht hiz mele, and dhat hiz moode wauz particularly brite and joiyous, widh dhat sumwhaut cinnister cheerfoolnes which wauz characteristic ov hiz liter moments.

"U hav a cace, Hoamz?" I remarct.

"The facculty ov deducshon iz certainly contajous, Wautson," he aancerd. "It haz enabeld u too probe mi ceecret. Yes, I hav a cace. Aafter a munth ov triveyallitese and stagnaishon the wheelz moove wuns moer."

"Mite I share it?"

"Dhare iz littel too share, but we ma discuss it when u hav conshuemd the too hard-boild egz widh which our nu cooc haz favord us. Dhare condishon ma not be unconnected widh the cobby ov the "Fammily Herral" which I observd yesterda uppon the haul-tabel. Even so trivveyal a matter az cooking an eg demaandz an atenshon which iz consmous ov the passage ov time, and incompartibel widh the luv romans in dhat exelent pereyoddical."

A qworter ov an our later the tabel had bene cleerd and we wer face too face. He had draun a letter from hiz pocket.

"U hav herd ov Nele Gibson, the Goald King?" he ced.

"U mene the Amerrican Cennator?"

"Wel, he wauz wuns Cennator for sum Western State, but iz better none az the gratest goald-mining magnate in the werld."

"Yes, I no ov him. He haz shuerly livd in In'gland for sum time. Hiz name iz verry familleyar."

"Yes; he baut a concidderabel estate in Hampshire sum five yeerz ago. Poscibly u hav aulreddy herd ov the tradgic end ov hiz wife?"

"Ov coers. I remember it nou. Dhat iz whi the name iz familleyar. But

I reyalz no nuthhing ov the detailz."

Hoamz waivd hiz hand toowordz sum paperz on a chare. "I had no ideyaa dhat the cace wauz cumming mi wa or I shoold hav had mi extracts reddy," ced he. "The fact iz dhat the problem, dho exedingly censaishonal, apeerd too present no difficulty. The interesting personallity ov the acuezd duz not obscure the cleernes ov the evvidens. Dhat wauz the vu taken bi the coronerz jury and aulso in the polece-coert procedingz. It iz nou referd too the Acisez at Winchester. I fere it iz a thancles biznes. I can discuvver facts, Wautson, but I canot chainj them. Unles sum entiarly nu and unexpected wunz cum too lite I doo not ce whaut mi cliyent can hope for."

"Yor cliyent?"

"Aa, I forgot I had not toald u. I am ghetting intoo yor involvd habbit, Wautson, ov telling a stoery baqwordz. U had best rede this ferst."

The letter which he handed too me, ritten in a boald, maasterfool hand, ran az follose:

CLARRIGEZ HOTEL, "October" 3"rd".

DERE MR. SHERLOC HOAMZ,--

I caant ce the best woomman God evver made go too her deth widhout doowing aul dhat iz poscibel too save her. I caant explane thhingz--I caant even tri too explane them, but I no beyond aul dout dhat Mis Dunbar iz innocent. U no the facts--whoo duznt? It haz bene the goscip ov the cuntry. And nevver a vois raizd for her! Its the damd injustice ov it aul dhat maix me crasy. Dhat woomman haz a hart dhat

woodnt let her kil a fli. Wel, Ile cum at elevven too-morro and ce if u can ghet sum ra ov lite in the darc. Maby I hav a clu and doant no it. Ennihou, aul I no and aul I hav and aul I am ar for yor uce if oonly u can save her. If evver in yor life u shode yor pouwerz, poot them nou intoo this cace.

Yorz faithfooly,

J. NELE GIBSON.

"Dhare u hav it," ced Sherloc Hoamz, nocking out the ashez ov hiz aafter-brecfast pipe and sloly refilling it. "Dhat iz the gentelman I awate. Az too the stoery, u hav hardly time too maaster aul these paperz, so I must ghiv it too u in a nutshel if u ar too take an intelligent interest in the procedingz. This man iz the gratest finanshal pouwer in the werld, and a man, az I understand, ov moast viyolent and formiddabel carracter. He marrede a wife, the victim ov this tradgedy, ov whoome I no nuthhing save dhat she wauz paast her prime, which wauz the moer unforchunate az a verry attractive guvvernes superintended the ejucaishon ov too yung children. These ar the thre pepel concernd, and the cene iz a grand oald mannor-hous, the center ov an historical In'glish estate. Then az too the tradgedy. The wife wauz found in the groundz neerly haaf a mile from the hous, late at nite, clad in her dinner dres, widh a shaul over her shoalderz and a revolver boollet throo her brane. No weppon wauz found nere her and dhare wauz no local clu az too the merder. No weppon nere her, Wautson--marc dhat! The crime ceemz too hav bene comitted late in the evening, and the boddy wauz found bi a gaimkeper about elevven oacloc, when it wauz exammiand bi the polece and bi a doctor befoer beying carrede up too the hous. Iz this too condenst, or can u follo it cleerly?"

"It iz aul verry clere. But whi suspect the guvvernes?"

"Wel, in the ferst place dhare iz sum verry direct evvidens. A revolver widh wun discharjd chaimber and a caliber which coresponded widh the boollet wauz found on the floer ov her wordrobe." Hiz ise fixt and he repeted in broken werdz, "On--the--floer--ov--her--wordrobe." Then he sanc intoo cilens, and I sau dhat sum trane ov thaut had bene cet mooving which I shood be foolish too interupt. Suddenly widh a start he emerjd intoo brisc life wuns moer. "Yes, Wautson, it wauz found. Pritty damming, a? So the too jurese thaut. Then the ded woomman had a note uppon her making an apointment at dhat verry place and ciand bi the guvvernes. Houz dhat? Finaly, dhare iz the motive. Cennator Gibson iz an atractive person. If hiz wife dise, whoo moer liacly too suxede her dhan the yung lady whoo had aulreddy bi aul acounts receevd prescing atenshonz from her employier. Luv, forchune, pouwer, aul depending uppon wun middel-aijd life. Ugly, Wautson--verry ugly!"

"Yes, indede, Hoamz."

"Nor cood she proove an allibi. On the contrary, she had too admit dhat she wauz doun nere Thor Brij--dhat wauz the cene ov the tradgedy--about dhat our. She coodnt deni it, for sum paacing villager had cene her dhare."

"Dhat reyaly ceemz final."

"And yet, Wautson--and yet! This brij--a cin'ghel braud span ov stone widh ballustraded ciadz--carrese the drive over the narrowest part ov a long, depe, rede-ghert shete ov wauter. Thor Mere it iz cauld. In the mouth ov the brij la the ded woomman. Such ar the mane facts. But here, if I mistake not, iz our cliyent, concidderably befoer hiz time."

Billy had opend the doer, but the name which he anounst wauz an

unnexpected wun. Mr. Marlo Baits wauz a strain'ger too boath ov us. He wauz

a thhin, nervous wisp ov a man widh fritend ise, and a twitching, hezsitating manner--a man whoome mi one profeshonal i wood juj too be on the brinc ov an absolute nervous braicdoun.

"U ceme adgitated, Mr. Baits," ced Hoamz. "Pra cit doun. I fere I can oanly ghiv u a short time, for I hav an apointment at elevven."

"I no u hav," our vizsitor gaaspt, shooting out short centencez like a man whoo iz out ov breth. "Mr. Gibson iz cumming. Mr. Gibson iz mi employier. I am mannager ov hiz estate. Mr. Hoamz, he iz a villane--an infernal villane."

"Strong lan'gwage, Mr. Baits."

"I hav too be emfatic, Mr. Hoamz, for the time iz so limmited. I wood not hav him fiand me here for the werld. He iz aulmoast ju nou. But I wauz so citchuwated dhat I cood not cum erleyer. Hiz cecretary, Mr. Ferguson, oanly toald me this morning ov hiz apointment widh u."

"And u ar hiz mannager?"

"I hav ghivven him notice. In a cuppel ov weex I shal hav shaken of hiz akerst slavery. A hard man, Mr. Hoamz, hard too aul about him. Dhose public charritese ar a screne too cuvver hiz private iniqwitesse. But hiz wife wauz hiz chefe victim. He wauz brootal too her--yes, cer, brootal! Hou she came bi her deth I doo not no, but I am shure dhat he had made her life a mizsery too her. She wauz a crechure ov the Troppix, a Brasileyan bi berth, az no dout u no?"

"No; it had escaipt me."

"Troppical bi berth and troppical bi nachure. A chiald ov the sun and ov

pashon. She had luvd him az such wimmen can luv, but when her one fizsical charmz had faded--I am toald dhat dha wuns wer grate--dhare wauz nuthhing too hoald him. We aul liact her and felt for her and hated him for the wa dhat he treted her. But he iz plausibel and cunning. Dhat iz aul I hav too sa too u. Doant take him at hiz face vullu. Dhare iz moer behiand. Nou Ile go. No, no, doant detane me! He iz aulmoast ju."

Widh a fritend looc at the cloc our strainj vizsitor litteraly ran too the doer and disapeerd.

"Wel! Wel!" ced Hoamz, aafter an interval ov cilens. "Mr. Gibson ceemz too hav a nice loiyal hous'hoald. But the worning iz a uesfool wun, and nou we can oonly wate til the man himcelf apeerz."

Sharp at the our we herd a hevvy step uppon the staerz and the famous milleyonare wauz shone intoo the roome. Az I looct uppon him I understood not oonly the feerz and dislike ov hiz mannager, but aulso the execraishonz which so menny biznes rivalz hav heept uppon hiz hed. If I wer a sculptor and desiard too ideyalise the suxesfool man ov afaerz, iarn ov nerv and lethery ov conshens, I shood chuse Mr. Nele Gibson az mi moddel. Hiz taul, gaunt cragghy figgure had a sugeschon ov hun'gher and rapascity. An Aibraham Lincon kede too bace ucez insted ov hi wunz wood ghiv sum ideyaa ov the man. Hiz face mite hav bene chizseld in grannite, hard-cet, cragghy, remorsles, widh depe lianz uppon it, the scarz ov menny a cricis. Coald gra ise, loocking shruidly out from under brisling brouz, cervade us eche in tern. He boud in perfunctory fashon az Hoamz menshond mi name, and then widh a maasterfool are ov poseshon he droo a chare up too mi companyon and ceted himcelf widh hiz bony nese aulmoast tutching him.

"Let me sa rite here, Mr. Hoamz," he began, "dhat munny iz nuthhing too me in this cace. U can bern it if its enny uce in liting u too

the truth. This woomman iz innocent and this woomman haz too be cleerd,  
and its up too u too doo it. Name yor figgure!"

"Mi profeshonal chargez ar uppon a fixt scale," ced Hoamz coaldly.  
"I doo not vary them, save when I remit them aultooghether."

"Wel, if dollarz make no differens too u, thhinc ov the reputaishon.  
If u pool this of evvery paper in In'gland and Amerricaa wil be booming u. Ule be the tauc ov too continents."

"Thanc u, Mr. Gibson, I doo not thhinc dhat I am in nede ov booming.  
It ma cerprise u too no dhat I prefer too werc anononimously, and dhat it iz the problem itcelf which atracts me. But we ar waisting time.  
Let us ghet doun too the facts."

"I thhinc dhat u wil fiand aul the mane wunz in the Pres repoerts. I doant no dhat I can ad ennithhing which wil help u. But if dhare iz ennithhing u wood wish moer lite uppon--wel, I am here too ghiv it."

"Wel, dhare iz just wun point."

"Whaut iz it?"

"Whaut wer the exact relaishonz betwene u and Mis Dunbar?"

The Goald King gave a viyolent start, and haaf rose from hiz chare. Then hiz mascive caam came bac too him.

"I supose u ar within yor riats--and maby doowing yor juty--in aasking such a qweschon, Mr. Hoamz."

"We wil agry too supose so," ced Hoamz.

"Then I can ashure u dhat our relaishonz wer entiarly and aulwase dhose ov an employier toowordz a yung lady whoome he nevver converst widh, or evver sau, save when she wauz in the cumpany ov hiz children."

Hoamz rose from hiz chare.

"I am a raather bizsy man, Mr. Gibson," ced he, "and I hav no time or taist for aimles conversaishonz. I wish u good morning."

Our vizsitor had rizens aulso and hiz grate looce figgure touwerd abuv Hoamz. Dhare wauz an an'gry gleme from under dhose brisling brouz and a tinj ov cullor in the sallo cheex.

"Whaut the devvil doo u mene bi this, Mr. Hoamz? Doo u dismis mi cace?"

"Wel, Mr. Gibson, at leest I dismis u. I shood hav thaut mi werdz wer plane."

"Plane enuf, but whauts at the bac ov it? Rasing the price on me, or afrade too tackel it, or whaut? Ive a rite too a plane aancer."

"Wel, perhaps u hav," ced Hoamz. "Ile ghiv u wun. This cace iz qwite sufishmently complicated too start widh, widhout the ferther difficulty ov fauls informaishon."

"Mening dhat I li."

"Wel, I wauz tryying too expres it az dellicaitly az I cood, but if u incist uppon the werd I wil not contradict u."

I sprang too mi fete, for the expreshon uppon the milleyonaerz face wauz feendish in its intencity, and he had raizd hiz grate notted fist.

Hoamz smiald lan'gwidly and reecht hiz hand out for hiz pipe.

"Doant be noisy, Mr. Gibson. I fiand dhat aafter breccfast even the smaulest argument iz uncetling. I sugest dhat a strole in the morning are and a littel qwiyet thaut wil be graitley too yor advaantage."

With an effort the Goald King maasterd hiz fury. I cood not but admire him, for bi a supreme celf-comaand he had ternd in a minnute from a hot flame ov an'gher too a fridgid and contempchuwous indifferens.

"Wel, its yor chois. I ghes u no hou too run yor one biznes. I caant make u tuch the cace against yor wil. Uve dun yorcelf no good this morning, Mr. Hoamz, for I hav broken stron'gher men dhan u. No man evver crost me and wauz the better for it."

"So menny hav ced so, and yet here I am," ced Hoamz, smiling.

"Wel, good morning, Mr. Gibson. U hav a good dele yet too lern."

Our vizsitor made a noisy exit, but Hoamz smoact in imperterbabel cilens widh dremy ise fixt uppon the celing.

"Enny vuse, Wautson?" he aasct at laast.

"Wel, Hoamz, I must confes dhat when I concidder dhat this iz a man whoo wood certainly brush enny obstakel from hiz paath, and when I remember dhat hiz wife ma hav bene an obstakel and an obgett ov dislike, az dhat man Baits plainly toald us, it ceemz too me----"

"Exactly. And too me aulso."

"But whaut wer hiz relaishonz widh the guvvernes and hou did u discuvver them?"

"Bluf, Wautson, bluf! When I concidderd the pashonate, unconvenshonal, unbizneslike tone ov hiz letter, and contraasted it widh hiz celf-containd manner and aperans, it wauz pritty clere dhat dhare wauz sum depe emoashon which centerd uppon the acuezd woomman raather dhan uppon the victim. Weve got too understand the exact relaishonz ov dhose thre pepel if we ar too reche the truith. U sau the fruntal atac which I made uppon him and hou imperterbably he receevd it. Then I bluft him bi ghivving him the impreshon dhat I wauz absoluetly certane, when in reyallity I wauz oonly extreemly suspishous.

"Perhaps he wil cum bac?"

"He iz shure too cum bac. He must cum bac. He caant leve it whare it iz. Haa! iznt dhat a ring? Yes, dhare iz hiz footstep. Wel, Mr. Gibson, I wauz just saying too Dr. Wautson dhat u wer sumwhaut overju."

The Goald King had re-enterd the roome in a moer chacend moode dhan he had left it. Hiz wuinded pride stil shode in hiz resentfool ise, but hiz common cens had shone him dhat he must yeeld if he wood atane hiz end.

"Ive bene thhinking it over, Mr. Hoamz, and I fele dhat I hav bene haisty in taking yor remarx amis. U ar justifide in ghetting down too the facts, whautevver dha ma be, and I thhinc the moer ov u for it. I can ashure u, houwevver, dhat the relaishonz betwene Mis Dunbar and me doant reyaly tuch this cace."

"Dhat iz for me too decide, iz it not?"

"Yes, I ghes dhat iz so. Yor like a cerjon whoo waunts evvery cimptom befoer he can ghiv hiz diyagnocis."

"Exactly. Dhat exprescez it. And it iz oonly a paishent whoo haz an obgett in deceving hiz cerjon whoo wood concele the facts ov hiz cace."

"Dhat ma be so, but u wil admit, Mr. Hoamz, dhat moast men wood shi of a bit when dha ar aasct point-blanc whaut dhare relaishonz widh a woomman ma be--if dhare iz reyaly sum cereyous feling in the cace. I ghes moast men hav a littel private reserv ov dhare one in sum corner ov dhare soalz whare dha doant welcum introoderz. And u berst suddenly intoo it. But the obgett excusez u, cins it wauz too tri and save her. Wel, the staix ar doun and the reserv open and u can exploer whare u wil. Whaut iz it u waunt?"

"The truth."

The Goald King pauzd for a moment az wun whoo marshalz hiz thauts. Hiz grim, depe-liand face had becum even sadder and moer grave.

"I can ghiv it too u in a verry fu werdz, Mr. Hoamz," ced he at laast. "Dhare ar sum thhingz dhat ar painfool az wel az difficult too sa, so I woant go deper dhan iz needfool. I met mi wife when I wauz goald-hunting in Brasil. Mareyaa Pinto wauz the dauter ov a Guvvernment ofishal at Manayos, and she wauz verry butifool. I wauz yung and ardent in dhose dase, but even nou, az I looc bac widh coalder blud and a moer crittical i, I can ce dhat she wauz rare and wunderfool in her buty. It wauz a depe rich nachure, too, pashonate, whole-harted, tropical, il-ballanst, verry different from the Amerrikan wimmen whoome I had none. Wel, too make a long stoery short, I luvd her and I marrede her. It wauz oonly when the romans had paast--and it lin'gherd for yeeرز--dhat I reyaliazd dhat we had nuthhing--absoluetly nuthhing--in common. Mi luv faded. If herz had faded aulso it mite hav bene

eseyer. But u no the wunderfool wa ov wimmen! Doo whaut I mite nuthhing cood tern her from me. If I hav bene harsh too her, even brootal az sum hav ced, it haz bene becauz I nu dhat if I cood kil her luv, or if it ternd too hate, it wood be eseyer for boath ov us. But nuthhing chainjd her. She adoerd me in dhose In'glisch woodz az she had adoerd me twenty yeeرز ago on the banx ov the Ammazon. Doo whaut I mite, she wauz az devoted az evver.

"Then came Mis Grace Dunbar. She aancerd our advertiazment and became guvvernes too our too children. Perhaps u hav cene her poertrate in the paperz. The whole werld haz proclaimd dhat she aulso iz a verry butifool woomman. Nou, I make no pretens too be moer moral dhan mi naborz, and I wil admit too u dhat I cood not liv under the same roofe widh such a woomman and in daly contact widh her widhout feling a pashonate regard for her. Doo u blame me, Mr. Hoamz?"

"I doo not blame u for feling it. I shood blame u if u exprest it, cins this yung lady wauz in a cens under yor protecshon."

"Wel, maby so," ced the milleyonare, dho for a moment the reproofe had braut the oald an'gry gleme intoo hiz ise. "Ime not pretending too be enny better dhan I am. I ghes aul mi life Ive bene a man dhat reecht out hiz hand for whaut he waunted, and I nevver waunted ennithhing moer dhan the luv and poseshon ov dhat woomman. I toald her so."

"O, u did, did u?"

Hoamz cood looc verry formiddabel when he wauz muivd.

"I ced too her dhat if I cood marry her I wood, but dhat it wauz out

ov mi pouwer. I ced dhat munny wauz no obgett and dhat aul I cood doo too make her happy and cumfortabel wood be dun."

"Verry gennerous, I am shure," ced Hoamz, widh a snere.

"Ce here, Mr. Hoamz. I came too u on a qweschon ov evvidens, not on a qweschon ov moralz. Ime not aasking for yor criticizm."

"It iz oanly for the yung ladese sake dhat I tuch yor cace at aul," ced Hoamz sternly. "I doant no dhat ennithhing she iz acuezd ov iz reyaly wers dhan whaut u hav yorcelf admitted, dhat u hav tride too roowin a defensles gherl whoo wauz under yor roofe. Sum ov u rich men hav too be taut dhat aul the werld canot be briabd intoo condoning yor ofencez."

Too mi cerprise the Goald King tooc the reproofe widh eqwanimmity.

"Dhats hou I fele micelf about it nou. I thanc God dhat mi planz did not werc out az I intended. She wood hav nun ov it, and she waunted too leve the hous instantly."

"Whi did she not?"

"Wel, in the ferst place, uthertz wer dependent uppon her, and it wauz no lite matter for her too let them aul down bi sacrificing her livving. When I had swoern--az I did--dhat she shood nevver be molested agane, she concented too remane. But dhare wauz anuther rezon. She nu the influwens she had over me, and dhat it wauz stron'gher dhan enny uther influwens in the werld. She waunted too use it for good."

"Hou?"

"Wel, she nu sumthhing ov mi afaerz. Dha ar larj, Mr. Hoamz--larj beyond the belefe ov an ordinary man. I can make or

brake--and it iz uezhuwaly brake. It wauznt individjuwalz oanly. It wauz comunitese, cittese, even naishonz. Biznes iz a hard game, and the weke go too the waul. I plade the game for aul it wauz werth. I nevver sqweeld micelf and I nevver caerd if the uther fello sqweeld. But she sau it different. I ghes she wauz rite. She beleevd and ced dhat a forchune for wun man dhat wauz moer dhan he neded shood not be bilt on ten thousand roowind men whoo wer left widhout the meenz ov life. Dhat wauz hou she sau it, and I ghes she cood ce paast the dollarz too sumthhing dhat wauz moer laasting. She found dhat I liscend too whaut she ced, and she beleevd she wauz cerving the werld bi influwencing mi acshonz. So she stade--and then this came along."

"Can u thro enny lite uppon dhat?"

The Goald King pauzd for a minnute or moer, hiz hed sunc in hiz handz, lost in depe thaut.

"Its verry blac against her. I caant deni dhat. And wimmen lede an inword life and ma doo thhingz beyond the jujment ov a man. At ferst I wauz so ratteld and taken abac dhat I wauz reddy too thhinc she had bene led awa in sum extrordinary fashon dhat wauz clene against her uezhuwal nachure. Wun explanaishon came intoo mi hed. I ghiv it too u, Mr. Hoamz, for whaut it iz werth. Dhare iz no dout dhat mi wife wauz bitterly gellous. Dhare iz a sole-gelloucy dhat can be az frantic az enny boddy-gelloucy, and dho mi wife had no cauz--and I thhinc she understood this--for the latter, she wauz aware dhat this In'glish gherl exerted an influwens uppon mi miand and mi acts dhat she hercelf nevver had. It wauz an influwens for good, but dhat did not mend the matter. She wauz crasy widh haitred, and the hete ov the Ammazon wauz aulwase in her blud. She mite hav pland too merder Mis Dunbar--or we wil sa too thretten her widh a gun and so friten her intoo leving us. Then dhare mite hav bene a scuffel and the gun gon of and shot the woomman whoo held it."

"Dhat pocibillity had aulreddy okerd too me," ced Hoamz. "Indede, it iz the oanly obveyous aulternative too delibberate merder."

"But she utterly denise it."

"Wel, dhat iz not final--iz it? Wun can understand dhat a woomman plaist in so aufool a posishon mite hurry home stil in her bewilderment hoalding the revolver. She mite even thro it doun among her cloadhz, hardly nowing whaut she wauz doowing, and when it wauz found she mite tri too li her wa out bi a total deniyal, cins aul explanaishon wauz imposcibel. Whaut iz against such a suposishon?"

"Mis Dunbar hercelf."

"Wel, perhaps."

Hoamz looct at hiz wauch. "I hav no dout we can ghet the nescenary permits this morning and reche Winchester bi the evening trane. When I hav cene this yung lady, it iz verry poscibel dhat I ma be ov moer uce too u in the matter, dho I canot prommice dhat mi concluezhonz wil necesarily be such az u desire."

Dhare wauz sum dela in the ofishal paas, and insted ov reching Winchester dhat da we went doun too Thor Place, the Hampshire estate ov Mr. Nele Gibson. He did not acumpany us himcelf, but we had the adres ov Sarjant Cuvventry, ov the local polece, whoo had ferst exammiand intoo the afare. He wauz a taul, thhin, cadavverous man, widh a ceecretive and mistereyous manner, which convade the ideyaa dhat he nu or suspected a verry grate dele moer dhan he daerd sa. He had a tric, too, ov suddenly cinking hiz vois too a whisper az if he had cum uppon sumthhing ov vital importans, dho the informaishon wauz uezhuwaly

commonplace enuf. Behiand these trix ov manner he soone shode himcelf too be a decent, onnest fello whoo wauz not too proud too admit dhat he wauz out ov hiz depth and wood welcum enny help.

"Ennihou, Ide raather hav u dhan Scotland Yard, Mr. Hoamz," ced he. "If the Yard ghets cauld intoo a cace, then the local loosez aul credit for suxes and ma be blaimd for falure. Nou, u pla strate, so Ive herd."

"I nede not apere in the matter at aul," ced Hoamz, too the evvident relefe ov our mellancoly aqwaintans. "If I can clere it up I doant aasc too hav mi name menshond."

"Wel, its verry handsum ov u, I am shure. And yor frend, Dr. Wautson, can be trusted, I no. Nou, Mr. Hoamz, az we wauc down too the place dhare iz wun qweschon I shood like too aasc u. Ide breedh it too no sole but u." He looct round az dho he hardly dare utter the werdz. "Doant u thhinc dhare mite be a cace against Mr. Nele Gibson himcelf?"

"I hav bene conciddering dhat."

"Uve not cene Mis Dunbar. She iz a wunderfool fine woomman in evvery wa. He ma wel hav wisht hiz wife out ov the rode. And these Amerricanz ar reddeyer widh pistolz dhan our foke ar. It wauz hiz pistol, u no."

"Wauz dhat cleerly made out?"

"Yes, cer. It wauz wun ov a pare dhat he had."

"Wun ov a pare? Whare iz the uther?"

"Wel, the gentelman haz a lot ov fire-armz ov wun sort and anuther.

We nevver qwite macht dhat particcular pistol--but the box wauz made for too."

"If it wauz wun ov a pare u shood shuerly be abel too mach it."

"Wel, we hav them aul lade out at the hous if u wood care too looc them over."

"Later, perhaps. I thhinc we wil wauc doun tooghether and hav a looc at the cene ov the tradgedy."

This conversaishon had taken place in the littel frunt roome ov Sarjant Cuvventrese humbel cottage which cervd az the local polece-staishon. A wauc ov haaf a mile or so acros a wind-swept heeth, aul goald and bronz widh the fading fernz, braut us too a cide-gate opening intoo the groundz ov the Thor Place estate. A paath led us throo the fezzant preservz, and then from a clering we sau the wide-spred, haaf-timberd hous, haaf Chudor and haaf Jorjan, uppon the crest ov the hil. Becide us dhare wauz a long, redy poole, constricted in the center whare the mane carrage drive paast over a stone brij, but swelling intoo smaual laix on iather cide. Our ghide pauzd at the mouth ov this brij, and he pointed too the ground.

"Dhat wauz whare Mrs. Gibsonz boddy la. I marct it bi dhat stone."

"I understand dhat u wer dhare befoer it wauz muivd?"

"Yes; dha cent for me at wuns."

"Whoo did?"

"Mr. Gibson himcelf. The moment the alarm wauz ghivven and he had rusht doun widh utherz from the hous, he incisted dhat nuthhing shood be

muivd until the polece shood arive."

"Dhat wauz cencibel. I gatherd from the nuesday repoert dhat the shot wauz fiard from cloce qworterz."

"Yes, cer, verry cloce."

"Nere the rite tempel?"

"Just behiand it, cer."

"Hou did the boddy li?"

"On the bac, cer. No trace ov a strugghel. No marx. No weppon. The short note from Mis Dunbar wauz clucht in her left hand."

"Clucht, u sa?"

"Yes, cer; we cood hardly open the fin'gherz."

"Dhat iz ov grate importans. It excluedz the ideyaa dhat enniwun cood hav plaist the note dhare aafter deth in order too fernish a fauls clu. Dere me! The note, az I remember, wauz qwite short. 'I wil be at Thor Brij at nine oacloc.--G. Dunbar.' Wauz dhat not so?"

"Yes, cer."

"Did Mis Dunbar admit riting it?"

"Yes, cer."

"Whaut wauz her explanaishon?"

"Her defens wauz reservd for the Acisez. She wood sa nuthhing."

"The problem iz certainly a verry interesting wun. The point ov the letter iz verry obscure, iz it not?"

"Wel, cer," ced the ghide, "it ceemd, if I ma be so boald az too sa so, the oanly reyal clere point in the whole cace."

Hoamz shooc hiz hed.

"Graanting dhat the letter iz genuwine and wauz reyal ritten, it wauz certainly receevd sum time befoer--sa wun our or too. Whi, then, wauz this lady stil claasping it in her left hand? Whi shood she carry it so caerfooly? She did not nede too refer too it in the intervü. Duz it not ceme remarcabel?"

"Wel, cer, az u poot it, perhaps it duz."

"I thhinc I shood like too cit qwiyetly for a fu minnuets and thhinc it out." He ceted himcelf uppon the stone lej ov the brij, and I cood ce hiz qwic gra ise darting dhare qweschoning glaancez in evvery direcshon. Suddenly he sprang up agane and ran acros too the opposite parrapet, whipt hiz lenz from hiz pocket, and began too exammine the stoanwerc.

"This iz cureyous," ced he.

"Yes, cer; we sau the chip on the lej. I expect its bene dun bi sum paacer-bi."

The stoanwerc wauz gra, but at this wun point it shode white for a space not larger dhan a cixpens. When exammiand cloasly wun cood ce dhat the cerface wauz chipt az bi a sharp blo.

"It tooc sum viyolens too doo dhat," ced Hoamz thautfooly. Widh hiz

cane he struc the lej cevveral tiamz widhout leving a marc. "Yes, it wauz a hard noc. In a cureyous place, too. It wauz not from abuv but from belo, for u ce dhat it iz on the "lower" ej ov the parrapet."

"But it iz at leest fiftene fete from the boddy."

"Yes, it iz fiftene fete from the boddy. It ma hav nuthhing too doo widh the matter, but it iz a point werth noting. I doo not thhinc dhat we hav ennithhing moer too lern here. Dhare wer no footsteps, u sa?"

"The ground wauz iarn hard, cer. Dhare wer no tracez at aul."

"Then we can go. We wil go up too the hous ferst and looc over these wepponz ov which u speke. Then we shal ghet on too Winchester, for I shood desire too ce Mis Dunbar befoer we go farther."

Mr. Nele Gibson had not reternd from toun, but we sau in the hous the nurottic Mr. Baits whoo had cauld uppon us in the morning. He shode us widh a cinnister rellish the formiddabel ara ov fire-armz ov vareyous shaips and cisez which hiz employer had acumulated in the coers ov an advenchurous life.

"Mr. Gibson haz hiz ennemese, az enniwun wood expect whoo nu him and hiz methodz," ced he. "He sleeps widh a loded revolver in the drauwer becide hiz bed. He iz a man ov viyolens, cer, and dhare ar tiamz when aul ov us ar afrade ov him. I am shure dhat the poor lady whoo haz paast wauz often terrifide."

"Did u evver witnes fizensal viyolens toowordz her?"

"No, I canot sa dhat. But I hav herd werdz which wer neerly az bad--werdz ov coald, cutting contempt, even befoer the cervants."

"Our milleyonare duz not ceme too shine in private life," remarct Hoamz, az we made our wa too the staishon. "Wel, Wautson, we hav cum on a good menny facts, sum ov them nu wunz, and yet I ceme sum wa from mi concluezhon. In spite ov the verry evvident dislike which Mr. Baits haz too hiz employer, I gather from him dhat when the alarm came he wauz undoutedly in hiz liabrary. Dinner wauz over at ate-thherty and aul wauz normal up too then. It iz troo dhat the alarm wauz sumwhaut late

in the evening, but the tradgedy certainly okerd about the our naimd in the note. Dhare iz no evvidens at aul dhat Mr. Gibson had bene out ov doerz cins hiz retern from toun at five oacloc. On the uther hand, Mis Dunbar, az I understand it, admits dhat she had made an apointment too mete Mrs. Gibson at the brij. Beyond this she wood sa nuthhing, az her lauyer had adviazd her too reserv her defens. We hav cevveral verry vital qweschonz too aasc dhat yung lady, and mi miand wil not be esy until we hav cene her. I must confes dhat the cace wood ceme too me too be verry blac against her if it wer not for wun thhing."

"And whaut iz dhat, Hoamz?"

"The fianding ov the pistol in her wordrobe."

"Dere me, Hoamz!" I cride, "dhat ceemd too me too be the moast damming incident ov aul."

"Not so, Wautson. It had struc me even at mi ferst perfunctory reding az verry strainj, and nou dhat I am in clocer tuch widh the cace it iz mi oanly ferm ground for hope. We must looc for concistency. Whare dhare iz a waunt ov it we must suspect decepshon."

"I hardly follo u."

"Wel nou, Wautson, supose for a moment dhat we vizhuwalise u in the

carracter ov a woomman whoo, in a coald, premedditated fashon, iz about too

ghet rid ov a rival. U hav pland it. A note haz bene ritten.

The victim haz cum. U hav yor weppon. The crime iz dun. It haz bene wercman-like and complete. Doo u tel me dhat aafter carreying out so craafy a crime u wood nou roowin yor reputaishon az a crimminal bi forghetting too fling yor weppon intoo dhose ajacent rede-bedz which wood for evver cuvver it, but u must needz carry it caerfooly home and poot it in yor one wordrobe, the verry ferst place dhat wood be cercht? Yor best frendz wood hardly caul u a skemer, Wautson, and yet I cood not picchure u doowing ennithhing so croode az dhat."

"In the exiatment ov the moment----"

"No, no, Wautson, I wil not admit dhat it iz poscibel. Whare a crime iz cooly premedditated, then the meenz ov cuvvering it ar cooly premedditated aulso. I hope, dhaerfoer, dhat we ar in the prezsens ov a cereyous misconcepshon."

"But dhare iz so much too explane."

"Wel, we shal cet about explaining it. When wuns yor point ov vu iz chainjd, the verry thhing which wauz so damming becumz a clu too the truth. For exaampel, dhare iz this revolver. Mis Dunbar disclaimz aul nollej ov it. On our nu ththeyory she iz speking truth when she cez so. Dhaerfoer, it wauz plaist in her wordrobe. Whoo plaist it dhare? Sumwun whoo wisht too incrimminate her. Wauz not dhat person the acchuwal crimminal? U ce hou we cum at wuns uppon a moast fruitfool line ov inqwiry."

We wer compeld too spend the nite at Winchester, az the formallitese had not yet bene completed, but next morning, in the cumpany ov Mr. Jois Cummingz, the rising barrister whoo wauz entrusted widh the

defens, we wer aloud too ce the yung lady in her cel. I had expected from aul dhat we had herd too ce a butifool woomman, but I can nevver forghet the efect which Mis Dunbar projuest uppon me. It wauz no wunder dhat even the maasterfool milleyonare had found in her sumthhing

moer pouwerfool dhan himself--sumthhing which cood controle and ghide him. Wun felt, too, az wun looct at dhat strong, clere-cut, and yet cencitive face, dhat even shood she be capabel ov sum impetchuwous dede,

nun the les dhare wauz an inate nobillity ov carracter which wood make her influwens aulwase for the good. She wauz a broonet, taul, widh a nobel figgure and comaanding prezsens, but her darc ise had in them the apeling, helples expreshon ov the hunted crechure whoo feelz the nets around it, but can ce no wa out from the toiliz. Nou, az she reyaliazd the prezsens and the help ov mi famous frend, dhare came a tuch ov cullor in her waun cheex and a lite ov hope began too glimmer in the glaans which she ternd uppon us.

"Perhaps Mr. Nele Gibson haz toald u sumthhing ov whaut okerd betwene us?" she aasct, in a lo, adgitated vois.

"Yes," Hoamz aancerd; "u nede not pane yorcelf bi entering intoo dhat part ov the stoery. Aafter ceying u, I am prepaerd too axept Mr. Gibsonz staitment boath az too the influwens which u had over him and az too the innocens ov yor relaishonz widh him. But whi wauz the whole cichuwaishon not braut out in coert?"

"It ceemd too me increddibel dhat such a charj cood be sustaind. I thaut dhat if we wated the whole thhing must clere itcelf up widhout our beying compeld too enter intoo painfool detailz ov the inner life ov the fammily. But I understand dhat far from clering it haz becum even moer cereyous."

"Mi dere yung lady," cride Hoamz earnestly, "I beg u too hav no

iluezhonz upon the point. Mr. Cummingz here wood ashure u dhat aul the cardz ar at prezsent against us, and dhat we must doo evverithhing dhat iz poscibel if we ar too win clere. It wood be a croowel decepshon too pretend dhat u ar not in verry grate dain'ger. Ghiv me aul the help u can, then, too ghet at the truth."

"I wil concele nuthhing."

"Tel us, then, ov yor troo relaishonz widh Mr. Gibsonz wife."

"She hated me, Mr. Hoamz. She hated me widh aul the fervor ov her tropical nachure. She wauz a woomman whoo wood doo nuthhing bi haavz, and the mezhure ov her luv for her huzband wauz the mezhure aulso ov her haitred for me. It iz probbabel dhat she misunderstood our relaishonz. I wood not wish too rong her, but she luvd so vivvidly in a fizensal cens dhat she cood hardly understand the mental, and even spirrichuwal, ti which held her huzband too me, or imadgine dhat it wauz oonly mi desire too influwens hiz pouwer too good endz which kept me under hiz roofe. I can ce nou dhat I wauz rong. Nuthhing cood justifi me in remaning whare I wauz a cauz ov unhappines, and yet it iz certane dhat the unhappines wood hav remaind even if I had left the hous."

"Nou, Mis Dunbar," ced Hoamz, "I beg u too tel us exactly whaut okerd dhat evening."

"I can tel u the truth so far az I no it, Mr. Hoamz, but I am in a posishon too proove nuthhing, and dhare ar points--the moast vital points--which I can niather explane nor can I imadgine enny explanaishon."

"If u wil fiand the facts, perhaps utherz ma fiand the explanaishon."

"Widh regard, then, too mi prezsens at Thor Brij dhat nite, I

recev'd a note from Mrs. Gibson in the morning. It la on the tabel ov the scuilroome, and it ma hav bene left dhare bi her one hand. It imploerd me too ce her dhare aafter dinner, ced she had sumthhing important too sa too me, and aasct me too leve an aancer on the sundiyal in the garden, az she desiard no wun too be in our confidens. I sau no rezon for such ceecrecy, but I did az she aasct, axepting the apointment. She aasct me too destroi her note and I bernd it in the scuilroome grate. She wauz verry much afrade ov her huzband, whoo treted her with a harshnes for which I freeqwently reproacht him, and I cood oonly imadgine dhat she acted in this wa becauz she did not wish him too no ov our interv'u."

"Yet she kept yor repli verry caerfooly?"

"Yes. I wauz cerpriazd too here dhat she had it in her hand when she dide."

"Wel, whaut happend then?"

"I went doun az I had prommiast. When I reecht the brij she wauz wating for me. Nevver did I reyalise til dhat moment hou this poor crechure hated me. She wauz like a mad woomman--indede, I thhinc she wauz a mad woomman, sutly mad with the depe pouwer ov decepshon which insane pepel ma hav. Hou els cood she hav met me with unconcern evvery da and yet had so raging a haitred ov me in her hart? I wil not sa whaut she ced. She poerd her whole wiald fury out in barning and horribel werdz. I did not even aancer--I cood not. It wauz dredfool too ce her. I poot mi handz too mi eerz and rusht awa. When I left her she wauz standing stil shreking out her kercez at me, in the mouth ov the brij."

"Whare she wauz aafterwordz found?"

"Within a fu yardz from the spot."

"And yet, prezhuming dhat she met her deth shortly aafter u left her, u herd no shot?"

"No, I herd nuthhing. But, indede, Mr. Hoamz, I wauz so adgitated and horrifide bi this terribel outbrake dhat I rusht too ghet bac too the pece ov mi one roome, and I wauz incapabel ov noticing ennithhing which happend."

"U sa dhat u reternd too yor roome. Did u leve it agane befoer next morning?"

"Yes; when the alarm came dhat the poor crechure had met her deth I ran out widh the utherz."

"Did u ce Mr. Gibson?"

"Yes; he had just reternd from the brij when I sau him. He had cent for the doctor and the polece."

"Did he ceme too u much perterbd?"

"Mr. Gibson iz a verry strong, celf-containd man. I doo not thhinc dhat he wood evver sho hiz emoashonz on the cerface. But I, whoo nu him so wel, cood ce dhat he wauz deeply concernd."

"Then we cum too the aul-important point. This pistol dhat wauz found in yor roome. Had u evver cene it befoer?"

"Nevver, I sware it."

"When wauz it found?"

"Next morning, when the polece made dhare cerch."

"Amung yor cloadhz?"

"Yes; on the floer ov mi wordrobe under mi drescez."

"U cood not ghes hou long it had bene dhare?"

"It had not bene dhare the morning befoer."

"Hou doo u no?"

"Becauz I tidede out the wordrobe."

"Dhat iz final. Then sumwun came intoo yor roome and plaist the pistol dhare in order too inculpate u."

"It must hav bene so."

"And when?"

"It cood oanly hav bene at mele-time, or els at the ourz when I wood be in the scuilroome widh the children."

"Az u wer when u got the note?"

"Yes; from dhat time onwordz for the whole morning."

"Thanc u, Mis Dunbar. Iz dhare enny uther point which cood help me in the investigaishon?"

"I can thhinc ov nun."

"Dhare wauz sum cine ov viyolens on the stoanwerc ov the brij--a perfectly fresh chip just opposite the boddy. Cood u sugest enny poscibel explanaishon ov dhat?"

"Shuerly it must be a mere cowincidens."

"Cureyous, Mis Dunbar, verry cureyous. Whi shood it apere at the verry time ov the tradgedy and whi at the verry place?"

"But whaut cood hav cauzd it? Oanly grate viyolens cood hav such an efect."

Hoamz did not aancer. Hiz pale, egher face had suddenly ashuemd dhat tens, far-awa expreshon which I had lernd too asoasheyate widh the supreme manifestaishonz ov hiz geenyus. So evvident wauz the cricis in hiz

miand dhat nun ov us daerd too speke, and we sat, barrister, prizzoner, and micelf, wauching him in a concentrated and abzorbd cilens. Suddenly he sprang from hiz chare, viabrating widh nervous ennergy and the prescing nede for acshon.

"Cum, Wautson, cum!" he cride.

"Whaut iz it, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Nevver miand, mi dere lady. U wil here from me, Mr. Cummingz. Widh the help ov the God ov justice I wil ghiv u a cace which wil make In'gland ring. U wil ghet nuse bi too-morro, Mis Dunbar, and meenwhile take mi ashurans dhat the cloudz ar lifting and dhat I hav evvery hope dhat the lite ov truith iz braking throo."

It wauz not a long gerny from Winchester too Thor Place, but it wauz

long too me in mi impaishens, while for Hoamz it wauz evvident dhat it ceemd endles; for, in hiz nervous restlesnes, he cood not cit stil, but paist the carrage or drumd widh hiz long, cencitive fin' gherz uppon the cooshonz becide him. Suddenly, houwevver, az we neerd

our destinaishon he ceted himcelf opposite too me--we had a ferst-claas carrage too ourcelvz--and laying a hand uppon eche ov mi nese he looct intoo mi ise widh the peculeyarly mischevous gase which wauz characteristic ov hiz moer imp-like muidz.

"Wautson," ced he, "I hav sum recolecshon dhat u go armd uppon these exkerzhonz ov ourz."

It wauz az wel for him dhat I did so, for he tooc littel care for hiz one saifty when hiz miand wauz wuns abzorbd bi a problem, so dhat moer dhan wuns mi revolver had bene a good frend in nede. I remianded him ov the fact.

"Yes, yes, I am a littel abcent-mianded in such matterz. But hav u yor revolver on u?"

I projuest it from mi hip-pocket, a short, handy, but verry cervisabel littel weppon. He undid the cach, shooc out the cartrigez, and exammiand it widh care.

"Its hevvy--remarcably hevvy," ced he.

"Yes, it iz a sollid bit ov werc."

He muezd over it for a minnute.

"Doo u no, Wautson," ced he, "I beleve yor revolver iz gowing too hav a verry intimate conecshon widh the mistery which we ar investigating."

"Mi dere Hoamz, u ar joking."

"No, Wautson, I am verry cereyous. Dhare iz a test befoer us. If the test cumz of, aul wil be clere. And the test wil depend uppon the conduct ov this littel weppon. Wun cartrij out. Nou we wil replace the uther five and poot on the saifty-cach. So! Dhat increcez the wate and maix it a better reproducshon."

I had no glimmer ov whaut wauz in hiz miand nor did he enliten me, but sat lost in thaut until we poold up in the littel Hampshire staishon. We cecuerd a ramshackel trap, and in a qworter ov an our wer at the hous ov our confidenshal frend, the sarjant.

"A clu, Mr. Hoamz? Whaut iz it?"

"It aul dependz uppon the behaveyor ov Dr. Wautsonz revolver," ced mi frend. "Here it iz. Nou, officer, can u ghiv me ten yardz ov string?"

The village shop provided a baul ov stout twine.

"I thhinc dhat this iz aul we wil nede," ced Hoamz. "Nou, if u plese, we wil ghet of on whaut I hope iz the laast stage ov our gerny."

The sun wauz cetting and terning the roling Hampshire moor intoo a wunderfool autumnal panoraamaa. The sarjant, widh menny crittical and incredjulous glaancez, which shode hiz depe douts ov the sannity ov mi companyon, lercht along beside us. Az we aproacht the cene ov the crime I cood ce dhat mi frend under aul hiz habitchuwal cuilnes wauz in truith deeply adgitated.

"Yes," he ced, in aancer too mi remarc, "u hav cene me mis mi marc

befoer, Wautson. I hav an instinct for such thhingz, and yet it haz sumtiamz plade me fauls. It ceemd a certainty when ferst it flasht acros mi miand in the cel at Winchester, but wun draubac ov an active miand iz dhat wun can aulwase conceve aulternative explanaishonz which wood make our cent a fauls wun. And yet--and yet---- Wel, Wautson, we can but tri."

Az he wauct he had fermly tide wun end ov the string too the handel ov the revolver. We had nou reecht the cene ov the tradgedy. Widh grate care he marct out under the ghidans ov the poleesman the exact spot whare the boddy had bene strecht. He then hunted among the hether and the fernz until he found a concidderabel stone. This he ce cuerd too the uther end ov hiz line ov string, and he hung it over the parrapet ov the brij so dhat it swung clere abuv the wauter. He then stood on the fatal spot, sum distans from the ej ov the brij, widh mi revolver in hiz hand, the string beying taut betwene the weppon and the hevvy stone on the farther cide.

"Nou for it!" he cride.

At the werdz he raizd the pistol too hiz hed, and then let go hiz grip. In an instant it had bene whisct awa bi the wate ov the stone, had struc widh a sharp crac against the parrapet, and had vannisht over the cide intoo the wauter. It had hardly gon befoer Hoamz wauz neling beside the stoanwerc, and a joiyous cri shode dhat he had found whaut he expected.

"Wauz dhare evver a moer exact demonstraishon?" he cride. "Ce, Wautson, yor revolver haz solvd the problem!" Az he spoke he pointed too a cecond chip ov the exact cise and shape ov the ferst which had apeerd on the under ej ov the stone ballustrade.

"Weeyl sta at the in too-nite," he continnude, az he rose and faist the astonnisht sarjant. "U wil, ov coers, ghet a grapling-hooc

and u wil esily restoer mi frendz revolver. U wil aulso fiand becide it the revolver, string and wate widh which this vindictive woomman atempted too disghise her one crime and too faacen a charj ov merder uppon an innocent victim. U can let Mr. Gibson no dhat I wil ce him in the morning, when steps can be taken for Mis Dunbarz vindicaishon."

Late dhat evening, az we sat tooghether smoking our piaps in the village in, Hoamz gave me a brefe revu ov whaut had paast.

"I fere, Wautson," ced he, "dhat u wil not improove enny reputaishon which I ma hav aqwiard bi adding the Cace ov the Thor Brij Mistery too yor annalz. I hav bene slugghish in miand and waunting in dhat mixchure ov imaginaishon and reyallity which iz the baxis ov mi art. I confes dhat the chip in the stoanwerc wauz a sufishent clu too sugest the troo solueshon, and dhat I blame micelf for not havving ataind it sooner.

"It must be admitted dhat the werkingz ov this unhappy woommanz miand wer depe and suttel, so dhat it wauz no verry cimpel matter too unravvel her plot. I doo not thhinc dhat in our advenchuerz we hav evver cum acros a strain'ger exaampel ov whaut perverted luv can bring about. Whether Mis Dunbar wauz her rival in a fizensical or in a meerly mental cens ceemz too hav bene eeqwaly unforghivvabel in her ise. No dout she blaimd this innocent lady for aul dhose harsh delingz and unkiand werdz widh which her huzband tride too repel her too demonstrative afecshon. Her ferst rezolueshon wauz too end her one life. Her cecond wauz too doo it in such a wa az too involv her victim in a fate which wauz wers far dhan enny sudden deth cood be.

"We can follo the vareyous steps qwite cleerly, and dha sho a remarlabel suttelty ov miand. A note wauz extracted verry clevverly from

Mis Dunbar which wood make it apere dhat she had chosen the cene ov the crime. In her anxiyety dhat it shood be discuvverd she sumwhaut overdid it, bi hoalding it in her hand too the laast. This alone shood hav exited mi suspishonz erleyer dhan it did.

"Then she tooc wun ov her huzbandz revolverz--dhare wauz, az u sau, an arcenal in the hous--and kept it for her one uce. A cimmilar wun she conceeld dhat morning in Mis Dunbarz wordrobe aafter discharging wun barrel, which she cood esily doo in the woodz widhout atracting atenshon. She then went doun too the brij whare she had contriavd this exedingly in'geenyous method for ghetting rid ov her weppon. When Mis Dunbar apeerd she uezd her laast breth in poering out her haitred, and then, when she wauz out ov hering, carrede out her terribel perpoce. Evvery linc iz nou in its place and the chane iz complete. The paperz ma aasc whi the mere wauz not dragd in the ferst instans, but it iz esy too be wise aafter the event, and in enny cace the expans ov a rede-fild lake iz no esy matter too drag unles u hav a clere percepshon ov whaut u ar loocking for and whare. Wel, Wautson, we hav helpt a remarcabel woomman, and aulso a formiddabel man. Shood dha in the fuchure join dhare foercez, az ceemz not unliacly, the finanshal world ma fiand dhat Mr. Nele Gibson haz lernd sumthhing in dhat scuilroome ov Sorro whare our erthly lessonz ar taut."

8

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE CREPING MAN

Mr. Sherloc Hoamz wauz aulwase ov opinyon dhat I shood publish the cin'gular facts conected widh Professor Prezbury, if oanly too dispel wuns for aul the ugly roomorz which sum twenty yeerz ago adgitated the

Univercity and wer eccode in the lerned sociyetese ov Lundon. Dhare wer, houwevver, certane obstakelz in the wa, and the troo history ov this cureyous cace remaind entuimd in the tin box which containz so menny reccordz ov mi frendz advenchuerz. Nou we hav at laast obtaind permishon too ventilate the facts which formd wun ov the verry laast cacez handeld bi Hoamz befoer hiz retiarment from practice. Even nou a certane retticens and discredishon hav too be observd in laying the matter befoer the public.

It wauz wun Sunda evening erly in Ceptember ov the yere 1903 dhat I receevd wun ov Hoamsez laconnic messagez: "Cum at wuns if conveyent--if inconveyent cum aul the same.--S.H." The relaishonz betwene us in dhose latter dase wer peculeyar. He wauz a man ov habbits, narro and concentrated habbits, and I had becum wun ov them. Az an instichueshon I wauz like the viyolin, the shag tobacco, the oald blac pipe, the index boox, and utherz perhaps les excuzabel. When it wauz a cace ov active werc and a comrade wauz neded uppon whoose nerv he cood place sum reliyans, mi role wauz obveyous. But apart from this I had ucez. I wauz a whetstone for hiz miand. I stimmulated him. He liact too thhinc aloud in mi prezsens. Hiz remarx cood hardly be ced too be made too me--menny ov them wood hav bene az aproapreyaitly adrest too hiz bedsted--but nun the les, havving formd the habbit, it had becum in sum wa helpfool dhat I shood redgister and interject. If I irritated him bi a certane methoddical slones in mi mentallity, dhat iritaishon cervd oanly too make hiz one flame-like inchuwishonz and impreshonz flash up the moer vivvidly and swiftly. Such wauz mi humbel role in our aliyans.

When I ariavd at Baker Strete I found him huddeld up in hiz arm-chare widh updraun nese, hiz pipe in hiz mouth and hiz brou furrode widh thaut. It wauz clere dhat he wauz in the throse ov sum vexaishous problem. Widh a wave ov hiz hand he indicated mi oald arm-chare, but urtherwise for haaf an our he gave no cine dhat he wauz aware ov mi

prezens. Then widh a start he ceemd too cum from hiz revvery, and, widh hiz uezhual whimsical smile, he greted me bac too whaut had wuns bene mi home.

"U wil excuse a certane abstracshon ov miand, mi dere Wautson," ced he. "Sum cureyous facts hav bene submitted too me within the laast twenty-foer ourz, and dha in tern hav ghivven rise too sum speculaishonz ov a moer genneral carracter. I hav cereyous thauts ov riting a smaul monnograaf uppon the ucez ov dogz in the werc ov the detective."

"But shuerly, Hoamz, this haz bene exploerd," ced I.

"Blud'houndz--slueth-houndz----"

"No, no, Wautson; dhat cide ov the matter iz, ov coers, obveyous. But dhare iz anuther which iz far moer suttel. U ma recolect dhat in the cace which u, in yor censaishonal wa, cuppeld widh the Copper Bechez, I wauz abel, bi wauching the miand ov the chiald, too form a deducshon az too the crimminal habbits ov the verry smug and respectabel faather."

"Yes, I remember it wel."

"Mi line ov thauts about dogz iz anallogous. A dog reflects the fammily life. Whoowevver sau a frisky dog in a gloomy fammily, or a sad dog in a happy wun? Snarling pepel hav snarling dogz, dain'gerous pepel hav dain'gerous wunz. And dhare paacing muidz ma reflect the paacing muidz ov utherz."

I shooc mi hed. "Shuerly, Hoamz, this iz a littel far-fecht," ced I.

He had refiled hiz pipe and rezhuemd hiz cete, taking no notice ov mi

comment.

"The practical applicaishon ov whaut I hav ced iz verry cloce too the problem which I am investigating. It iz a tan'gheld scane, u understand, and I am loocking for a looce end. Wun poscibel looce end lise in the qweschon: Whi duz Professor Prezburese faithfool woolf-hound, Roi, endevvor too bite him?"

I sanc bac in mi chare in sum disapointment. Wauz it for so trivveyal a qweschon az this dhat I had bene summond from mi werc? Hoamz glaanst acros at me.

"The same oald Wautson!" ced he. "U nevver lern dhat the gravest ishuse ma depend uppon the smaulest thhingz. But iz it not on the face ov it strainj dhat a stade, elderly filossofer--uve herd ov Prezbury, ov coers, the famous Camford fiseyollogist?--dhat such a man, whoose frend haz bene hiz devoted woolf-hound, shood nou hav bene twice atact bi hiz one dog? Whaut doo u make ov it?"

"The dog iz il."

"Wel, dhat haz too be concidderd. But he atax no wun els, nor duz he aparrently molest hiz maaster, save on verry speshal ocaizhonz. Cureyous, Wautson--verry cureyous. But yung Mr. Bennet iz befoer hiz time, if dhat iz hiz ring. I had hoapt too hav a lon'gher chat widh u befoer he came."

Dhare wauz a qwic step on the staerz, a sharp tap at the doer, and a moment later the nu cliyent presented himcelf. He wauz a taul, handsum ueth about thherty, wel drest and ellegant, but widh sumthhing in hiz baring which sugested the shines ov the schudent raather dhan the celf-poseshon ov the man ov the werld. He shooc handz widh Hoamz, and then looct widh sum cerprise at me.

"This matter iz verry dellicate, Mr. Hoamz," he ced. "Concidder the relaishon in which I stand too Professor Prezbury, boath privaitly and publicly. I reyalz can hardly justifi micelf if I speke befoer enny thherd person."

"Hav no fere, Mr. Bennet. Dr. Wautson iz the verry sole ov discredhon, and I can ashure u dhat this iz a matter in which I am verry liacly too nede an acistant."

"Az u like, Mr. Hoamz. U wil, I am shure, understand mi havving sum reservz in the matter."

"U wil apreesheyate it, Wautson, when I tel u dhat this gentelman, Mr. Trevvor Bennet, iz profeshonal acistant too the grate ciyentist, livz under hiz roofe, and iz en'gajjd too hiz oanly dauter. Certainly we must agry dhat the Professor haz evvery clame uppon hiz loiyalty and devoashon. But it ma best be shone bi taking the nescesary steps too clere up this strainj mistery."

"I hope so, Mr. Hoamz. Dhat iz mi wun obgett. Duz Dr. Wautson no the cichuwaishon?"

"I hav not had time too explane it."

"Then perhaps I had better go over the ground agane befoer explaining sum fresh devellopments."

"I wil doo so micelf," ced Hoamz, "in order too sho dhat I hav the events in dhare ju order. The Professor, Wautson, iz a man ov Uropeyan reputaishon. Hiz life haz bene academmic. Dhare haz nevver bene a breth ov scandal. He iz a widdower widh wun dauter, Edith. He iz, I gather, a man ov verry virile and pozsitive, wun mite aulmoast sa combative, carracter. So the matter stood until a verry fu munths ago.

"Then the current ov hiz life wauz broken. He iz cixty-wun yeerz ov age, but he became en'gaijd too the dauter ov Professor Morfy, hiz colleghe in the chare ov Comparrative Anattomy. It wauz not, az I understand, the rezond coerting ov an elderly man, but raather the pashonate frensy ov ueth, for no wun cood hav shone himcelf a moer devoted luvver. The lady, Allice Morfy, wauz a verry perfect gherl both in miand and boddy, so dhat dhare wauz evvery excuce for the Professorz infachuwaishon. Nuntheles, it did not mete widh fool aprooval in hiz one fammily."

"We thaut it raather exescive," ced our vizsitor.

"Exactly. Exescive and a littel viyolent and un'natchural. Professor Prezbury wauz rich, houwevver, and dhare wauz no obgecshon uppon the part ov the faather. The dauter, houwevver, had uthervuse, and dhare wer aulreddy cevveral candidaits for her hand, whoo, if dha wer les elligibel from a werldly point ov vu, wer at leest moer ov an age. The gherl ceemd too like the Professor in spite ov hiz exentriscitese. It wauz oonly age which stood in the wa.

"About this time a littel mistery suddenly clouded the normal rootene ov the Professorz life. He did whaut he had nevver dun befoer. He left home and gave no indicaishon whare he wauz gowing. He wauz awa a fortnite, and reternd loocking raather travvel-woern. He made no aluezhon too whare he had bene, auldho he wauz uezhuwaly the frankest ov men. It chaanst, houwevver, dhat our cliyent here, Mr. Bennet, receevd a letter from a fello-schudent in Praag, whoo ced dhat he wauz glad too hav cene Professor Prezbury dhare, auldho he had not bene abel too tauc too him. Oonly in this wa did hiz one hous'hoald lern whare he had bene.

"Nou cumz the point. From dhat time onwordz a cureyous chainj came over the Professor. He became fertive and sli. Dhose around him had aulwase the feling dhat he wauz not the man dhat dha had none, but dhat he wauz under sum shaddo which had darkend hiz hiyer qwaulitese. Hiz intelekt wauz not afected. Hiz lecchuerz wer az brilleyant az evver. But aulwase dhare wauz sumthhing nu, sumthhing cinnister and unnexpected. Hiz dauter, whoo wauz devoted too him, tride agane and agane too rezhume the oald relaishonz and too pennetrate this maasc which her faather ceemd too hav poot on. U, cer, az I understand, did the same--but aul wauz in vane. And nou, Mr. Bennet, tel in yor one werdz the incident ov the letterz."

"U must understand, Dr. Wautson, dhat the Professor had no ceecrets from me. If I wer hiz sun or hiz yun'gher bruther, I cood not hav moer compleetly enjoid hiz confidens. Az hiz cecretary I handeld evvery paper which came too him, and I opend and subdivided hiz letterz. Shortly aafter hiz retern aul this wauz chainjd. He toald me dhat certane letterz mite cum too him from Lundon which wood be marct bi a cros under the stamp. These wer too be cet acide for hiz one ise oonly. I ma sa dhat cevveral ov these did paas throo mi handz, dhat dha had the E.C. marc, and wer in an ilitterate handriting. If he aancerd them at aul the aancerz did not paas throo mi handz nor intoo the letter-baasket in which our corespondens wauz colected."

"And the box," ced Hoamz.

"Aa, yes, the box. The Professor braut bac a littel wooden box from hiz travvelz. It wauz the wun thhing which sugested a Continental toor, for it wauz wun ov dhose qwaint carvd thhingz which wun asoasheyaits widh Germany. This he plaist in hiz instrooment cubbord. Wun da, in loocking for a cannulaa, I tooc up the box. Too mi cerprise he wauz verry an'gry, and repruivd me in werdz which wer qwite savvage for mi

cureyosity. It wauz the ferst time such a thhing had happend and I wauz deeply hert. I endevvord too explane dhat it wauz a mere axident dhat I had tucht the box, but aul the evening I wauz conshous dhat he looct at me harshly and dhat the incident wauz rancling in hiz miand." Mr. Bennet droo a littel diyary booc from hiz pocket. "Dhat wauz on Juli 2," ced he.

"U ar certainly an admirabel witnes," ced Hoamz. "I ma nede sum ov these daits which u hav noted."

"I lernd method amung uther thhingz from mi grate techer. From the time dhat I observd abnormallity in hiz behaveyor I felt dhat it wauz mi juty too studdy hiz cace. Dhus I hav it here dhat it wauz on dhat verry da, Juli 2, dhat Roi atact the Professor, az he came from hiz studdy intoo the haul. Agane on Juli 11, dhare wauz a cene ov the same sort and then I hav a note ov yet anuther uppon Juli 20. Aafter dhat we had too bannish Roi too the stabelz. He wauz a dere, afecshonate annimal--but I fere I wery u."

Mr. Bennet spoke in a tone ov reproche, for it wauz verry clere dhat Hoamz wauz not liscening. Hiz face wauz ridgid and hiz ise gaizd abstractedly at the celing. With an effort he recuvverd himcelf.

"Cin'gular! Moast cin'gular!" he mermerd. "These detailz wer nu too me, Mr. Bennet. I thhinc we hav nou faerly gon over the oald ground, hav we not? But u spoke ov sum fresh devellopments."

The plezzant, open face ov our vizsitor clouded over, shaddode bi sum grim remembrans. "Whaut I speke ov okerd the nite befoer laast," ced he. "I wauz liying awake about too in the morning, when I wauz aware ov a dul muffeld sound cumming from the passage. I opend mi doer and peept out. I shoood explane dhat the Professor sleeps at the end ov the passage----"

"The date beying----?" aasct Hoamz.

Our vizsitor wauz cleerly anoid at so irellevant an interupshon.

"I hav ced, cer, dhat it wauz the nite befoer laast--dhat iz, Ceptember 4."

Hoamz nodded and smiald.

"Pra continnu," ced he.

"He sleeps at the end ov the passage, and wood hav too paas mi doer in order too reche the staercace. It wauz a reyaly terrifying expereyens, Mr. Hoamz. I thhinc dhat I am az strong-nervd az mi naborz, but I wauz shaken bi whaut I sau. The passage wauz darc save dhat wun windo haaf-wa along it throo a pach ov lite. I cood ce dhat sumthhing wauz cumming along the passage, sumthhing darc and crouching. Then suddenly it emerjd intoo the lite, and I sau dhat it wauz he. He wauz crawling, Mr. Hoamz--crawling! He wauz not qwite on hiz handz and nese. I shood raather sa on hiz handz and fete, widh hiz face sunc betwene hiz handz. Yet he ceemd too moove widh ese. I wauz so parraliazd bi the cite dhat it wauz not until he had reecht mi doer dhat I wauz abel too step forword and aasc if I cood acist him. Hiz aancer wauz extrordinary. He sprang up, spat out sum atroashous werd at me, and hurrede on paast me, and doun the staercace. I wated about for an our, but he did not cum bac. It must hav bene dalite befoer he regaind hiz roome."

"Wel, Wautson, whaut make u ov dhat?" aasct Hoamz, widh the are ov the pathollogist whoo presents a rare spescimen.

"Lumbago, poscibly. I hav none a cevere atac make a man wauc in just such a wa, and nuthhing wood be moer tryying too the temper."

"Good, Wautson! U aulwase kepe us flat-footted on the ground. But we can hardly axept lumbago, cins he wauz abel too stand erect in a moment."

"He wauz nevver better in helth," ced Bennet. "In fact, he iz stron'gher dhan I hav none him for yeerz. But dhare ar the facts, Mr. Hoamz. It iz not a cace in which we can consult the polece, and yet we ar utterly at our wits end az too whaut too doo, and we fele in sum strainj wa dhat we ar drifting toowordz dizaaster. Edith--Mis Prezbury--feelz az I doo, dhat we canot wate pasciavly enny lon'gher."

"It iz certainly a verry cureyous and sugestive cace. Whaut doo u thhinc, Wautson?"

"Speking az a meddical man," ced I, "it apeerz too be a cace for an aleyenist. The oald gentelmanz cerebral procecez wer disterbd bi the luv afare. He made a gerny abraud in the hope ov braking himcelf ov the pashon. Hiz letterz and the box ma be conected widh sum uther private traanzacshon--a lone, perhaps, or share certifficaits, which ar in the box."

"And the woolf-hound no dout disapruivd ov the finanshal bargane. No, no, Wautson, dhare iz moer in it dhan this. Nou, I can oanly sugest----"

Whaut Sherlock Hoamz wauz about too sugest wil nevver be none, for at this moment the doer opend and a yung lady wauz shone intoo the roome. Az she apeerd Mr. Bennet sprang up widh a cri and ran forword widh hiz handz out too mete dhose which she had hercelf outstreht.

"Edith, dere! Nuthhing the matter, I hope?"

"I felt I must follo u. O, Jac, I hav bene so dredfooly fritend! It iz aufool too be dhare alone."

"Mr. Hoamz, this iz the yung lady I spoke ov. This iz mi feyaansa."

"We wer gradjuwaly cumming too dhat concluezhon, wer we not, Wautson?"

Hoamz aancerd, widh a smile. "I take it, Mis Prezbury, dhat dhare iz sum fresh devellopment in the cace, and dhat u thaut we shood no?"

Our nu vizsitor, a brite, handsum gherl ov a convenshonal In'glish tipe, smiald bac at Hoamz az she ceted hercelf becide Mr. Bennet.

"When I found Mr. Bennet had left hiz hotel I thaut I shood probbably fiand him here. Ov coers, he had toald me dhat he wood consult u. But, o, Mr. Hoamz, can u doo nuthhing for mi poor faather?"

"I hav hoaps, Mis Prezbury, but the cace iz stil obscure. Perhaps whaut u hav too sa ma thro sum fresh lite uppon it."

"It wauz laast nite, Mr. Hoamz. He had bene verry strainj aul da. I am shure dhat dhare ar tiamz when he haz no recolecshon ov whaut he duz. He livz az in a strainj dreame. Yesterda wauz such a da. It wauz not mi faather widh whoome I livd. Hiz outword shel wauz dhare, but it wauz not reyaly he."

"Tel me whaut happend."

"I wauz awakend in the nite bi the dog barking moast fureyously. Poor Roi, he iz chaid nou nere the stabel. I ma sa dhat I aulwase slepe widh mi doer loct; for, az Jac--az Mr. Bennet--wil tel u, we aul hav a feling ov impending dain'ger. Mi roome iz on the cecond floer. It happend dhat the bliand wauz up in mi windo, and dhare wauz

brite muinlite outside. Az I la widh mi ise fixt uppon the sqware ov lite, liscening too the frensede barkingz ov the dog, I wauz amaizd too ce mi faatherz face loocking in at me. Mr. Hoamz, I neerly dide ov cerprise and horror. Dhare it wauz prest against the windo-pane, and wun hand ceemd too be raizd az if too poosh up the windo. If dhat windo had opend, I thhinc I shood hav gon mad. It wauz no deluezhon, Mr. Hoamz. Doant deceve yorcelf bi thhinking so. I dare sa it wauz twenty cecondz or so dhat I la parraliazd and waucht the face. Then it vannisht, but I cood not--I cood not spring out ov bed and looc out aafter it. I la coald and shivvering til morning. At brecfast he wauz sharp and feers in manner, and made no aluezhon too the advenchure ov the nite. Niather did I, but I gave an excuce for cumming too toun--and here I am."

Hoamz looct thurroly cerpriazd at Mis Prezburese narrative.

"Mi dere yung lady, u sa dhat yor roome iz on the cecond floer. Iz dhare a long ladder in the garden?"

"No, Mr. Hoamz; dhat iz the amasing part ov it. Dhare iz no poscibel wa ov reching the windo--and yet he wauz dhare."

"The date beying Ceptember 5," ced Hoamz. "Dhat certainly complicaits matterz."

It wauz the yung ladese tern too looc cerpriazd. "This iz the cecond time dhat u hav aluded too the date, Mr. Hoamz," ced Bennet. "Iz it poscibel dhat it haz enny baring uppon the cace?"

"It iz poscibel--verry poscibel--and yet I hav not mi fool matereyal at prezsent."

"Poscibly u ar thhinking ov the conecshon betwene insannity and

fasez ov the moone?"

"No, I ashure u. It wauz qwite a different line ov thaut. Poscibly u can leve yor noatbooc widh me and I wil chec the daits. Nou I thhinc, Wautson, dhat our line ov acshon iz perfectly clere. This yung lady haz informd us--and I hav the gratest confidens in her inchuwishon--dhat her faather rememberz littel or nuthhing which okerz uppon certane daits. We wil dhaerfoer caul uppon him az if he had ghivven us an apointment uppon such a date. He wil poot it doun too hiz one lac ov memmory. Dhus we wil open our campane bi havving a good cloce vu ov him."

"Dhat iz exelent," ced Mr. Bennet. "I worn u, houwevver, dhat the Professor iz irascibel and viyolent at tiamz."

Hoamz smiald. "Dhare ar rezonz whi we shood cum at wuns--verry cogent rezonz if mi ththeyorese hoald good. Too-morro, Mr. Bennet, wil certainly ce us in Camford. Dhare iz, if I remember rite, an in cauld the Checkerz whare the poert uest too be abuv mejocrity, and the linnen wauz abuv reproche. I thhinc, Wautson, dhat our lot for the next fu dase mite li in les plezzant placez."

Munda morning found us on our wa too the famous Univercity toun--an esy effort on the part ov Hoamz, whoo had no ruits too pool up, but wun which involvd frantic planning and hurreying on mi part, az mi practice wauz bi this time not inconcidderabel. Hoamz made no aluezhon too the cace until aafter we had depozsited our sute-cacez at the ainshent hostel ov which he had spoken.

"I thhinc, Wautson, dhat we can cach the Professor just befoer lunch. He lecchuerz at elevven, and shood hav an interval at home."

"Whaut poscibel excuce hav we for cauling?"

Hoamz glaanst at hiz noatbooc.

"Dhare wauz a pereyod ov exiatment uppon August 26. We wil ashume dhat he iz a littel hasy az too whaut he duz at such tiamz. If we incist dhat we ar dhare bi apointment I thhinc he wil hardly venchure too contradict us. Hav u the efruntery nescesary too poot it throo?"

"We can but tri."

"Exelent, Wautson! Compound ov the Bizsy Be and Exelceyor. We can but tri--the motto ov the ferm. A frendly native wil shuerly ghide us."

Such a wun on the bac ov a smart hansom swept us paast a ro ov ainshent collegez, and finaly terning intoo a tre-liand drive poold up at the doer ov a charming hous, ghert round widh launz and cuvverd widh perpel wistareyaa. Professor Prezbury wauz certainly surounded widh evvery cine not oonly ov cumfort but ov lucshury. Even az we poold up a grizseld hed apeerd at the frunt windo, and we wer aware ov a pare ov kene ise from under shagghy brouz which cervade us throo larj horn glaacez. A moment later we wer acchuwaly in hiz sanctum, and the mistereyous ciyentist, whoose vagarese had braut us from Lundon, wauz standing befoer us. Dhare wauz certainly no cine ov exentriscity iather in hiz manner or aperans, for he wauz a poertly, larj-fechuerd man, grave, taul, and froc-coted, widh the dignity ov baring which a lecchurer needz. Hiz ise wer hiz moast remarcabel fechure, kene, observant, and clevver too the verj ov cunning.

He looct at our cardz. "Pra cit down, gentelmen. Whaut can I doo for u?"

Mr. Hoamz smiald ameyably.

"It wauz the qweschon which I wauz about too poot too u, Professor."

"Too me, cer!"

"Poscibly dhare iz sum mistake. I herd throo a cecond person dhat Professor Prezbury ov Camford had nede ov mi cervicez."

"O, indede!" It ceemd too me dhat dhare wauz a malishous sparkel in the intens gra ise. "U herd dhat, did u? Ma I aasc the name ov yor informant?"

"I am sorry, Professor, but the matter wauz raather confidenshal. If I hav made a mistake dhare iz no harm dun. I can oanly expres mi regret."

"Not at aul. I shood wish too go ferther intoo this matter. It interests me. Hav u enny scrap ov riting, enny letter or tellegram, too bare out yor acershon?"

"No, I hav not."

"I prezhume dhat u doo not go so far az too acert dhat I summond u?"

"I wood raather aancer no qweschonz," ced Hoamz.

"No, I dare sa not," ced the Professor, widh asperrity. "Houwevver, dhat particcular wun can be aancerd verry esily widhout yor ade."

He wauct acros the roome too the bel. Our Lundon frend, Mr. Bennet, aancerd the caul.

"Cum in, Mr. Bennet. These too gentelmen hav cum from Lunden under the impreshon dhat dha hav bene summond. U handel aul mi corespondens. Hav u a note ov ennithhing gowing too a person naimd Hoamz?"

"No, cer," Bennet aancerd, with a flush.

"Dhat iz conclucive," ced the Professor, glaring an'grily at mi companyon. "Nou, cer"--he leend forword with hiz too handz uppon the tabel--"it ceemz too me dhat yor posishon iz a verry qweschonabel wun."

Hoamz shrugd hiz shoalderz.

"I can oanly repete dhat I am sorry dhat we hav made a needles intruizhon."

"Hardly enuf, Mr. Hoamz!" the oald man cride, in a hi screaming vois, with extrordinary malignancy uppon hiz face. He got betwene us and the doer az he spoke, and he shooc hiz too handz at us with fureyous pashon. "U can hardly ghet out ov it so esily az dhat." Hiz face wauz convulst and he grind and gibberd at us in hiz censles rage. I am convinst dhat we shood hav had too fite our wa out ov the roome if Mr. Bennet had not interveend.

"Mi dere Professor," he cride, "concidder yor posishon! Concidder the scandal at the Univercity! Mr. Hoamz iz a wel-none man. U canot poscibly trete him with such diskertecy."

Sulkily our hoast--if I ma caul him so--cleerd the paath too the doer. We wer glad too fiand ourcelvz outcide the hous, and in the qwiyet ov the tre-liand drive. Hoamz ceemd graitley amuezd bi the eppisode.

"Our lerned frendz nervz ar sumwhaut out ov order," ced he.

"Perhaps our intruizhon wauz a littel croode, and yet we hav gaind dhat

personal contact which I desired. But, dere me, Wautson, he iz shuerly at our heelz. The villane stil pershuse us."

Dhare wer the soundz ov running fete behiand, but it wauz, too mi relefe, not the formiddabel Professor but hiz acistant whoo apeerd round the kerv ov the drive. He came panting up too us.

"I am so sorry, Mr. Hoamz. I wisht too apollogise."

"Mi dere cer, dhare iz no nede. It iz aul in the wa ov profeshonal expereyens."

"I hav nevver cene him in a moer dain'gerous moode. But he grose moer cinnister. U can understand nou whi hiz dauter and I ar alarmd. And yet hiz miand iz perfectly clere."

"Too clere!" ced Hoamz. "Dhat wauz mi miscalculaishon. It iz evvident dhat hiz memmory iz much moer reliyabel dhan I had thaut. Bi the wa, can we, befoer we go, ce the windo ov Mis Prezburese roome?"

Mr. Bennet poosht hiz wa throo sum shrubz and we had a vu ov the cide ov the hous.

"It iz dhare. The cecond on the left."

"Dere me, it ceemz hardly axescibel. And yet u wil observ dhat dhare iz a creper belo and a wauter-pipe abuv which ghiv sum foot'hoald."

"I cood not clime it micelf," ced Mr. Bennet.

"Verry liacly. It wood certainly be a dain'gerous exploit for enny normal man."

"Dhare wauz wun uther thhing I wisht too tel u, Mr. Hoamz. I hav the adres ov the man in Lundon too whoome the Professor riats. He ceemz too hav ritten this morning and I got it from hiz blotting-paper. It iz an ignobel posishon for a trusted cecretary, but whaut els can I doo?"

Hoamz glaanst at the paper and poot it intoo hiz pocket.

"Dorac--a cureyous name. Slavonnic, I imadgine. Wel, it iz an important linc in the chane. We retern too Lundon this aafternoone, Mr. Bennet. I ce no good perpoce too be cervd bi our remaning. We canot arest the Professor, becauz he haz dun no crime, nor can we place him under constraint, for he canot be pruivd too be mad. No acshon iz az yet poscibel."

"Then whaut on erth ar we too doo?"

"A littel paishens, Mr. Bennet. Thhingz wil soone devellop. Unles I am mistaken next Chuezda ma marc a cricis. Certainly we shal be in Camford on dhat da. Meenwhile, the genneral posishon iz undeniyably unplezzant, and if Mis Prezbury can prolong her vizsit----"

"Dhat iz esy."

"Then let her sta til we can ashure her dhat aul dain'ger iz paast. Meenwhile, let him hav hiz wa and doo not cros him. So long az he iz in a good humor aul iz wel."

"Dhare he iz!" ced Bennet, in a starteld whisper. Looocking betwene the braanchez we sau the taul, erect figgure emerj from the haul doer and looc around him. He stood lening forword, hiz handz swinging strate befoer him, hiz hed terning from cide too cide. The cecretary widh a laast wave slipt of amung the trese, and we sau him prezsently rejoin hiz employier, the too entering the hous tooghether in whaut ceemd

too be animated and even exited conversashon.

"I expect the oald gentelman haz bene pootting too and too tooghether," ced Hoamz, az we wauct hotelwordz. "He struc me az havving a particularly clere and lodgical brane, from the littel I sau ov him. Explosive, no dout, but then from hiz point ov vu he haz sumthhing too explode about if detectiavz ar poot on hiz trac and he suspects hiz one hous'hoald ov doowing it. I raather fancy dhat frend Bennet iz in for an uncumfortabel time."

Hoamz stopt at a poast office and cent of a tellegram on our wa. The aancer reecht us in the evening, and he tost it acros too me. "Hav vizsited the Comershal Rode and cene Dorac. Swaav person, Bohemeyan, elderly. Keeps larj genneral stoer.--Mercer."

"Mercer iz cins yor time," ced Hoamz. "He iz mi genneral utility man whoo loox up rootene biznes. It wauz important too no sumthhing ov the man widh whoome our Professor wauz so ceecretly coresponding. Hiz nashonallity conects up widh the Praag vizsit."

"Thanc goodnes dhat sumthhing conects widh sumthhing," ced I. "At prezsent we ceme too be faist bi a long cerese ov inexpliccabel incidents widh no baring uppon eche uther. For exaampel, whaut poscibel conecshon can dhare be betwene an an'gry woolf-hound and a vizsit too Bohemeyaa, or iather ov them widh a man crawling doun a passage at nite? Az too yor daits, dhat iz the bigghest mistificaishon ov aul."

Hoamz smiald and rubd hiz handz. We wer, I ma sa, ceted in the oald citting-roome ov the ainshent hotel, widh a bottel ov the famous vintage ov which Hoamz had spoken on the tabel betwene us.

"Wel, nou, let us take the daits ferst," ced he, hiz fin'gher-tips tooghether and hiz manner az if he wer adrescing a claas. "This exelent yung manz diyary shose dhat dhare wauz trubbel uppon Juli 2, and from then onwordz it ceemz too hav bene at nine-da intervalz, widh, so far az I remember, oonly wun exepshon. Dhus the laast outbrake uppon Frida wauz on Ceptember 3, which aulso faulz intoo the cerese, az did August 26, which preceded it. The thhing iz beyond cowincidens."

I wauz foerst too agry.

"Let us, then, form the provizhonal ththeyory dhat evvery nine dase the Professor taix sum strong drug which haz a paacing but hily poizonous efect. Hiz natchuraly viyolent nachure iz intencifide bi it. He lernd too take this drug while he wauz in Praag, and iz nou suplide widh it bi a Bohemeyan intermejary in Lundon. This aul hangz tooghether, Wautson!"

"But the dog, the face at the windo, the creping man in the passage?"

"Wel, wel, we hav made a beghinning. I shood not expect enny fresh devellopments until next Chuezda. In the meentime we can oonly kepe in tuch widh frend Bennet and enjoj the amenitese ov this charming toun."

In the morning Mr. Bennet slipt round too bring us the latest repoert. Az Hoamz had imadgiand, tiamz had not bene esy widh him. Widhout exactly acusing him ov beying responcibel for our prezsens, the Professor had bene verry ruf and roode in hiz speche, and evvidently felt sum strong grevans. This morning he wauz qwite himcelf agane, houwevver, and had delivverd hiz uezhuwal brilleyant lecchure too a crowd  
claas. "Apart from hiz qwere fits," ced Bennet, "he haz acchuwaly moer ennergy and vitallity dhan I can evver remember, nor wauz hiz brane

evver clerer. But its not he--its nevver the man whoome we hav none."

"I doant thhinc u hav ennithhing too fere nou for a weke at leest,"  
Hoamz aancerd. "I am a bizsy man, and Dr. Wautson haz hiz paishents too  
atend too. Let us agry dhat we mete here at this our next Chuezda,  
and I shal be cerpriazd if befoer we leve u agane we ar not abel  
too explane, even if we canot perhaps poot an end too, yor trubbelz.  
Meenwhile, kepe us poasted in whaut okerz."

I sau nuthhing ov mi frend for the next fu dase, but on the following  
Munda evening I had a short note aasking me too mete him next da at the  
trane. From whaut he toald me az we travveld up too Camford aul wauz  
wel, the pece ov the Professorz hous had bene unruffeld, and hiz  
one conduct perfectly normal. This aulso wauz the repoert which wauz  
ghivven  
us bi Mr. Bennet himcelf when he cauld uppon us dhat evening at our  
oald qworterz in the "Checkerz." "He herd from hiz Lundon  
corespondent too-da. Dhare wauz a letter and dhare wauz a smaul packet,  
eche widh the cros under the stamp which wornd me not too tuch them.  
Dhare haz bene nuthhing els."

"Dhat ma proove qwite enuf," ced Hoamz grimly. "Nou, Mr. Bennet,  
we shal, I thhinc, cum too sum concluezhon too-nite. If mi deducshonz  
ar corect we shood hav an oporchunity ov bringing matterz too a  
hed. In order too doo so it iz nescenary too hoald the Professor under  
observaishon. I wood sugest, dhaerfoer, dhat u remane awake and on  
the looc out. Shood u here him paas yor doer doo not interupt him,  
but follo him az discreetly az u can. Dr. Wautson and I wil not be  
far of. Bi the wa, whare iz the ke ov dhat littel box ov which u  
spoke?"

"Uppon hiz wauch-chane."

"I fancy our recerchez must li in dhat direcshon. At the werst the loc shood not be verry formiddabel. Hav u enny uther abel-boddede man on the premmicez?"

"Dhare iz the coachman, Macfale."

"Whare duz he slepe?"

"Over the stabelz."

"We mite poscibly waunt him. Wel, we can doo no moer until we ce hou thhingz devellop. Good-bi--but I expect dhat we shal ce u befoer morning."

It wauz neerly midnite befoer we tooc our staishon amung sum booshez imejaitly opposite the haul doer ov the Professor. It wauz a fine nite, but chilly, and we wer glad ov our worm overcoats. Dhare wauz a brese, and cloudz wer scudding acros the ski, obscuring from time too time the haaf-moone. It wood hav bene a dizmal vidgil wer it not for the expectaishon and exiatment which carrede us along, and the ashurans ov mi comrade dhat we had probbably reecht the end ov the strainj ceeqwens ov events which had en'gaijd our atenshon.

"If the cikel ov nine dase hoaldz good then we shal hav the Professor at hiz werst too-nite," ced Hoamz. "The fact dhat these strainj cimptomz began aafter hiz vizsit too Praag, dhat he iz in ceecret corespondens widh a Bohemeyan deler in Lundon, whoo preezhumably represents sumwun in Praag, and dhat he receevd a packet from him this verry da, aul point in wun direcshon. Whaut he taix and whi he taix it ar stil beyond our ken, but dhat it emmanaits in sum wa from Praag iz clere enuf. He taix it under deffinite direcshonz which reggulate this nianth-da cistem, which wauz the ferst point which attracted mi atenshon. But hiz cimptomz ar moast remarcabel. Did u observ hiz nuckelz?"

I had too confes dhat I did not.

"Thhic and horny in a wa which iz qwite nu in mi expereyens. Aulwase looc at the handz ferst, Wautson. Then cufs, trouser-nese, and buits. Verry cureyous nuckelz which can oonly be explaind bi the mode ov progreshon observd bi----" Hoamz pauzd, and suddenly clapt hiz hand too hiz foerhed. "O, Wautson, Wautson, whaut a foole I hav bene! It ceemz increddibel, and yet it must be troo. Aul points in wun direcshon. Hou cood I mis ceying the conecshon ov ideyaaz? Dhose nuckelz--hou cood I hav paast dhose nuckelz? And the dog! And the ivy! Its shuerly time dhat I disapeerd intoo dhat littel farm ov mi dreemz. Looc out, Wautson! Here he iz! We shal hav the chaans ov ceying for ourcelvz."

The haul doer had sloly opend, and against the lamp-lit bacground we sau the taul figgure ov Professor Prezbury. He wauz clad in hiz drescing-goun. Az he stood outliand in the doerwa he wauz erect but lening forword widh dan'gling armz, az when we sau him laast.

Nou he stept forword intoo the drive, and an extrordinary chainj came over him. He sanc doun intoo a crouching posishon, and muivd along uppon hiz handz and fete, skipping evvery nou and then az if he wer overflowing widh ennergy and vitallity. He muivd along the face ov the hous and then round the corner. Az he disapeerd Bennet slipt throo the haul doer and softly follode him.

"Cum, Wautson, cum!" cride Hoamz, and we stole az softly az we cood throo the booshez until we had gaind a spot whens we cood ce the uther cide ov the hous, which wauz baidhd in the lite ov the haaf-moone. The Professor wauz cleerly vizsibel crouching at the foot ov the ivy-cuvverd waul. Az we waucht him he suddenly began widh

incredibbel agillity too acend it. From braanch too braanch he sprang, shure ov foot and ferm ov graasp, climing aparrently in mere joi at hiz one pouwerz, widh no deffinite object in vu. Widh hiz drescing-goun flapping on eche cide ov him he looct like sum huge bat glude against the cide ov hiz one hous, a grate sqware darc pach uppon the muinlit waul. Prezently he tiard ov this amuezment, and, dropping from braanch too braanch, he sqwauted down intoo the oald attichude and muivd toowordz the stabelz, creping along in the same strainj wa az befoer. The woolf-hound wauz out nou, barking fureyously, and moer exited dhan evver when it acchuwaly caut cite ov its maaster. It wauz straning on its chane, and qwivvering widh eghernes and rage. The Professor sqwauted doun verry delibberaitly just out ov reche ov the hound, and began too provoke it in evvery poscibel wa. He tooc handfoolz ov pebbelz from the drive and throo them in the dogz face, prodded him widh a stic which he had pict up, flict hiz handz about oonly a fu inchez from the gaping mouth, and endevvord in evvery wa too increce the annimalz fury, which wauz aulreddy beyond aul controle. In aul our advenchuerz I doo not no dhat I hav evver cene a moer strainj cite dhan this impascive and stil dignifide figgure crouching frog-like uppon the ground and goding too a wialder exhibishon ov pashon the maddend hound, which rampt and raijd in frunt ov him, bi aul manner ov in'geenyous and calculated croowelty.

And then in a moment it happend! It wauz not the chane dhat broke, but it wauz the collar dhat slipt, for it had bene made for a thhic-neck Nufoundland. We herd the rattel ov fauling mettal, and the next instant dog and man wer roling on the ground tooghether, the wun roering in rage, the uther screming in a strainj shril faulcetto ov terror. It wauz a verry narro thhing for the Professorz life. The savvage crechure had him faerly bi the throte, its fangz had bitten

depe, and he wauz censles befoer we cood reche them and drag the too apart. It mite hav bene a dain'gerous taasc for us, but Bennets vois and prezsens braut the grate woolf-hound instantly too rezon. The uproer had braut the slepy and astonnisht coachman from hiz roome abuv the stabelz. "Ime not cerpriazd," ced he, shaking hiz hed. "Ive cene him at it befoer. I nu the dog wood ghet him sooner or later."

The hound wauz cecuerd, and tooggether we carrede the Professor up too hiz roome, whare Bennet, whoo had a meddical degry, helpt me too dres hiz toern throte. The sharp teeth had paast dain'gerously nere the carottid artery, and the hemmorage wauz cereyous. In haaf an our the dain'ger wauz paast, I had ghivven the paishent an in'gecshon ov morfeyaa, and he had sunc intoo depe slepe. Then, and oonly then, wer we abel too looc at eche uther and too take stoc ov the cichuwaishon.

"I thhinc a ferst-claas cerjon shood ce him," ced I.

"For Godz sake, no!" cride Bennet. "At prezsent the scandal iz confiand too our one hous'hoald. It iz safe widh us. If it ghetz beyond these waulz it wil nevver stop. Concidder hiz posishon at the Univercity, hiz Uropeyan reputaishon, the felingz ov hiz dauter."

"Qwite so," ced Hoamz. "I thhinc it ma be qwite poscibel too kepe the matter too ourcelvz, and aulso too prevent its recurrens nou dhat we hav a fre hand. The ke from the wauch-chane, Mr. Bennet. Macfale wil gard the paishent and let us no if dhare iz enny chainj. Let us ce whaut we can fiand in the Professorz mistereyous box."

Dhare wauz not much, but dhare wauz enuf--an empty fiyal, another neerly fool, a hipodermic cirinj, cevveral letterz in a crabd,

forane hand. The marx on the enveloaps shode dhat dha wer dhose which had disterbd the rootene ov the cecretary, and eche wauz dated from the Comershal Rode and ciand "A. Dorac." Dha wer mere invoicez too sa dhat a fresh bottel wauz beying cent too Professor Prezbury, or receets too acnollej munny. Dhare wauz wun uther envelope, houwevver, in a moer edjucated hand and baring the Austreyan stamp widh the poastmarc ov Praag. "Here we hav our matereyal!" cride Hoamz, az he toer out the encloazhure.

"ONNORD COLLEGHE," it ran. "Cins yor esteemd vizsit I hav thaut much ov yor cace, and dho in yor cercumstaancez dhare ar sum speshal rezonz for the treetment, I wood nun the les enjoin caushon, az mi rezults hav shone dhat it iz not widhout dain'ger ov a kiand.

"It iz poscibel dhat the Cerum ov Anthropoid wood hav bene better. I hav, az I explaind too u, uezd blac-faist Lan'gher becauz a spescimen wauz axescibel. Lan'gher iz, ov coers, a crauler and climer, while Anthropoid waux erect, and iz in aul wase nerer.

"I beg u too take evvery poscibel precaushon dhat dhare be no premachure revelaishon ov the proces. I hav wun uther cliyent in In'gland, and Dorac iz mi agent for boath.

"Weecly repoerts wil oblige.

"Yorz widh hi esteme,  
"H. LOVENSTINE."

Lovenstine! The name braut bac too me the memmory ov sum snippet from a nuespaper which spoke ov an obscure ciyentist whoo wauz striving in sum un'none wa for the ceecret ov rejuvenescens and the elixer ov

life. Lovenstine ov Praag! Lovenstine widh the wondrous strength-ghivving cerum, taboode bi the profeshon becauz he refuezd too revele its soers. In a fu werdz I ced whaut I rememberd. Bennet had taken a mannuwal ov Zowollogy from the shelvz. "Lan'gher," he red, "the grate blac-faist munky ov the Himalayan sloaps, bigghest and moast human ov climing munkese.' Menny detailz ar added. Wel, thanx too u, Mr. Hoamz, it iz verry clere dhat we hav traist the evil too its soers."

"The reyal soers," ced Hoamz, "lise, ov coers, in dhat untiamly luv afare which gave our impetchuwous Professor the ideyaa dhat he cood oonly gane hiz wish bi terning himcelf intoo a yun'gher man. When wun trise too rise abuv Nachure wun iz liyabel too faul belo it. The hiyest tipe ov man ma revert too the annimal if he leevz the strate rode ov destiny." He sat musing for a littel widh the fiyal in hiz hand, loocking at the clere liqwid within. "When I hav ritten too this man and toald him dhat I hoald him crimminally responcibel for the poizonz which he cerculaits, we wil hav no moer trubbel. But it ma reker. Utherz ma fiand a better wa. Dhare iz dain'ger dhare--a verry reyal dain'ger too humannity. Concidder, Wautson, dhat the matereyal, the censhuwal, the werldly wood aul prolong dhare werthles liavz. The spirrichuwal wood not avoid the caul too sumthhing hiyer. It wood be the cervical ov the leest fit. Whaut sort ov cespoole ma not our poor werld becum?" Suddenly the dremer disapeerd, and Hoamz, the man ov acshon, sprang from hiz chare. "I thhinc dhare iz nuthhing moer too be ced, Mr. Bennet. The vareyous incidents wil nou fit themcelvz esily intoo the genneral skeme. The dog, ov coers, wauz aware ov the chainj far moer qwicly dhan u. Hiz smel wood enshure dhat. It wauz the munky, not the Professor, whoome Roi atact, just az it wauz the munky whoo teezd Roi. Climing wauz a joi too the crechure, and it wauz a mere chaans, I take it, dhat the paastime braut him too the yung

ladese windo. Dhare iz an erly trane too toun, Wautson, but I thhinc we shal just hav time for a cup ov te at the Checkerz befoer we cach it."

9

## THE ADVENCHURE OV THE LIYONZ MANE

It iz a moast cin'gular thhing dhat a problem which wauz certainly az abstrooce and unnuezhuwal az enny which I hav faist in mi long profeshonal carere shood hav cum too me aafter mi retiarment; and be braut, az it wer, too mi verry doer. It okerd aafter mi widhdrauwal too mi littel Suscex home, when I had ghivven micelf up entiarly too dhat suithing life ov Nachure for which I had so often yernd juring the long yeeرز spent amid the gloome ov Lunden. At this pereyod ov mi life the good Wautson had paast aulmoast beyond mi ken. An ocaizhonal weke-end vizsit wauz the moast dhat I evver sau ov him. Dhus I must act az mi one cronniacler. Aa! had he but bene widh me, hou much he mite hav made ov so wunderfool a happening and ov mi evenchuwal triyumf against evvery difficulty! Az it iz, houwevver, I must needz tel mi tale in mi one plane wa, showing bi mi werdz eche step uppon the difficult rode which la befoer me az I cercht for the mistery ov the Liyonz Mane.

Mi villaa iz citchuwated uppon the suthern slope ov the Dounz, comaanding a grate vu ov the Channel. At this point the coast-line iz entiarly ov chauc clifs, which can oanly be decended bi a cin'ghel, long, torchuwous paath, which iz stepe and slippery. At the bottom ov the paath li a hundred yardz ov pebbelz and shin'ghel, even when the tide iz at fool.

Here and dhare, houwevver, dhare ar kervz and hollose which make splendid swimming-puilz fild afresh with eche flo. This admirabel beche extendz for sum mialz in eche direcshon, save oonly at wun point whare the littel cove and village ov Foolwerth brake the line.

Mi hous iz loanly. I, mi oald houskeper, and mi bese hav the estate aul too ourcelvz. Haaf a mile of, houwevver, iz Harrold Stac'hersts wel-none coching establishment. The Gabelz, qwite a larj place, which containz sum scoer ov yung fellose preparing for vareyous profeshonz, with a staaf ov cevveral maasterz. Stac'herst himcelf wauz a wel-none rowing Blu in hiz da, and an exelent aul-round scollar. He and I wer aulwase frendly from the da I came too the coast, and he wauz the wun man whoo wauz on such termz with me dhat we cood drop in on eche uther in the eveningz widhout an invitaishon.

Toowordz the end ov Juli, 1907, dhare wauz a cevere gale, the wind blowing up-Channel, heping the cese too the bace ov the clifs, and leving a lagoon at the tern ov the tide. On the morning ov which I speke the wind had abated, and aul Nachure wauz nuly wausht and fresh. It wauz imposcibel too werc uppon so deliatfool a da, and I stroald out befoer brecfast too enjoi the exqwizsite are. I wauct along the clif paath which led too the stepe decent too the beche. Az I wauct I herd a shout behiand me, and dhare wauz Harrold Stac'herst waving hiz hand in chery greting.

"Whaut a morning, Mr. Hoamz! I thaut I shood ce u out."

"Gowing for a swim, I ce."

"At yor oald trix agane," he laaft, patting hiz bulging pocket.

"Yes. McFerson started erly, and I expect I ma fiand him dhare."

Fitzroi McFerson wauz the ciyens maaster, a fine upstanding yung fello whose life had bene crippeld bi hart trubbel following roomattic fever. He wauz a natchural athlete, houwevver, and exeld in evvery game which did not thro too grate a strane uppon him. Summer and winter he went for hiz swim, and, az I am a swimmer micelf, I hav often joind him.

At this moment we sau the man himcelf. Hiz hed shode abuv the ej ov the clif whare the paath endz. Then hiz whole figgure apeerd at the top, stagghering like a drunken man. The next instant he throo up hiz handz, and, widh a terribel cri, fel uppon hiz face. Stac'herst and I rusht forword--it ma hav bene fifty yardz--and ternd him on hiz bac. He wauz obveyously diying. Dhose glaizd sunken ise and dredfool livvid cheex cood mene nuthhing els. Wun glimmer ov life came intoo hiz face for an instant, and he utterd too or thre werdz widh an egher are ov worning. Dha wer slerd and indistinct, but too mi ere the laast ov them, which berst in a shreke from hiz lips, wer "the liyonz mane." It wauz utterly irellevant and unnintelligibel, and yet I cood twist the sound intoo no uther cens. Then he haaf raizd himcelf from the ground, throo hiz armz intoo the are and fel forword on hiz side. He wauz ded.

Mi companyon wauz parraliazd bi the sudden horror ov it, but I, az ma wel be imadgiand, had evvery cens on the alert. And I had nede, for it wauz spedily evvident dhat we wer in the prezsens ov an extrordinary cace. The man wauz drest oonly in hiz Berbery overcote, hiz trouserz, and an unlaist pare ov canvas shoose. Az he fel over, hiz Berbery, which had bene cimply throne round hiz shoalderz, slipt of, exposing hiz trunc. We staerd at it in amaizment. Hiz bac wauz cuvverd widh darc red lianz az dho he had bene terribly flogd bi a thhin wire skerj. The instrooment widh which this punnishment had bene inflicted wauz cleerly flexibel, for the long, an'gry weelz kervd round hiz shoalderz and ribz. Dhare wauz blud dripping doun hiz chin, for he had

bitten throo hiz lower lip in the parroxizm ov hiz aggony. Hiz draun and distorted face toald hou terribel dhat aggony had bene.

I wauz neling and Stac'herst standing bi the boddy when a shaddo fel across us, and we found dhat Eyan Merdoc wauz bi our side. Merdoc wauz the mathemattical coche at the establishment, a taul, darc, thhin man, so tascitern and aloofe dhat nun can be ced too hav bene hiz frend. He ceemd too liv in sum hi, abstract rejon ov cerdz and connic cecshonz widh littel too conect him widh ordinary life. He wauz looct uppon az an oddity bi the schudents, and wood hav bene dhare but, but dhare wauz sum strainj outlandish blud in the man, which shode itcelf not oonly in hiz cole-blac ise and sworthy face, but aulso in ocaizhonal outbraix ov temper, which cood oonly be descriabd az feroashous. On wun ocaizhon, beying plaigd bi a littel dog belonging too McFerson, he had caut the crechure up and herld it throo the plate-glaas windo, an acshon for which Stac'herst wood certainly hav ghivven him hiz dismissal had he not bene a verry vallubel techer. Such wauz the strainj, complex man whoo nou apeerd becide us. He ceemd too be onnestly shoct at the cite befoer him, dho the incident ov the dog ma sho dhat dhare wauz no grate cimpathy betwene the ded man and himcelf.

"Poor fello! Poor fello! Whaut can I doo? Hou can I help?"

"Wer u widh him? Can u tel us whaut haz happend?"

"No, no, I wauz late this morning. I wauz not on the beche at aul. I hav cum strate from The Gabelz. Whaut can I doo?"

"U can hurry too the polece-staishon at Foolwerth. Repoert the matter at wuns."

Widhout a werd he made of at top spede, and I proceded too take the

matter in hand, while Stac'herst, daizd at this tradgedy, remaind bi the boddy. Mi ferst taasc natchuraly wauz too note whoo wauz on the beche.

From the top ov the paath I cood ce the whole swepe ov it, and it wauz absolutely deserted save dhat too or thre darc figguerz cood be cene far awa mooving toowordz the village ov Foolwerth. Havving sattisfide micelf uppon this point, I wauct sloly down the paath. Dhare wauz cla or soft marl mixt widh the chauc, and evvery here and dhare I sau the same footstep, boath acending and decending. No wun els had gon doun too the beche bi this trac dhat morning. At wun place I observd the print ov an open hand widh the fin'gherz toowordz the incline. This cood oanly mene dhat poor McFerson had faulen az he acended. Dhare wer rounded depreshonz, too, which sugested dhat he had cum doun uppon hiz nese moer dhan wuns. At the bottom ov the paath wauz the concidderabel lagoone left bi the retreting tide. At the cide ov it McFerson had undrest, for dhare la hiz touwel on a roc. It wauz foalded and dri, so dhat it wood ceme dhat aafter aul he had nevver enterd the wauter. Wuns or twice az I hunted round amid the hard shin'ghel I came on littel patchez ov sand whare the print ov hiz canvas shoo, and aulso ov hiz naked foot, cood be cene. The latter fact pruivd dhat he had made aul reddy too baidh, dho the touwel indicated dhat he had not acchuwaly dun so.

And here wauz the problem cleerly defiaand--az strainj a wun az had evver confrunted me. The man had not bene on the beche moer dhan a qworter ov an our at the moast. Stac'herst had follode him from The Gabelz, so dhare cood be no dout about dhat. He had gon too baidh and had stript, az the naked footsteps shode. Then he had suddenly huddeld on hiz cloadhz agane--dha wer aul dishevveld and unfaacend--and he had reternd widhout baithing, or at enny rate widhout drying himcelf. And the rezon for hiz chainj ov perpoce had bene dhat he had bene skerjd in sum savvage, inhuman fashon, torchuerd until he bit hiz lip throo in hiz agony, and wauz left widh oanly strength enuf too crawl awa and too di. Whoo had dun this barbarous dede? Dhare wer, it iz

troo, smaul grottose and caivz in the bace ov the clifs, but the lo sun shon directly intoo them, and dhare wauz no place for concealment. Then, agane, dhare wer dhose distant figguerz on the beche. Dha ceemd too far awa too hav bene conected with the crime, and the braud lagoone in which McFerson had intended too baidh la betwene him and them, lapping up too the rox. On the ce too or thre fishing-boats wer at no grate distans. Dhare occupants mite be exammiand at our lezhure. Dhare wer cevveral roadz for inqwiry, but nun which led too enny verry obveyous gole.

When I at laast reternd too the boddy I found dhat a littel groope ov waundering foke had gatherd round it. Stac'herst wauz, ov coers, stil dhare, and Eyan Merdoc had just ariavd widh Anderson, the village cunstabel, a big, gin'ger-moostaasht man ov the slo, sollid Suscex brede--a brede which cuvverz much good cens under a hevvy, cilent extereyor. He liscend too evverithhing, tooc note ov aul we ced, and finaly droo me acide.

"Ide be glad ov yor advice, Mr. Hoamz. This iz a big thhing for me too handel, and Ile here ov it from Luwes if I go rong."

I adviazd him too cend for hiz imejate supereyor, and for a doctor; aulso too alou nuthhing too be muivd, and az fu fresh footmarx az poscibel too be made, until dha came. In the meentime I cercht the ded manz pockets. Dhare wer hiz hankerchefe, a larj nife, and a smaul foalding card-cace. From this proected a slip ov paper, which I unfoalded and handed too the cunstabel. Dhare wauz ritten on it in a scraulng, femminine hand: "I wil be dhare, u ma be shure.--Maudy." It red like a luv afare, an acignaishon, dho when and whare wer a blanc. The cunstabel replaist it in the card-cace and reternd it widh the uther thhingz too the pockets ov the Berbery. Then, az nuthhing moer sugested itcelf, I wauct bac too mi hous for breccfast, havving ferst arainjd dhat the bace ov the clifs shood be thurroly cercht.

Stac'herst wauz round in an our or too too tel me dhat the boddy had bene remuivd too The Gabelz, whare the inqwest wood be held. He braut widh him sum cereyous and deffinite nuse. Az I expected, nuthhing had bene found in the smaual caivz belo the clif, but he had exammiand the paperz in McFersonz desc, and dhare wer cevveral which shode an intimate corespondens widh a certane Mis Maud Bellamy, ov Foolwerth. We had then establisht the identity ov the riter ov the note.

"The polece hav the letterz," he explaind. "I cood not bring them. But dhare iz no dout dhat it wauz a cereyous luv afare. I ce no rezon, houwevver, too conect it widh dhat horribel happening save, indede, dhat the lady had made an apointment widh him."

"But hardly at a baithing-poole which aul ov u wer in the habbit ov using," I remarct.

"It iz mere chaans," ced he, "dhat cevveral ov the schudents wer not widh McFerson."

"Wauz it mere chaans?"

Stac'herst nit hiz brouz in thaut.

"Eyan Merdoc held them bac," ced he; "he wood incist uppon sum algebrayic demonstraishon befoer brecfast. Poor chap, he iz dredfooly cut up about it aul."

"And yet I gather dhat dha wer not frendz."

"At wun time dha wer not. But for a yere or moer Merdoc haz bene az nere too McFerson az he evver cood be too enniwun. He iz not ov a verry

cimpathhettic disposishon bi nachure."

"So I understand. I ceme too remember yor telling me wuns about a qworel over the il-usage ov a dog."

"Dhat blu over aul rite."

"But left sum vindictive feling, perhaps."

"No, no; I am shure dha wer reyal frendz."

"Wel, then, we must exploer the matter ov the gherl. Doo u no her?"

"Evveriwun nose her. She iz the buty ov the naborhood--a reyal buty, Hoamz, whoo wood drau atenshon evveriwahre. I nu dhat McFerson wauz atracted bi her, but I had no noashon dhat it had gon so far az these letterz wood ceme too indicate."

"But whoo iz she?"

"She iz the dauter ov oald Tom Bellamy, whoo oanz aul the boats and baithing-cots at Foolwerth. He wauz a fisherman too start widh, but iz nou a man ov sum substans. He and hiz sun Willeyam run the biznes."

"Shal we wauc intoo Foolwerth and ce them?"

"On whaut pretext?"

"O, we can esily fiand a pretext. Aafter aul, this poor man did not il-use himcelf in this outrageous wa. Sum human hand wauz on the handel ov dhat skerj, if indede it wauz a skerj which inflicted the injurese. Hiz cerkel ov aqwaintancez in this loanly place wauz shuerly limmited. Let us follo it up in evvery direcshon and we can hardly fale too cum uppon the motive, which in tern shood lede us too the crimminal."

It wood hav bene a plezzant wauc acros the time-cented Dounz had our miandz not bene poizond bi the tradgedy we had witnest. The village ov Foolwerth lise in a hollo kerving in a cemmicerkel round the ba. Behiand the oald-fashond hamlet cevveral moddern housez hav bene bilt uppon the rising ground. It wauz too wun ov these dhat Stac'herst ghided me.

"Dhats The Haven, az Bellamy cauld it. The wun widh the corner tower and slate roofe. Not bad for a man whoo started widh nuthhing but---- Bi Jove, looc at dhat!"

The garden gate ov The Haven had opend and a man had emerjd. Dhare wauz no mistaking dhat taul, an'gular, stragling figgure. It wauz Eyan Merdoc, the mathematishan. A moment later we confrunted him uppon the rode.

"Hullo!" ced Stac'herst. The man nodded, gave us a ciadwase glaans from hiz cureyous darc ise, and wood hav paast us, but hiz principal poold him up.

"Whaut wer u doowing dhare?" he aasct.

Merdoc face flusht widh an'gher. "I am yor subordinate, cer, under yor roofe. I am not aware dhat I o u enny acount ov mi private acshonz."

Stac'hersts nervz wer nere the cerface aafter aul he had enjuerd. Utherwise, perhaps, he wood hav wated. Nou he lost hiz temper compleetly.

"In the cercumstaancez yor aancer iz pure impertinens, Mr. Merdoc."

"Yor one qweschon mite perhaps cum under the same hedding."

"This iz not the ferst time dhat I hav had too overlooc yor insubordinate wase. It wil certainly be the laast. U wil kiandly make fresh arainjments for yor fuchure az spedily az u can."

"I had intended too doo so. I hav lost too-da the oonly person whoo made The Gabelz habbitabel."

He strode of uppon hiz wa, while Stac'herst, with an'gry ise, stood glaring aafter him. "Iz he not an impscibel, intollerabel man?" he cride.

The wun thhing dhat imprest itcelf forcibly uppon mi miand wauz dhat Mr.

Eyan Merdoc wauz taking the ferst chaans too open a paath ov escape from the cene ov the crime. Suspishon, vaghe and nebbulous, wauz nou beghinning too take outline in mi miand. Perhaps the vizsit too the Bellamese mite thro sum ferther lite uppon the matter. Stac'herst poold himcelf tooghether and we went forward too the hous.

Mr. Bellamy pruivd too be a middel-aijd man with a flaming red beard. He ceemd too be in a verry an'gry moode, and hiz face wauz soone az florid az hiz hare.

"No, cer, I doo not desire enny particcularz. Mi sun here"--indicating a pouwerfool yung man, with a hevvy, sullen face, in the corner ov the citting-roome--"iz ov wun miand with me dhat Mr. McFersonz atenshonz too Maud wer insulting. Yes, cer, the werd marreyage wauz nevver menshond, and yet dhare wer letterz and metingz, and a grate dele moer ov which niather ov us cood aproove. She haz no muther, and we ar her oonly garjanz. We ar determiand----"

But the werdz wer taken from hiz mouth bi the aperans ov the lady hercelf. Dhare wauz no gainsaying dhat she wood hav graist enny acembly in the werld. Whoo cood hav imadgiand dhat so rare a flouwer wood gro from such a roote and in such an atmosfere? Wimmen hav celdom bene an atracshon too me, for mi brane haz aulwase guvvernd mi hart, but I cood not looc uppon her perfect clere-cut face, widh aul the soft freshnes ov the Dounlandz in her dellicate culloring, widhout reyalising dhat no yung man wood cros her paath unscaidhd. Such wauz the gherl whoo had poosht open the doer and stood nou, wide-ide and intens, in frunt ov Harrold Stac'herst.

"I no aulreddy dhat Fitzroi iz ded," she ced. "Doo not be afrade too tel me the particcularz."

"This uther gentelman ov yorz let us no the nuse," explaind the faather.

"Dhare iz no rezon whi mi cister shood be braut intoo the matter," grould the yun'gher man. The cister ternd a sharp, feers looc uppon him. "This iz mi biznes, Willeyam. Kiandly leve me too mannage it in mi one wa. Bi aul acounts dhare haz bene a crime comitted. If I can help too sho whoo did it, it iz the leest I can doo for him whoo iz gon."

She liscend too a short acount from mi companyon, widh a compoazd concentraishon which shode me dhat she posest strong carracter az wel az grate buty. Maud Bellamy wil aulwase remane in mi memmory az a moast complete and remarcabel woomman. It ceemz dhat she aulreddy nu  
me bi cite, for she ternd too me at the end.

"Bring them too justice, Mr. Hoamz. U hav mi cimpathhy and mi help, whoowevver dha ma be." It ceemd too me dhat she glaanst defiyantly at her faather and bruther az she spoke.

"Thanc u," ced I. "I vallu a woommanz instinct in such matterz. U use the werd dha.' U thhinc dhat moer dhan wun wauz concernd?"

"I nu Mr. McFerson wel enuf too be aware dhat he wauz a brave and a strong man. No cin'ghel person cood evver hav inflicted such an outrage uppon him."

"Mite I hav wun werd widh u alone?"

"I tel u, Maud, not too mix yorcelf up in the matter," cride her faather an'grily.

She looct at me helplesly. "Whaut can I doo?"

"The whole werld wil no the facts prezently, so dhare can be no harm if I discus them here," ced I. "I shood hav preferd privacy, but if yor faather wil not alou it, he must share the deliberaishonz." Then I spoke ov the note which had bene found in the ded manz pocket. "It iz shure too be projuest at the inqwest. Ma I aasc u too thro enny lite uppon it dhat u can?"

"I ce no rezon for mistery," she aancerd. "We wer en'gaijd too be marrede, and we oonly kept it ceecret becauz Fitzroiz unkel, whoo iz verry oald and ced too be diying, mite hav dicinherrited him if he had marrede against hiz wish. Dhare wauz no uther rezon."

"U cood hav toald us," groud Mr. Bellamy.

"So I wood, faather, if u had evver shone cimpathy."

"I obgett too mi gherl picking up widh men outside her one staishon."

"It wauz yor prejudice against him which prevented us from telling u.

Az too this apointment"--she fumbeld in her dres and projuest a crumpeld note--"it wauz in aancer too this."

"DEREST," ran the message: "The oald place on the beche just aafter suncet on Chuezda. It iz the oonly time I can ghet awa.--F.M."

"Chuezda wauz too-da, and I had ment too mete him too-nite."

I ternd over the paper. "This nevver came bi poast. Hou did u ghet it?"

"I wood raather not aancer dhat qweschon. It haz reyaly nuthhing too doo widh the matter which u ar investigating. But ennithhing which baerz uppon dhat I wil moast frely aancer."

She wauz az good az her werd, but dhare wauz nuthhing which wauz helpfool in our investigaishon. She had no rezon too thhinc dhat her feyaansa had enny hidden ennemy, but she admitted dhat she had had cevveral worm admirerz.

"Ma I aasc if Mr. Eyan Merdoc wauz wun ov them?"

She blusht and ceemd confuezd.

"Dhare wauz a time when I thaut he wauz. But dhat wauz aul chainjd when he understood the relaishonz betwene Fitzroi and micelf."

Agane the shaddo round this strainj man ceemd too me too be taking moer deffinite shape. Hiz reccord must be exammiand. Hiz ruimz must be

privaitly cercht. Stac'herst wauz a willing colaborator, for in hiz miand aulso suspishonz wer forming. We reternd from our vizsit too The Haven widh the hope dhat wun fre end ov this tan'gheld scane wauz aulreddy in our handz.

A weke paast. The inqwest had throne no lite uppon the matter and had bene agernd for ferther evvidens. Stac'herst had made discrete inqwiry about hiz subordinate, and dhare had bene a superfisal cerch ov hiz roome, but widhout rezult. Personaly, I had gon over the whole ground agane, boath fizensicaly and mentaly, but widh no nu concluezhonz. In aul mi cronnikelz the reder wil fiand no cace which braut me so compleetly too the limmit ov mi pouwerz. Even mi imaginaishon cood conceve no solueshon too the mistery. And then dhare came the incident ov the dog.

It wauz mi oald houskeper whoo herd ov it ferst bi dhat strainj wiarles bi which such pepel colect the nuse ov the cuntry-cide.

"Sad stoery this, cer, about Mr. McFersonz dog," ced she wun evening.

I doo not encurrage such conversaishonz, but the werdz arested mi atenshon.

"Whaut ov Mr. McFersonz dog?"

"Ded, cer. Dide ov grefe for its maaster."

"Whoo toald u this?"

"Whi, cer, evveriwun iz tauking ov it. It tooc on terribel, and haz eten nuthhing for a weke. Then too-da too ov the yung gentelmen from The Gabelz found it ded--doun on the beche, cer, at the verry place

whare its maaster met hiz end."

"At the verry place." The werdz stood out clere in mi memmory. Sum dim percepshon dhat the matter wauz vital rose in mi miand. Dhat the dog shood di wauz aafter the butifool, faithfool nachure ov dogz. But in the verry place! Whi shood this loanly beche be fatal too it? Wauz it poscibel dhat it aulso, had bene sacrificiast too sum revenjfool fude? Wauz it poscibel----? Yes, the percepshon wauz dim, but aulreddy sumthhing wauz bilding up in mi miand. In a fu minnuets I wauz on mi wa

too The Gabelz, whare I found Stac'herst in hiz studdy. At mi request he cent for Sudberry and Blount, the too schudents whoo had found the dog.

"Yes, it la on the verry ej ov the poole," ced wun ov them. "It must hav follode the trale ov its ded maaster."

I sau the faithfool littel crechure, an Aerdale terreyer, lade out uppon the mat in the haul. The boddy wauz stif and ridgid, the ise progecting, and the limz contorted. Dhare wauz agony in evvery line ov it.

From The Gabelz I wauct doun too the baithing-poole. The sun had sunc and the shaddo ov the grate clif la blac acros the wauter, which glimmerd dully like a shete ov led, The place wauz deserted and dhare wauz no cine ov life save for too ce-berdz cercling and screaming overhed. In the fading lite I cood dimly make out the littel dogz spoor uppon the sand round the verry roc on which hiz maasterz touwel had

bene lade. For a long time I stood in depe meditaishon while the shaddose groo darker around me. Mi miand wauz fild with racing thauts. U hav none whaut it wauz too be in a niatmare in which u fele dhat dhare iz sum aul-important thhing for which u cerch and which u no iz dhare, dho it remainz for evver just beyond yor reche. Dhat wauz hou I felt dhat evening az I stood alone bi dhat place

ov deth. Then at laast I ternd and wauct sloly hoamwordz. I had just reecht the top ov the paath when it came too me. Like a flash, I rememberd the thhing for which I had so egherly and vainly graaspt. U wil no, or Wautson haz ritten in vane, dhat I hoald a vaast stoer ov out-ov-the-wa nollej, widhout ciyentiffic cistem, but verry avalabel for the needz ov mi werc. Mi miand iz like a crouded box-roome widh packets ov aul sorts stode awa dharin--so menny dhat I ma wel hav but a vaghe percepshon ov whaut wauz dhare. I had none dhat dhare wauz sumthhing which mite bare uppon this matter. It wauz stil vaghe, but at leest I nu hou I cood make it clere. It wauz monstrous, increddibel, and yet it wauz aulwase a pocibility. I wood test it too the fool. Dhare iz a grate garret in mi littel hous which iz stuff widh boox. It wauz intoo this dhat I plunjd and rummaidj for an our. At the end ov dhat time I emerjyd widh a littel chocolate and cilver vollume. Egherly I ternd up the chapter ov which I had a dim remembrans. Yes, it wauz indede a far-fecht and unliacly proposishon, and yet I cood not be at rest until I had made shure if it mite, indede, be so. It wauz late when I retiard, widh mi miand egherly awating the werc ov the morro.

But dhat werc met widh an anoiying interupshon. I had hardly swaulode mi erly cup ov te and wauz starting for the beche when I had a caul from Inspector Bardy ov the Suscex Constabbulary--a steddy, sollid, bovine man widh thautfool ise, which looct at me nou widh a verry trubheld expreshon.

"I no yor imens expereyens, cer," ced he. "This iz qwite unnofishal, ov coers, and nede go no farther. But I am faerly up against it in this McFerson cace. The qweschon iz, shal I make an arest, or shal I not?"

"Mening Mr. Eyan Merdoc?"

"Yes, cer. Dhare iz reyaly no wun els when u cum too thhinc ov it.

Dhats the advaantage ov this sollichude. We narro it doun too a verry smaual cumpas. If he did not doo it, then whoo did?"

"Whaut hav u against him?"

He had gleend along the same furrose az I had. Dhare wauz Merdox carracter and the mistery which ceemd too hang round the man. Hiz fureyous bersts ov temper, az shone in the incident ov the dog. The fact dhat he had qworeld widh McFerson in the paast, and dhat dhare wauz sum rezon too thhinc dhat he mite hav resented hiz atenshonz too Mis Bellamy. He had aul mi points, but no fresh wunz, save dhat Merdoc ceemd too be making evvery preparaishon for deparchure.

"Whaut wood mi posishon be if I let him slip awa widh aul this evvidens against him?" The berly, flegmattic man wauz soerly trubbelld in hiz miand.

"Concidderr," I ced, "aul the ecenshal gaps in yor cace. On the morning ov the crime he can shuerly proove an allibi. He had bene widh hiz scollarz til the laast moment, and within a fu minnuets ov McFersonz aperans he came uppon us from behiand. Then bare in miand the absolute impocibillity dhat he cood cin'ghel-handed hav inflicted this outrage uppon a man qwite az strong az himself. Finaly, dhare iz this qweschon ov the instrooment widh which these injurese wer inflicted."

"Whaut cood it be but a skerj or flexibel whip ov sum sort?"

"Hav u exammiand the marx?" I aasct.

"I hav cene them. So haz the doctor."

"But I hav exammiand them verry caerfooly widh a lenz. Dha hav peculeyarritese."

"Whaut ar dha, Mr. Hoamz?"

I stept too mi buro and braut out an enlarjd fotograaf. "This iz mi method in such cacez," I explaind.

"U certainly doo thhingz thurroly, Mr. Hoamz."

"I shood hardly be whaut I am if I did not. Nou let us concidder this wele which extendz round the rite shoalder. Doo u observ nuthhing remarcabel?"

"I caant sa I doo."

"Shuerly it iz evvident dhat it iz unneeqwal in its intencity. Dhare iz a dot ov extravazated blud, here, and anuther dhare. Dhare ar cimmilar indicaishonz in this uther wele doun here. Whaut can dhat mene?"

"I hav no ideyaa. Hav u?"

"Perhaps I hav. Perhaps I havnt. I ma be abel too sa moer soone. Ennithhing which wil define whaut made dhat marc wil bring us a long wa toowordz the crimminal."

"It iz, ov coers, an abcerd ideyaa," ced the poleesman, "but if a red-hot net ov wire had bene lade acros the bac, then these better-marct points wood represent whare the meshez crost eche uther."

"A moast in'geenyous comparrison. Or shal we sa a verry stif cat-o'-nine-tailz widh smaul hard nots uppon it?"

"Bi Jove, Mr. Hoamz, I thhinc u hav hit it."

"Or dhare ma be sum verry different cauz, Mr. Bardy. But yor cace iz far too weke for an arest. Beciadz, we hav dhose laast werdz--Liyonz Mane."

"I hav wunderd whether Eyan----"

"Yes, I hav concidderd dhat. If the cecond werd had boern enny resemblans too Merdoc--but it did not. He gave it aulmoast in a shreke. I am shure dhat it wauz Mane."

"Hav u no aulternative, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Perhaps I hav. But I doo not care too discus it until dhare iz sumthhing moer sollid too discus."

"And when wil dhat be?"

"In an our--poscibly les."

The Inspector rubd hiz chin and looct at me widh jubeyous ise..

"I wish I cood ce whaut wauz in yor miand, Mr. Hoamz. Perhaps its dhose fishing-boats."

"No, no; dha wer too far out."

"Wel, then, iz it Bellamy and dhat big sun ov hiz? Dha wer not too swete uppon Mr. McFerson. Cood dha hav dun him a mischefe?"

"No, no; u woant drau me until I am reddy," ced I widh a smile.

"Nou, Inspector, we eche hav our one werc too doo. Perhaps if u wer too mete me here at midda----?"

So far we had got when dhare came the tremendous interupshon which wauz the beghinning ov the end. Mi outer doer wauz flung open, dhare wer blundering footsteps in the passage, and Eyan Merdoc staggherd intoo the roome, pallid, dishevvel, hiz cloadhz in wiald disorder, clauwing widh hiz bony handz at the fernichure too hoald himcelf erect. "Brandy! Brandy!" he gaaspt, and fel groning uppon the sofaa.

He wauz not alone. Behiand him came Stac'herst, hatles and panting, aulmoast az distrate az hiz companyon.

"Yes, yes, brandy!" he cride. "The man iz at hiz laast gaasp. It wauz aul I cood doo too bring him here. He fainted twice uppon the wa."

Haaf a tumbler ov the rau spirrit braut about a wondrous chainj. He poosht himcelf up on wun arm and swung hiz cote from of hiz shoalderz. "For Godz sake! oil, opeyum, morfeyaa!" he cride. "Ennithing too ese this infernal aggonny!"

The Inspector and I cride out at the cite. Dhare, cris-crost uppon the manz naked shoalder, wauz the same strainj reticculated pattern ov red, inflaimd lianz which had bene the deth-marc ov Fitzroi McFerson.

The pane wauz evvidently terribel and wauz moer dhan local, for the suffererz breething wood stop for a time, hiz face wood tern blac, and then widh loud gaasps he wood clap hiz hand too hiz hart, while hiz brou dropt beedz ov swet. At enny moment he mite di. Moer and moer brandy wauz poerd down hiz throte, eche fresh doce bringing him bac too life. Padz ov cotton-wool soact in sallad-oil ceemd too take the aggonny from the strainj wuindz. At laast hiz hed fel hevvely uppon the cooshon. Exhausted Nachure had taken reffuge in its laast stoerhous ov vitallity. It wauz haaf a slepe and haaf a faint, but at leest it wauz ese from pane.

Too qweschon him had bene imposcibel, but the moment we wer ashuerd  
ov  
hiz condishon Stac'herst ternd uppon me.

"Mi God!" he cride, "whaut iz it, Hoamz? Whaut iz it?"

"Whare did u fiand him?"

"Doun on the beche. Exactly whare poor McFerson met hiz end. If this  
manz hart had bene weke az McFersonz wauz, he wood not be here nou.  
Moer dhan wuns I thaut he wauz gon az I braut him up. It wauz too  
far too The Gabelz, so I made for u."

"Did u ce him on the beche?"

"I wauz wauking on the clif when I herd hiz cri. He wauz at the ej  
ov the wauter, reling about like a drunken man. I ran doun, throo sum  
cloadhz about him, and braut him up. For Hevvenz sake, Hoamz, use  
aul the pouwerz u hav and spare no painz too lift the kers from this  
place, for life iz becumming unenjurabel. Can u, widh aul yor  
werld-wide reputaishon, doo nuthhing for us?"

"I thhinc I can, Stac'herst. Cum widh me nou! And u, Inspector,  
cum along! We wil ce if we canot delivver this merderer intoo yor  
handz."

Leving the unconshous man in the charj ov mi houskeper, we aul  
thre went doun too the dedly lagoon. On the shin'ghel dhare wauz piald  
a  
littel hepe ov touwelz and cloadhz, left bi the stricken man. Sloly I  
wauct round the ej ov the wauter, mi comraidz in Injan file behiand  
me. Moast ov the poole wauz qwite shallo, but under the clif whare the  
beche wauz hollode out it wauz foer or five fete depe. It wauz too this  
part dhat a swimmer wood natchuraly go, for it formd a butifool

pelucid grene poole az clere az cristal. A line ov rox la abuv it at the bace ov the clif, and along this I led the wa, pering egherly intoo the depths beneeth me. I had reecht the depest and stillest poole when mi ise caut dhat for which dha wer cerching, and I berst intoo a shout ov triyumf.

"Cyanea!" I cride. "Cyanea! Behoald the Liyonz Mane!"

The strainj obgett at which I pointed did indede looc like a tan'gheld mas toern from the mane ov a liyon. It la uppon a rocky shelf sum thre fete under the wauter, a cureyous waving, viabrating, hary crechure widh streex ov silver amung its yello trescez. It pulsated widh a slo, hevvy dilaishon and contracshon.

"It haz dun mischefe enuf. Its da iz over!" I cride. "Help me, Stac'herst! Let us end the merderer for evver."

Dhare wauz a big boalder just abuv the lej, and we poosht it until it fel widh a tremendous splash intoo the wauter. When the rippelz had cleerd we sau dhat it had cetteld uppon the lej belo. Wun flapping ej ov yello membrane snode dhat our victim wauz beneeth it. A thhic oily scum uizd out from belo the stone and staid the wauter round, rising sloly too the cerface.

"Wel, this ghets me!" cride the Inspector. "Whaut wauz it, Mr. Hoamz? Ime born and bred in these parts, but I nevver sau such a thhing. It doant belong too Suscex."

"Just az wel for Suscex," I remarct. "It ma hav bene the south-west gale dhat braut it up. Cum bac too mi hous, boath ov u, and I wil ghiv u the terribel expereyens ov wun whoo haz good rezon too remember hiz one meting widh the same perril ov the cese."

When we reecht mi studdy, we found dhat Merdoc wauz so far recuverd dhat he cood cit up. He wauz daizd in miand, and evvery nou and then wauz shaken bi a parroxizm ov pane. In broken werdz he explaind dhat he had no noashon whaut had okerd too him, save dhat teriffic pangz had suddenly shot throo him, and dhat it had taken aul hiz fortichude too reche the banc.

"Here iz a booc," I ced, taking up the littel vollume, "which ferst braut lite intoo whaut mite hav bene for evver darc. It iz "Out ov Doerz", bi the famous observer J. G. Wood. Wood himcelf verry neerly perrisht from contact widh this vile crechure, so he rote widh a verry fool nollej. *Cyanea capillata* iz the miscreyants fool name, and he can be az dain'gerous too life az, and far moer painfool dhan, the bite ov the coabraa. Let me breefly ghiv this extract.

"If the baither shood ce a looce roundish mas ov tauny membrainz and fiberz, sumthhing like verry larj handfoolz ov liyonz mane and cilver paper, let him beware, for this iz the feerfool stinger, *Cyanea capillata*.' Cood our cinnister aqwaintans be moer cleerly descriabd?

"He gose on too tel hiz one encounter widh wun when swimming of the coast ov Kent. He found dhat the crechure rajated aulmoast invizibel fillaments too the distans ov fifty fete, and dhat enniwun within dhat circumferens from the dedly center wauz in dain'ger ov deth. Even at a distans the efect uppon Wood wauz aulmoast fatal. The multichudinous thredz cauzd lite scarlet lianz uppon the skin which on clocer examinaishon rezolvd intoo minute dots or puschuelz, eche dot charjd az it wer widh a red-hot nedel making its wa throo the nervz.'

"The local pane wauz, az he explainz, the leest part ov the exqwizsite torment. Pangz shot throo the chest, causing me too faul az if

struc bi a boullet. The pulsaishon wood cece, and then the hart wood ghiv cix or cevven leeps az if it wood foers its wa throo the chest.'

"It neerly kild him, auldho he had oanly bene expoazd too it in the disterbd oashan and not in the narro caam wauterz ov a baithing-poole. He cez dhat he cood hardly reccognise himcelf aafterwordz, so white, rinkeld and shrivveld wauz hiz face. He gulpt doun brandy, a whole bottelfool, and it ceemz too hav saivd hiz life. Dhare iz the booc, Inspector. I leve it widh u, and u canot dout dhat it containz a fool explanaishon ov the tradgedy ov poor McFerson."

"And incidentaly exoneraits me," remarct Eyan Merdoc widh a ri smile. "I doo not blame u, Inspector, nor u, Mr. Hoamz, for yor suspishonz wer natchural. I fele dhat on the verry eve ov mi arest I hav oanly cleerd micelf bi sharing the fate ov mi poor frend."

"No, Mr. Merdoc. I wauz aulreddy uppon the trac, and had I bene out az erly az I intended I mite wel hav saivd u from this terriffic expereyens."

"But hou did u no, Mr. Hoamz?"

"I am an omnivvorous reder widh a strainjly retentive memmory for trifelz. Dhat frase Liyonz Mane haunted mi miand. I nu dhat I had cene it sumwhare in an unnexpected context. U hav cene dhat it duz describe the crechure. I hav no dout dhat it wauz floting on the wauter when McFerson sau it, and dhat this frase wauz the oanly wun bi which he cood conva too us a warning az too the crechure which had bene hiz deth."

"Then I, at leest, am cleerd," ced Merdoc, rising sloly too hiz fete. "Dhare ar wun or too werdz ov explanaishon which I shood ghiv, for I no the direcshon in which yor inqwirese hav run. It iz troo

dhat I luvd this lady, but from the da when she chose mi frend McFerson mi wun desire wauz too help her too happines. I wauz wel content too stand acide and act az dhare go-betwene. Often I carrede dhare messagez, and it wauz becauz I wauz in dhare confidens and becauz she wauz so dere too me dhat I hacend too tel her ov mi frendz deth, lest sumwun shood foerstaul me in a moer sudden and hartles manner. She wood not tel u, cer, ov our relaishonz lest u shood disaproove and I mite suffer. But widh yor leve I must tri too ghet bac too The Gabelz, for mi bed wil be verry welcum."

Stac'herst held out hiz hand. "Our nervz hav aul bene at concert-pich," ced he. "Forghiv whaut iz paast, Merdoc. We shal understand eche uther better in the fuchure." Dha paast out tooggether widh dhare armz linct in frendly fashon. The Inspector remaind, staring at me in cilens widh hiz ox-like ise.

"Wel, uve dun it!" he cride at laast. "I had red ov u, but I nevver beleevd it. Its wunderfool!"

I wauz foerst too shake mi hed. Too axept such prase wauz too lower wunz one standardz.

"I wauz slo at the outcet--culpably slo. Had the boddy bene found in the wauter I cood hardly hav mist it. It wauz the touwel which misled me. The poor fello had nevver thaut too dri himcelf, and so I in tern wauz led too beleve dhat he had nevver bene in the wauter. Whi, then, shood the atac ov enny wauter crechure sugest itcelf too me? Dhat wauz whare I went astra. Wel, wel, Inspector, I often venchuerd too chaaf u gentelmen ov the polece foers, but *Cyanea capillata* verry neerly avenjd Scotland Yard."

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE VAILED LODGER

When wun considderz dhat Mr. Sherloc Hoamz wauz in active practice for twenty-thre yeerz, and dhat juring cevventene ov these I wauz aloud too co-operate widh him and too kepe noats ov hiz doowingz, it wil be clere dhat I hav a mas ov matereyal at mi comaand. The problem haz aulwase bene, not too fiand, but too chuse. Dhare iz the long ro ov yere-boox which fil a shelf, and dhare ar the dispach-cacez fild widh doccuments, a perfect qwory for the schudent, not oonly ov crime, but ov the soashal and ofishal scandalz ov the late Victoereyan eraa. Concerning these latter, I ma sa dhat the riterz ov aggoniazd letterz, whoo beg dhat the onnor ov dhare fammilese or the reputaishon ov famous forbaerz ma not be tucht, hav nuthhing too fere. The discredishon and hi cens ov profeshonal onnor which hav aulwase distin'gwisht mi frend ar stil at werc in the chois ov these memwarz, and no confidens wil be abuezd. I deprecate, houwevver, in the stron'ghest wa the atempts which hav bene made laitley too ghet at and too destroi these paperz. The soers ov these outragez iz none, and if dha ar repeted I hav Mr. Hoamsez authorrity for saying dhat the whole stoery concerning the politishan, the liat'hous and the traird cormorant wil be ghivven too the public. Dhare iz at leest wun reder whoo wil understand.

It iz not rezonabel too suppose dhat evvery wun ov these cacez gave Hoamz the oportchunity ov showing dhose cureyous ghifts ov instinct and observaishon which I hav endevvord too cet foerth in these memwarz. Sumtiamz he had widh much effort too pic the froote, sumtiamz it fel esily intoo hiz lap. But the moast terribel human tradgedese wer often involvd in these cacez which braut him the fuwest personal oportchunitese, and it iz wun ov these which I nou desire too record. In telling it, I hav made a slite chainj ov name and place, but

urtherwise the facts ar az stated.

Wun foernoone--it wauz late in 1896--I receevd a hurrede note from Hoamz aasking for mi attendans. When I ariavd, I found him ceted in a smoke-laden atmosfere, widh an elderly, mutherly woomman ov the buxom landlady tipe in the coresponding chare in frunt ov him.

"This iz Mrs. Merrilo, ov South Brixton," ced mi frend, widh a wave ov the hand. "Mrs. Merrilo duz not obgett too tobacco, Wautson, if u wish too indulj yor filthhy habbits. Mrs. Merrilo haz an interesting stoery too tel which ma wel lede too ferther devellopments in which yor prezsens ma be uesfool."

"Ennithhing I can doo----"

"U wil understand, Mrs. Merrilo, dhat if I cum too Mrs. Ronder I shoold prefer too hav a witnes. U wil make her understand dhat befoer we arive."

"Lord bles u, Mr. Hoamz," ced our vizsitor, "she iz dhat ancshous too ce u dhat u mite bring the whole parrish at yor heelz!"

"Then we shal cum erly in the aafternoone. Let us ce dhat we hav our facts corect befoer we start. If we go over them it wil help Dr. Wautson too understand the cichuwaishon. U sa dhat Mrs. Ronder haz bene yor lodger for cevven yeerz and dhat u hav oanly wuns cene her face."

"And I wish too God I had not!" ced Mrs. Merrilo.

"It wauz, I understand, terribly mutilated."

"Wel, Mr. Hoamz, u wood hardly sa it wauz a face at aul. Dhats

hou it looct. Our milcman got a glimps ov her wuns peping out ov the upper windo, and he dropt hiz tin and the milc aul over the frunt garden. Dhat iz the kiand ov face it iz. When I sau her--I happend on her unnawaerz--she cuvverd up qwic, and then she ced, Nou, Mrs. Merrilo, u no at laast whi it iz dhat I nevver rase mi vale."

"Doo u no ennithhing about her history?"

"Nuthhing at aul."

"Did she ghiv refferencez when she came?"

"No, cer, but she gave hard cash, and plenty ov it. A qworterz rent rite doun on the tabel in advaans and no arguwing about termz. In these tiamz a poor woomman like me caant afoerd too tern doun a chaans like dhat."

"Did she ghiv enny rezon for chusing yor hous?"

"Mine standz wel bac from the rode and iz moer private dhan moast. Then, agane, I oonly take the wun, and I hav no fammily ov mi one. I recon she had tride utherz and found dhat mine suted her best. Its privacy she iz aafter, and she iz reddy too pa for it."

"U sa dhat she nevver shode her face from ferst too laast save on the wun axidental ocaizhon. Wel, it iz a verry remarcabel stoery, moast remarcabel, and I doant wunder dhat u waunt it exammiand."

"I doant, Mr. Hoamz. I am qwite sattisfide so long az I ghet mi rent. U cood not hav a qwiyeter lodger, or wun whoo ghivz-les trubbel."

"Then whaut haz braut matterz too a hed?"

"Her helth, Mr. Hoamz. She ceemz too be waisting awa. And dhaerz sumthhing terribel on her miand. Merder!' she crise. Merder!' And wuns I herd her, U croowel beest! U monster!' she cride. It wauz in the nite, and it fare rang throo the hous and cent the shivverz throo me. So I went too her in the morning. 'Mrs. Ronder,' I cez, if u hav ennithhing dhat iz trubling yor sole, dhaerz the clergy,' I cez, and dhaerz the polece. Betwene them u shood ghet sum help.' For Godz sake, not the polece!' cez she, and the clergy caant chainj whaut iz paast. And yet,' she cez, it wood ese mi miand if sumwun nu the truth befoer I dide.' Wel,' cez I, if u woant hav the reggularz, dhare iz this detective man whaut we rede about--begghin yor pardon, Mr. Hoamz. And she, she fare jumt at it. Dhats the man,' cez she. 'I wunder I nevver thaut ov it befoer. Bring him here, Mrs. Merrilo, and if he woant cum, tel him I am the wife ov Ronderz wiald beest sho. Sa dhat, and ghiv him the name Abbas Parvaa.' Here it iz az she rote it, Abbas Parvaa. Dhat wil bring him, if hese the man I thhinc he iz."

"And it wil, too," remarct Hoamz. "Verry good, Mrs. Merrilo. I shood like too hav a littel chat widh Dr. Wautson. Dhat wil carry us til lunch-time. About thre oacloc u ma expect too ce us at yor hous in Brixton."

Our vizsitor had no sooner waudeld out ov the roome--no uther verb can describe Mrs. Merrilose method ov progreshon--dhan Sherloc Hoamz throo himcelf widh feers ennergy uppon the pile ov commonplace boox in the corner. For a fu minnuets dhare wauz a constant swish ov the leevz, and then widh a grunt ov satisfacshon he came uppon whaut he saut. So exited wauz he dhat he did not rise, but sat uppon the floer like sum strainj Booddaa, widh crost legz, the huge boox aul round him, and wun open uppon hiz nese.

"The cace wurrede me at the time, Wautson. Here ar mi marginal noats too prove it. I confes dhat I cood make nuthhing ov it. And yet I wauz

convinst dhat the coroner wauz rong. Hav u no recolecshon ov the Abbas Parvaa tradgedy?"

"Nun, Hoamz."

"And yet u wer widh me then. But certainly mi one impreshon wauz verry superfisal, for dhare wauz nuthhing too go bi, and nun ov the partese had en'gaijd mi cervicez. Perhaps u wood care too rede the paperz?"

"Cood u not ghiv me the points?"

"Dhat iz verry esily dun. It wil probbably cum bac too yor memmory az I tauc. Ronder, ov coers, wauz a hous'hoald werd. He wauz the rival ov Wuimwel, and ov Sanger, wun ov the gratest shomen ov hiz da. Dhare iz evvidens, houwevver, dhat he tooc too drinc, and dhat both he and hiz sho wer on the doun grade at the time ov the grate tradgedy. The carravan had haulted for the nite at Abbas Parvaa, which iz a smaull village in Barcshire, when this horror okerd. Dha wer on dhare wa too Wimbeldon, travveling bi rode, and dha wer cimply camping, and not exhibbiting, az the place iz so smaull a wun dhat it wood not hav pade them too open.

"Dha had amung dhare exhibbits a verry fine North African liyon. Sahaaraa King wauz its name, and it wauz the habbit, both ov Ronder and hiz wife, too ghiv exhibshonz incide its cage. Here, u ce, iz a fotograaf ov the performans, bi which u wil perceve dhat Ronder wauz a huge porcine person and dhat hiz wife wauz a verry magnificent woomman. It wauz depoazd at the inqwest dhat dhare had bene sum cianz dhat the liyon wauz dain'gerous, but, az uezhuwal, familyarrity begat contempt, and no notice wauz

taken ov the fact.

"It wauz uezhuwal for iather Ronder or hiz wife too fede the liyon at nite. Sumtiamz wun went, sumtiamz boath, but dha nevver aloud enniwun els too doo it, for dha beleevd dhat so long az dha wer the foode-carreyerz he wood regard them az benefactorz, and wood nevver molest them. On this particcular nite, cevven yeerz ago, dha boath went, and a verry terribel happening follode, the detailz ov which hav nevver bene made clere.

"It ceemz dhat the whole camp wauz rouzd nere midnite bi the roerz ov the annimal and the screemz ov the woomman. The different grumz and *employase* rusht from dhare tents, carreying lanternz, and bi dhare lite an aufool cite wauz reveeld. Ronder la, with the bac ov hiz hed crusht in and depe clau-marx acros hiz scalp, sum ten yardz from the cage, which wauz open. Cloce too the doer ov the cage la Mrs. Ronder, uppon her bac, with the crechure sqwauting and snarling abuv her. It had toern her face in such a fashon dhat it wauz nevver thaut dhat she cood liv. Cevveral ov the cercus men, hedded bi Leyonardo, the strongman, and Grigz, the cloun, drove the crechure of widh poalz, uppon which it sprang bac intoo the cage, and wauz at wuns loct in. Hou it had got looce wauz a mistery. It wauz con'gecchuerd dhat the pare intended too enter the cage, but dhat when the doer wauz luist the crechure bounded out uppon them. Dhare wauz no uther point ov interest in the evvidens, save dhat the woomman in a delereyum ov agony kept screaming, Couward! Couward!' az she wauz carrede bac too the van in which dha livd. It wauz cix munths befoer she wauz fit too ghiv evvidens, but the inqwest wauz july held, with the obveyous verdict ov deth from misadvenchure."

"Whaut aulternative cood be conceevd?" ced I.

"U ma wel sa so. And yet dhare wer wun or too points which

wurrede yung Edmundz, ov the Barcshire Constabulary. A smart lad dhat! He wauz cent later too Allahabad. Dhat wauz hou I came intoo the matter, for he dropt in and smoact a pipe or too over it."

"A thhin, yello-haerd man?"

"Exactly. I wauz shure u wood pic up the trale prezently."

"But whaut wurrede him?"

"Wel, we wer boath wurrede. It wauz so juestly difficult too reconstruct the afare. Looc at it from the liyonz point ov vu. He iz libberated. Whaut duz he doo? He taix haaf a duzen boundz forward, which bringz him too Ronder. Ronder ternz too fli,--the clau-marx wer on the bac ov hiz hed--but the liyon striax him doun. Then, insted ov bounding on and escaping, he reternz too the woomman, whoo wauz cloce too the cage, and he nox her over and chuse her face up. Then, agane, dhose crise ov herz wood ceme too impli dhat her huzband had in sum wa faild her. Whaut cood the poor devvil hav dun too help her? U ce the difficulty?"

"Qwite."

"And then dhare wauz anuther thhing. It cumz bac too me nou az I thhinc it over. Dhare wauz sum evvidens dhat, just at the time the liyon roerd and the woomman screemd, a man began shouting in terror."

"This man Ronder, no dout."

"Wel, if hiz scul wauz smasht in u wood hardly expect too here from him agane. Dhare wer at leest too witnecez whoo spoke ov the crise ov a man beying min'gheld widh dhose ov a woomman."

"I shood thhinc the whole camp wauz criering out bi then. Az too the uther points, I thhinc I cood sugest a solueshon."

"I shood be glad too concidder it."

"The too wer toogheter, ten yardz from the cage, when the liyon got looce. The man ternd and wauz struc down. The woomman conceevd the ideyaa ov ghetting intoo the cage and shutting the doer. It wauz her oanly reffuge. She made for it, and just az she reecht it the beest bounded aafter her and noct her over. She wauz an'gry widh her huzband for havving encurraijd the beests rage bi terning. If dha had faist it, dha mite hav cood it. Hens her crise ov Couward!"

"Brilleyant, Wautson! Oanly wun flau in yor dimond."

"Whaut iz the flau, Hoamz?"

"If dha wer boath ten pacez from the cage, hou came the beest too ghet looce?"

"Iz it poscibel dhat dha had sum ennemy whoo luist it?"

"And whi shood it atac them savvaijly when it wauz in the habbit ov playing widh them, and doowing trix widh them incide the cage?"

"Poscibly the same ennemy had dun sumthhing too enrage it."

Hoamz looct thautfool and remaind in cilens for sum moments.

"Wel, Wautson, dhare iz this too be ced for yor ththeyory. Ronder wauz a man ov menny ennemese. Edmundz toald me dhat in hiz cups he wauz horribel.

A huge boolly ov a man, he kerst and slasht at evveriwun whoo came in hiz wa. I expect dhose crise about a monster, ov which our vizsitor

haz spoken, wer nocturnal reminiscencez ov the dere departed. Houwevver, our speculaishonz ar futile until we hav aul the facts. Dhare iz a coald partrij on the ciadboerd, Wautson, and a bottel ov Montrasha. Let us renu our ennergese befoer we make a fresh caul uppon them."

When our hansom depozsited us at the hous ov Mrs. Merrilo, we found dhat plump lady blocking up the open doer ov her humbel but retiard abode. It wauz verry clere dhat her chefe preyoccupaishon wauz lest she shood loose a vallubel lodger, and she imploerd us, befoer showing us up, too sa and doo nuthhing which cood lede too so undesirabel an end. Then, havving reyashuerd her, we follode her up the strate, badly-carpeted staercace and wer shone intoo the roome ov the mistereyous lodger.

It wauz a cloce, musty, il-ventilated place, az mite be expected, cins its inmate celdom left it. From keping beests in a cage, the woomman ceemd, bi sum retribueshon ov Fate, too hav becum hercelf a beest in a cage. She sat nou in a broken arm-chare in the shaddowy corner ov the roome. Long yeerz ov inacshon had coerced the lianz ov her figgure, but at sum pereyod it must hav bene butifool, and wauz stil fool and volupshous. A thhic darc vale cuvverd her face, but it wauz cut of cloce at her upper lip, and discloazd a perfectly-shaipt mouth and a dellicaitly-rounded chin. I cood wel conceve dhat she had indede bene a verry remarcabel woomman. Her vois, too, wauz wel-modjulated and plesing.

"Mi name iz not unfamilleyar too u, Mr. Hoamz," ced she. "I thaut dhat it wood bring u."

"Dhat iz so, maddam, dho I doo not no hou u ar aware dhat I wauz interested in yor cace."

"I lerned it when I had recuverd mi helth and wauz exammiand bi Mr. Edmundz, the County detective. I fere I lide too him. Perhaps it wood hav bene wiser had I toald the truith."

"It iz uezhuwaly wiser too tel the truith. But whi did u li too him?"

"Becauz the fate ov sumwun els depended uppon it. I no dhat he wauz a verry werthles beying, and yet I wood not hav hiz destrucshon uppon mi consens. We had bene so cloce--so cloce!"

"But haz this impeddiment bene remuivd?"

"Yes, cer. The person dhat I alude too iz ded."

"Then whi shood u not nou tel the polece ennithhing u no?"

"Becauz dhare iz anuther person too be concidderd. Dhat uther person iz micelf. I cood not stand the scandal and publiscity which wood cum from a polece examinaishon. I hav not long too liv, but I wish too di undisterbd. And yet I waunted too fiand wun man ov jujment too whoome  
I cood tel mi terribel stoery, so dhat when I am gon aul mite be understood."

"U compliment me, maddam. At the same time, I am a responcebel person. I doo not prommice u dhat when u hav spoken I ma not micelf thhinc it mi juty too refer the cace too the polece."

"I thhinc not, Mr. Hoamz. I no yor carracter and methodz too wel, for I hav follode yor werc for sum yeerz. Reding iz the oonly plezhure which Fate haz left me, and I mis littel which paacez in the world. But in enny cace, I wil take mi chaans ov the uce which u ma make ov mi tradgedy. It wil ese mi miand too tel it."

"Mi frend and I wood be glad too here it."

The woomman rose and tooc from a drauwer the fotograaf ov a man. He wauz cleerly a profeshonal acrobat, a man ov magnificent fiseke, taken widh hiz huge armz foalded acros hiz swollen chest and a smile braking from under hiz hevvy moostaash--the celf-sattisfide smile ov the man ov menny conqwests.

"Dhat iz Leyonardo," she ced.

"Leyonardo, the strongman, whoo gave evvidens?"

"The same. And this--this iz mi huzband."

It wauz a dredfool face--a human pig, or raather a human wiald boer, for it wauz formiddabel in its beschallity. Wun cood imadgine dhat vile mouth champing and foming in its rage, and wun cood conceve dhose smaul, vishous ise darting pure malignancy az dha looct foerth uppon the werld, Ruffeyan, boolly, beest--it wauz aul ritten on dhat hevvy-jould face.

"Dhose too picchuerz wil help u, gentelmen, too understand the stoery. I wauz a poor cercus gherl braut up on the saudust, and doowing springz throo the hoope befoer I wauz ten. When I became a woomman this man luvd me, if such lust az hiz can be cauld luv, and in an evil moment I became hiz wife. From dhat da I wauz in hel, and he the devvil whoo tormented me. Dhare wauz no wun in the sho whoo did not no ov hiz treetment. He deserted me for utherz. He tide me doun and lasht me widh hiz riding-whip when I complaind. Dha aul pittede me and dha aul loadhd him, but whaut cood dha doo? Dha feerd him, wun and aul. For he wauz terribel at aul tiamz, and merderous when he wauz drunc. Agane and agane he wauz had for asault, and for croowelty too the beests,

but he had plenty ov munny and the fianz wer nuthhing too him. The best men aul left us and the sho began too go dounhil. It wauz oanly Leyonardo and I whoo kept it up--widh littel Gimmy Grigz, the cloun. Poor devvil, he had not much too be funny about, but he did whaut he cood too hoald thhingz tooghether.

"Then Leyonardo came moer and moer intoo mi life. U ce whaut he wauz like. I no nou the poor spirrit dhat wauz hidden in dhat splendid boddy, but compaerd too mi huzband he ceemd like the Ain'gel Gaibreyel. He pittede me and helpt me, til at laast our intimacy ternd too luv--depe, depe, pashonate luv, such luv az I had dreemd ov but nevver hoapt too fele. Mi huzband suspected it, but I thhinc dhat he wauz a couward az wel az a boolly, and dhat Leyonardo wauz the wun man dhat he wauz afrade ov. He tooc revenj in hiz one wa bi torchuring me moer dhan evver. Wun nite mi crise braut Leyonardo too the doer ov our van. We wer nere tradgedy dhat nite, and soone mi luvver and I understood dhat it cood not be avoided. Mi huzband wauz not fit too liv. We pland dhat he shood di.

"Leyonardo had a clevver, skeming brane. It wauz he whoo pland it. I doo not sa dhat too blame him, for I wauz reddy too go widh him evvery inch ov the wa. But I shood nevver hav had the wit too thhinc ov such a plan. We made a club--Leyonardo made it--and in the ledde hed he faacend five long stele nailz, the points outwordz, widh just such a spread az the liyonz pau. This wauz too ghiv mi huzband hiz deth-blo, and yet too leve the evvidens dhat it wauz the liyon which we wood looce whoo had dun the dede.

"It wauz a pich-darc nite when mi huzband and I went down, az wauz our custom, too fede the beast. We carrede widh us the rau mete in a sinc

pale. Leyonardo wauz wating at the corner ov the big van which we shood hav too paas befoer we reecht the cage. He wauz too slo, and we wauct paast him befoer he cood strike, but he follode us on tipto and I herd the crash az the club smasht mi huzbandz scul. Mi hart leept widh joi at the sound. I sprang forword, and I undid the cach which held the doer ov the grate liyonz cage.

"And then the terribel thhing happend. U ma hav herd hou qwic these crechuerz ar too cent human blud, and hou it exiats them. Sum strainj instinct had toald the crechure in wun instant dhat a human beying had bene slane. Az I slipt the barz it bounded out, and wauz on me in an instant. Leyonardo cood hav saivd me. If he had rusht forword and struc the beest widh hiz club he mite hav coud it. But the man lost hiz nerv. I herd him shout in hiz terror, and then I sau him tern and fli. At the same instant the teeth ov the liyon met in mi face. Its hot, filthhy breth had aulreddy poizond me and I wauz hardly conshous ov pane. Widh the paamz ov mi handz I tride too poosh the grate steming, blud-staind jauz awa from me, and I screemd for help. I wauz conshous dhat the camp wauz sturing, and then dimly I remember a groope ov men, Leyonardo, Grigz and utherz, dragghing me from under the crechuerz pauz. Dhat wauz mi laast memmory, Mr. Hoamz, for menny a wery munth. When I came too micelf, and sau micelf in the mirror, I kerst dhat liyon--o, hou I kerst him!---not becauz he had toern awa mi buty, but becauz he had not toern awa mi life. I had but wun desire, Mr. Hoamz, and I had enuf munny too grattifi it. It wauz dhat I shood cuvver micelf so dhat mi poor face shood be cene bi nun, and dhat I shood dwel whare nun whoome I had evver none shood fiand me. Dhat wauz aul dhat wauz left too me too doo--and dhat iz whaut I hav dun. A poor wuinded beest dhat haz crauld intoo its hole too di--dhat iz the end ov Ugeenyaa Ronder."

We sat in cilens for sum time aafter the unhappy woomman had toald her

stoery. Then Hoamz strecht out hiz long arm and patted her hand widh such a sho ov cimpathy az I had celdom none him too exhibbit.

"Poor gherl!" he ced. "Poor gherl! The wase ov Fate ar indede hard too understand. If dhare iz not sum compensaishon heraafter, then the werld iz a croowel gest. But whaut ov this man Leyonardo?"

"I nevver sau him or herd from him agane. Perhaps I hav bene rong too fele so bitterly against him. He mite az soone hav luvd wun ov the freex whoome we carrede round the cuntry az the thhing which the liyon had left. But a woommanz luv iz not so esily cet acide. He had left me under the beests clauz, he had deserted me in mi nede, and yet I cood not bring micelf too ghiv him too the gallose. For micelf, I caerd nuthhing whaut became ov me. Whaut cood be moer dredfool dhan mi acchuwal life? But I stood betwene Leyonardo and hiz fate."

"And he iz ded?"

"He wauz dround laast munth when baithing nere Margate. I sau hiz deth in the paper."

"And whaut did he doo widh this five-claud club, which iz the moast cin'gular and in'geenyous part ov aul yor stoery?"

"I canot tel, Mr. Hoamz. Dhare iz a chauc-pit bi the camp, widh a depe grene poole at the bace ov it. Perhaps in the depths ov dhat poole----"

"Wel, wel, it iz ov littel conceqwens nou. The cace iz cloazd."

"Yes," ced the woomman, "the cace iz cloazd."

We had risen too go, but dhare wauz sumthhing in the woommanz vois which arested Hoamsez atenshon. He ternd swiftly uppon her.

"Yor life iz not yor one," he ced. "Kepe yor handz of it."

"Whaut uce iz it too enniwun?"

"Hou can u tel? The exaampel ov paishent suffering iz in itcelf the moast preshous ov aul lessonz too an impaishent werld."

The woommanz aancer wauz a terribel wun. She raizd her vale and stept forword intoo the lite.

"I wunder if u wood bare it," she ced.

It wauz horribel. No werdz can describe the fraimwerc ov a face when the face itcelf iz gon. Too livving and butifool broun ise loocking sadly out from dhat grizly roowin did but make the vu moer afool. Hoamz held up hiz hand in a geschure ov pitty and protest, and tooggether we left the roome.

Too dase later, when I cauld uppon mi frend, he pointed widh sum pride too a smaul blu bottel uppon hiz mantelpece. I pict it up. Dhare wauz a red poizon label. A plezzant almondy odor rose when I opend it.

"Pruscic ascid?" ced I.

"Exactly. It came bi poast. 'I cend u mi temptaishon. I wil follo yor advice.' Dhat wauz the message. I thhinc, Wautson, we can ghes the name ov the brave woomman whoo cent it."

## THE ADVENCHURE OV SHOSCOME OALD PLACE

Sherloc Hoamz had bene bending for a long time over a lo-pouwer miacroscope. Nou he stratend himself up and looct round at me in triyumf.

"It iz glu, Wautson," ced he. "Unqweschonably it iz glu. Hav a looc at these scatterd obgets in the feeld!"

I stuipt too the ipece and focust for mi vizhon.

"Dhose haerz ar thredz from a twede cote. The ireggular gra mascez ar dust. Dhare ar epithheleyal scailz on the left. Dhose broun blobz in the center ar undoutedly glu."

"Wel," I ced, laafing, "I am prepaerd too take yor werd for it. Duz ennithhing depend uppon it?"

"It iz a verry fine demonstraishon," he aancerd. "In the St. Pancras cace u ma remember dhat a cap wauz found beside the ded poleesman. The acuezd man denise dhat it iz hiz. But he iz a picchure-frame maker whoo habitchuwaly handelz glu."

"Iz it wun ov yor cacez?"

"No; mi frend, Merrivale ov the Yard, aasct me too looc intoo the cace. Cins I ran down dhat coiner bi the sinc and copper filingz in the ceme ov hiz cuf dha hav begun too reyalise the importans ov the miacroscope." He looct impaishently at hiz wauch. "I had a nu cliyent

cauling, but he iz overju. Bi the wa, Wautson, u no sumthhing ov racing?"

"I aut too. I pa for it widh about haaf mi wuind penshon."

"Then Ile make u mi Handy Ghide too the Terf.' Whaut about Cer Robbert Norberton? Duz the name recaul ennithhing?"

"Wel, I shood sa so. He livz at Shoscome Oald Place, and I no it wel, for mi summer qworterz wer doun dhare wuns. Norberton neerly came within yor provvins wuns."

"Hou wauz dhat?"

"It wauz when he horswhipt Sam Broower, the wel-none Kerzon Strete munnilender, on Numarket Heeth. He neerly kild the man."

"Aa, he soundz interesting! Duz he often indulj in dhat wa?"

"Wel, he haz the name ov beying a dain'gerous man. He iz about the moast daerdevvil rider in In'gland--cecond in the Grand Nashonal a fu yeerz bac. He iz wun ov dhose men whoo hav overshot dhare troo generaishon. He shood hav bene a buc in the dase ov the Regency--a boxer, an athlete, a plun'ger on the Terf, a luvver ov fare ladese, and, bi aul acount, so far doun Qwere Strete dhat he ma nevver fiand hiz wa bac agane."

"Cappital, Wautson! A thum-nale skech. I ceme too no the man. Nou, can u ghiv me sum ideyaa ov Shoscome Oald Place?"

"Oonly dhat it iz in the center ov Shoscome Parc, and dhat the famous Shoscome stud and traning qworterz ar too be found dhare."

"And the hed traner," ced Hoamz, "iz Jon Mason. U nede not looc

cerpriazd at mi nollej, Wautson, for this iz a letter from him which I am unfoalding. But let us hav sum moer about Shoscome. I ceme too hav struc a rich vane."

"Dhare ar the Shoscome spanyelz," ced I. "U here ov them at evvery dog sho. The moast exclucive brede in In'gland. Dha ar the speshal pride ov the lady ov Shoscome Oald Place."

"Cer Robbert Norbertonz wife, I prezhume!"

"Cer Robbert haz nevver marrede. Just az wel, I thhinc, conciddering hiz prospects. He livz widh hiz widdode cister, Lady Beyatrice Faulder."

"U mene dhat she livz widh him?"

"No, no. The place belongd too her late huzband, Cer Jaimz. Norberton haz no clame on it at aul. It iz oonly a life interest and reverts too her huzbandz bruther. Meentime, she drauz the rents evvery yere."

"And bruther Robbert, I supose, spendz the ced rents?"

"Dhat iz about the cise ov it. He iz a devvil ov a fello and must lede her a moast unnesy life. Yet I hav herd dhat she iz devoted too him. But whaut iz amis at Shoscome?"

"Aa, dhat iz just whaut I waunt too no. And here, I expect, iz the man whoo can tel us."

The doer had opend and the page had shone in a taul, clene-shaven man widh the ferm, austere expreshon which iz oonly cene uppon dhose whoo hav too controle horcez or boiz. Mr. Jon Mason had menny ov boath under hiz swa, and he looct eeqwal too the taasc. He boud widh coald celf-poseshon and ceted himcelf uppon the chare too which Hoamz had waivd him.

"U had mi note, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Yes, but it explaind nuthhing."

"It wauz too dellicate a thhing for me too poot the detailz on paper. And too complicated. It wauz oanly face too face I cood doo it."

"Wel, we ar at yor dispozal."

"Ferst ov aul, Mr. Hoamz, I thhinc dhat mi employer, Cer Robbert, haz gon mad."

Hoamz raizd hiz iabrouz. "This iz Baker Strete, not Harly Strete," ced he. "But whi doo u sa so?"

"Wel, cer, when a man duz wun qwere thhing, or too qwere thhingz, dhare ma be a mening too it, but when evverithhing he duz iz qwere, then u beghin too wunder. I beleve Shoscome Prins and the Darby hav ternd hiz brane."

"Dhat iz a coalt u ar running?"

"The best in In'gland, Mr. Hoamz. I shood no, if enniwun duz. Nou, Ile be plane widh u, for I no u ar gentlemen ov onnor and dhat it woant go beyond the roome. Cer Robbert haz got too win this Darby. Hese up too the nec, and its hiz laast chaans. Evverithhing he cood rase or borro iz on the hors--and at fine odz, too! U can ghet fortese nou, but it wauz nerer the hundred when he began too bac him."

"But hou iz dhat, if the hors iz so good?"

"The public doant no hou good he iz. Cer Robbert haz bene too clevver for the touts. He haz the Princez haaf-bruther out for spinz. U

caant tel em apart. But dhare ar too lengths in a ferlong betwene them when it cumz too a gallop. He thhinx ov nuthhing but the hors and the race. Hiz whole life iz on it. Hese hoalding of the Juse til then. If the Prins failz him, he iz dun."

"It ceemz a raather desperate gambel, but whare duz the madnes cum in?"

"Wel, ferst ov aul, u hav oonly too looc at him. I doant beleve he sleeps at nite. He iz down at the stabelz at aul ourz. Hiz ise ar wiald. It haz aul bene too much for hiz nervz. Then dhare iz hiz conduct too Lady Beyatrice!"

"Aa! whaut iz dhat?"

"Dha hav aulwase bene the best ov frendz. Dha had the same taists, the too ov them, and she luvd the horcez az much az he did. Evvery da at the same our she wood drive down too ce them--and, abuv aul, she luvd the Prins. He wood pric up hiz eerz when he herd the wheelz on the gravvel, and he wood trot out eche morning too the carrage too ghet hiz lump ov shooggar. But dhats aul over nou."

"Whi?"

"Wel, she ceemz too hav lost aul interest in the horcez. For a weke nou she haz drivven paast the stabelz widh nevver so much az good morning!"

"U thhinc dhare haz bene a qworel?"

"And a bitter, savvage, spiatfool qworel at dhat. Whi els wood he ghiv awa her pet spanyel dhat she luvd az if he wer her chiald? He gave it a fu dase ago too oald Barnz, whaut keeps the Grene Draggon, thre mialz of, at Crendal."

"Dhat certainly did ceme strainj."

"Ov coers, widh her weke hart and dropcy wun coodnt expect dhat she cood ghet about widh him, but he spent too ourz evvery evening in her roome. He mite wel doo whaut he cood, for she haz bene a rare good frend too him. But dhats aul over, too. He nevver gose nere her. And she taix it too hart. She iz brooding and sulky and drinking, Mr. Hoamz--drinking like a fish."

"Did she drinc befoer this estrainjment?"

"Wel, she tooc her glaas, but nou it iz often a whole bottel ov an evening. So Stevenz, the butler, toald me. Its aul chainjd, Mr. Hoamz, and dhare iz sumthhing damd rotten about it. But then, agane, whaut iz maaster doowing down at the oald chersch cript at nite? And whoo iz the man dhat meets him dhare?"

Hoamz rubd hiz handz.

"Go on, Mr. Mason. U ghet moer and moer interesting."

"It wauz the butler whoo sau him go. Twelv oacloc at nite and raning hard. So next nite I wauz up at the hous and, shure enuf, maaster wauz of agane. Stevenz and I went aafter him, but it wauz jumpy werc, for it wood hav bene a bad job if he had cene us. Hese a terribel man widh hiz fists if he ghets started, and no respecter ov personz. So we wer shi ov ghetting too nere, but we marct him down aul rite. It wauz the haunted cript dhat he wauz making for, and dhare wauz a man wating for him dhare."

"Whaut iz this haunted cript?"

"Wel, cer, dhare iz an oald roowind chappel in the parc. It iz so oald dhat nobody cood fix its date. And under it dhaerz a cript which haz a bad name amung us. Its a darc, damp, loanly place bi da, but dhare ar fu in dhat county dhat wood hav the nerv too go nere it at nite. But maasterz not afrade. He nevver feerd ennithhing in hiz life. But whaut iz he doowing dhare in the nite-time?"

"Wate a bit!" ced Hoamz. "U sa dhare iz anuther man dhare. It must be wun ov yor one stabel-men, or sumwun from the hous! Shuerly u hav oanly too spot whoo it iz and qweschon him?"

"Its no wun I no."

"Hou can u sa dhat?"

"Becauz I hav cene him, Mr. Hoamz. It wauz on dhat cecond nite. Cer Robbert ternd and paast us--me and Stevenz, qwaking in the booshez like too bunny-rabbits, for dhare wauz a bit ov moone dhat nite. But we cood here the uther mooving about behiand. We wer not afrade ov him. So we up when Cer Robbert wauz gon and pretended we wer just havving a wauc like in the muinlite, and so we came rite on him az cazhuwal and innocent az u plese. Hullo, mate! whoo ma u be?' cez I. I ghes he had not herd us cumming, so he looct over hiz shoalder with a face az if he had cene the Devvil cumming out ov Hel. He let out a yel, and awa he went az hard az he cood lic it in the darcnes. He cood run!--Ile ghiv him dhat. In a minnute he wauz out ov cite and hering, and whoo he wauz, or whaut he wauz, we nevver found."

"But u sau him cleerly in the muinlite?"

"Yes, I wood sware too hiz yello face--a mene dog, I shood sa. Whaut cood he hav in common widh Cer Robbert?"

Hoamz sat for sum time lost in thaut.

"Whoo keeps Lady Beyatrice Faulder cumpany?" he aasct at laast.

"Dhare iz her made, Carry Evvanz. She haz bene widh her this five yearz."

"And iz, no dout, devoted?"

Mr. Mason shuffeld uncumfortably.

"Shese devoted enuf," he aancerd at laast. "But I woant sa too whoome."

"Aa!" ced Hoamz.

"I caant tel tailz out ov scoole."

"I qwite understand, Mr. Mason. Ov coers, the cichuwaishon iz clere enuf. From Dr. Wautsonz descripshon ov Cer Robbert I can reyalise dhat no woomman iz safe from him. Doant u thhinc the qworel betwene bruther and cister ma li dhare?"

"Wel, the scandal haz bene pritty clere for a long time."

"But she ma not hav cene it befoer. Let us supose dhat she haz suddenly found it out. She waunts too ghet rid ov the woomman. Her bruther wil not permit it. The invalid, widh her weke hart and inabillity too ghet about, haz no meenz ov enforcing her wil. The hated made iz stil tide too her. The lady refusez too speke, sulx, taix too drinc. Cer Robbert in hiz an'gher taix her pet spanyel awa from her. Duz not aul this hang tooghether?"

"Wel, it mite doo--so far az it gose."

"Exactly! Az far az it gose. Hou wood aul dhat bare uppon the vizsits bi nite too the oald cript? We caant fit dhat intoo our plot."

"No, cer, and dhare iz sumthhing moer dhat I caant fit in. Whi shood Cer Robbert waunt too dig up a ded boddy?"

Hoamz sat up abruptly.

"We oanly found it out yesterda--aafter I had ritten too u. Yesterda Cer Robbert had gon too Lundon, so Stevenz and I went down too the cript. It wauz aul in order, cer, exept dhat in wun corner wauz a bit ov a human boddy."

"U informd the polece, I suppose?"

Our vizsitor smiald grimly.

"Wel, cer, I thhinc it wood hardly interest them. It wauz just the hed and a fu boanz ov a mummy. It ma hav bene a thousand yeerz oald. But it wauznt dhare befoer. Dhat Ile sware, and so wil Stevenz. It had bene stode awa in a corner and cuvverd over widh a boerd, but dhat corner had aulwase bene empty befoer."

"Whaut did u doo widh it?"

"Wel, we just left it dhare."

"Dhat wauz wise. U sa Cer Robbert wauz awa yesterda. Haz he reternd?"

"We expect him bac too-da."

"When did Cer Robbert ghiv awa hiz cisterz dog?"

"It wauz just a weke ago too-da. The crechure wauz houling outside the oald wel-hous, and Cer Robbert wauz in wun ov hiz tantrumz dhat morning.

He caut it up and I thaut he wood hav kild it. Then he gave it too Sandy Bane, the jocky, and toald him too take the dog too oald Barnz at the Grene Draggon,' for he nevver wisht too ce it agane."

Hoamz sat for sum time in cilent thaut. He had lit the oaldest and foulest ov hiz piaps.

"I am not clere yet whaut u waunt me too doo in this matter, Mr. Mason," he ced at laast. "Caant u make it moer deffinite?"

"Perhaps this wil make it moer deffinite, Mr. Hoamz," ced our vizsitor.

He tooc a paper from hiz pocket and, unrapping it caerfooly, he expoazd a chard fragment ov bone.

Hoamz exammiand it widh interest.

"Whare did u ghet it?"

"Dhare iz a central heting fernace in the cellar under Lady Beyatricez roome. Its bene of for sum time, but Cer Robbert complaind ov coald and had it on agane. Harvy runz it--hese wun ov mi ladz. This verry morning he came too me widh this which he found raking out the cinderz. He didnt like the looc ov it."

"Nor doo I," ced Hoamz. "Whaut doo u make ov it, Wautson?"

It wauz bernd too a blac cinder, but dhare cood be no qweschon az too its anatomical cignifficans.

"Its the upper condile ov a human femer," ced I.

"Exactly!" Hoamz had becum verry cereyous. "When duz this lad tend too the fernace?"

"He maix it up evvery evening and then leevz it."

"Then enniwun cood vizsit it juring the nite?"

"Yes, cer."

"Can u enter it from outcide?"

"Dhare iz wun doer from outcide. Dhare iz anuther which leedz up bi a stare too the passage in which Lady Beyatricez roome iz citchuwated."

"These ar depe wauterz, Mr. Mason; depe and raather derty. U sa dhat Cer Robbert wauz not at home laast nite?"

"No, cer."

"Then, whoowevver wauz barning boanz, it wauz not he."

"Dhats troo, cer."

"Whaut iz the name ov dhat in u spoke ov?"

"The Grene Draggon."

"Iz dhare good fishing in dhat part ov Barcshire?"

The onnest traner shode verry cleerly uppon hiz face dhat he wauz convinst dhat yet anuther lunatic had cum intoo hiz harast life.

"Wel, cer, Ive herd dhare ar trout in the milstreme and pike in the Haul lake."

"Dhats good enuf. Wautson and I ar famous fishermen--ar we not, Wautson? U ma adres us in fuchure at the Grene Draggon.' We shoold reche it too-nite. I nede not sa dhat we doant waunt too ce u, Mr. Mason, but a note wil reche us, and no dout I cood fiand u if I waunt u. When we hav gon a littel farther intoo the matter I wil let u hav a concidderd opinyon."

Dhus it wauz dhat on a brite Ma evening Hoamz and I found ourcelvz alone in a ferst-claas carrage and bound for the littel "hault-on-demaand" staishon ov Shoscome. The rac abuv us wauz cuvverd widh a formiddabel litter ov rodz, reelz and baaskets. On reching our destinaishon a short drive tooc us too an oald-fashond tavvern, whare a spoerting hoast, Jociyaa Barnz, enterd egherly intoo our planz for the exterpaishon ov the fish ov the naborhood.

"Whaut about the Haul lake and the chaans ov a pike?" ced Hoamz.

The face ov the inkeper clouded.

"Dhat woodnt doo, cer. U mite chaans too fiand yorcelf in the lake befoer u wer throo."

"Houz dhat, then?"

"Its Cer Robbert, cer. Hese terribel gellous ov touts. If u too strain'gerz wer az nere hiz traning qworterz az dhat hede be aafter u az shure az fate. He aint taking no chaancez, Cer Robbert aint."

"Ive herd he haz a hors enterd for the Darby."

"Yes, and a good coalt, too. He carrese aul our munny for the race, and aul Cer Robberts intoo the bargane. Bi the wa"--he looct at us widh thautfool ise--"I supose u aint on the Terf yorcelvz?"

"No, indede. Just too wery Lundonerz whoo badly nede sum good Barcshire are."

"Wel, u ar in the rite place for dhat. Dhare iz a dele ov it liying about. But miand whaut I hav toald u about Cer Robbert. Hese the sort dhat striax ferst and speex aafterwordz. Kepe clere ov the parc."

"Shuerly, Mr. Barnz! We certainly shal. Bi the wa, dhat wauz a moast butifool spanyel dhat wauz whining in the haul."

"I shood sa it wauz. Dhat wauz the reyal Shoscome brede. Dhare aint a better in In'gland."

"I am a dog-fanceyer micelf," ced Hoamz. "Nou, if it iz a fare qweschon, whaut wood a prise dog like dhat cost?"

"Moer dhan I cood pa, cer. It wauz Cer Robbert himcelf whoo gave me this wun. Dhats whi I hav too kepe it on a lede. It wood be of too the Haul in a giffy if I gave it its hed."

"We ar ghetting sum cardz in our hand, Wautson," ced Hoamz, when the landlord had left us. "Its not an esy wun too pla, but we ma ce our wa in a da or too. Bi the wa Cer Robbert iz stil in Lundon, I here. We mite, perhaps, enter the saicred domane too-nite widhout fere ov boddily asault. Dhare ar wun or too points on which I shood like reyashurans."

"Hav u enny thheyory, Hoamz?"

"Oonly this, Wautson, dhat sumthhing happend a weke or so ago which haz

cut depe intoo the life ov the Shosome hous'hoald. Whaut iz dhat sumthhing? We can oonly ghes at it from its efects. Dha ceme too be ov a cureyously mixt carracter. But dhat shood shuerly help us. It iz oonly the cullorles, unneventfool cace which iz hoaples.

"Let us concidder our dataa. The bruther no lon'gher vizsits the beluvved invalid cister. He ghivz awa her favorite dog. Her dog, Wautson! Duz dhat sugest nuthhing too u?"

"Nuthhing but the brutherz spite."

"Wel, it mite be so. Or--wel, dhare iz an aulternative. Nou too continnu our revu ov the cichuwaishon from the time dhat the qworel, if dhare iz a qworel, began. The lady keeps her roome, aulterz her habbits, iz not cene save when she driavz out widh her made, refusez too stop at the stabelz too grete her favorite hors, and aparrently taix too drinc. Dhat cuverz the cace, duz it not?"

"Save for the biznes in the cript."

"Dhat iz anuther line ov thaut. Dhare ar too, and I beg u wil not tan'ghel them. Line A, which concernz Lady Beyatrice, haz a vaigly cinnister flavor, haz it not?"

"I can make nuthhing ov it."

"Wel, nou, let us take up line B, which concernz Cer Robbert. He iz mad kene uppon winning the Darby. He iz in the handz ov the Juse, and ma at enny moment be soald up and hiz racing stabelz ceezd bi hiz credditorz. He iz a daring and desperate man. He deriavz hiz incum from hiz cister. Hiz cisterz made iz hiz willing toole. So far we ceme too be on faerly safe ground, doo we not?"

"But the cript?"

"Aa, yes, the cript! Let us suppose, Wautson--it iz meerly a scandalous suposishon, a hipothhecis poot forword for arguments sake--dhat Cer Robbert haz dun awa widh hiz cister."

"Mi dere Hoamz, it iz out ov the qweschon."

"Verry poscibly, Wautson. Cer Robbert iz a man ov an onnorabel stoc. But u doo ocaizhonaly fiand a carreyon cro among the eghelz. Let us for a moment argu uppon this suposishon. He cood not fli the cuntry until he had reyaliazd hiz forchune, and dhat forchune cood oanly be reyaliazd bi bringing of this coo widh Shoscome Prins. Dhaerfoer, he haz stil too stand hiz ground. Too doo this he wood hav too dispose ov the boddy ov hiz victim, and he wood aulso hav too fiand a substichute whoo wood impersonate her. Widh the made az hiz confidant dhat wood not be imposcibel. The woommanz boddy mite be convade too the cript, which iz a place so celdom vizsited, and it mite be ceecretly destroid at nite in the fernace, leving behiand it such evvidens az we hav aulreddy cene. Whaut sa u too dhat, Wautson?"

"Wel, it iz aul poscibel if u graant the oridginal monstrous suposishon."

"I thhinc dhat dhare iz a smaual experriment which we ma tri too-morro, Wautson, in order too thro sum lite on the matter. Meenwhile, if we mene too kepe up our carracterz, I sugest dhat we hav our hoast in for a glaas ov hiz one wine and hoald sum hi convers uppon eelz and dace, which ceemz too be the strate rode too hiz afecshonz. We ma chaans too cum uppon sum uesfool local goscip in the proces."

In the morning Hoamz discuvverd dhat we had cum widhout our

spoon-bate for jac, which absolvd us from fishing for the da. About elevven oacloc we started for a wauc, and he obtaind leve too take the blac spanyel widh us.

"This iz the place," ced he, az we came too too hi parc gaitz widh heraldic griffinz touwering abuv them. "About midda, Mr. Barnz informz me, the oald lady taix a drive, and the carrage must slo down while the gaitz ar opend. When it cumz throo, and befoer it gatherz spede, I waunt u, Wautson, too stop the coachman widh sum qweschon. Nevver miand me. I shal stand behiand this holly-boosh and ce whaut I can ce."

It wauz not a long vidgil. Within a qworter ov an our we sau the big open yello baruish cumming down the long avvenu, widh too splendid, hi-stepping gra carrage horcez in the shaafz. Hoamz croucht behiand hiz boosh widh the dog. I stood unconcernedly swinging a cane in the roadwa. A keper ran out and the gaitz swung open.

The carrage had slode too a wauc and I wauz abel too ghet a good looc at the occupants. A hily-cullord yung woomman widh flaxen hare and impudent ise sat on the left. At her rite wauz an elderly person widh rounded bac and a huddel ov shaulz about her face and shoalderz which proclaimd the invalid. When the horcez reecht the hi rode I held up mi hand widh an authorritative geschure, and az the coachman poold up

I inqwiard if Cer Robbert wauz at Shoscome Oald Place.

At the same moment Hoamz stept out and releest the spanyel. Widh a joiyous cri it dasht forword too the carrage and sprang upon the step. Then in a moment its egher greting chainjd too fureyous rage, and it snapt at the blac skert abuv it.

"Drive on! Drive on!" shreect a harsh vois. The coachman lasht the horcez, and we wer left standing in the roadwa.

"Wel, Wautson, dhats dun it," ced Hoamz, az he faacend the led too the nec ov the exited spanyel. "He thaut it wauz hiz mistres and he found it wauz a strain'ger. Dogz doant make mistaix."

"But it wauz the vois ov a man!" I cride.

"Exactly! We hav added wun card too our hand, Wautson, but it needz caerfool playing, aul the same."

Mi companyon ceemd too hav no ferther planz for the da, and we did acchuwaly use our fishing tackel in the mil-streme, widh the rezult dhat we had a dish ov trout for our supper. It wauz oonly aafter dhat mele dhat Hoamz shode cianz ov renude activvity. Wuns moer we found ourcelvz uppon the same rode az in the morning, which led us too the parc gaits. A taul, darc figgure wauz awating us dhare, whoo pruivd too be our Lunden aqwaintans, Mr. Jon Mason, the traner.

"Good evening, gentelmen," ced he. "I got yor note, Mr. Hoamz. Cer Robbert haz not reternd yet, but I here dhat he iz expected too-nite."

"Hou far iz this cript from the hous?" aasct Hoamz.

"A good qworter ov a mile."

"Then I thhinc we can disregard him aultooghether."

"I caant afoerd too doo dhat, Mr. Hoamz. The moment he ariavz he wil waunt too ce me too ghet the laast nuse ov Shoscome Prins."

"I ce! In dhat cace we must werc widhout u, Mr. Mason. U can sho us the cript and then leve us."

It wauz pich-darc and widhout a moone, but Mason led us over the

graas-landz until a darc mas luimd up in frunt ov us which pruid too be the ainshent chappel. We enterd the broken gap which wauz wuns the poerch and our ghide, stumbling among heeps ov looce masonry, pict hiz wa too the corner ov the bilding, whare a stepe stare led doun intoo the cript. Striking a mach, he iluminated the mellancoly place--dizmal and evil-smelling, widh ainshent crumbling waulz ov ruf-hune stone, and pialz ov coffinz, sum ov led and sum ov stone, extending uppon wun cide rite up too the archt and ground roofe which lost itcelf in the shaddose abuv our hedz. Hoamz had lit hiz lantern, which shot a tiny tunnel ov vivvid yello lite uppon the moernfool cene. Its rase wer reflected bac from the coffin-plaits, menny ov them adornd widh the griffin and coronet ov this oald fammily which carrede its onnorz even too the gate ov Deth.

"U spoke ov sum boanz, Mr. Mason. Cood u sho them befoer u go?"

"Dha ar here in this corner." The traner strode acros and then stood in cilent cerprise az our lite wauz ternd uppon the place. "Dha ar gon," ced he.

"So I expected," ced Hoamz, chucling. "I fancy the ashez ov them mite even nou be found in dhat uvven which had aulreddy conshuemd a part."

"But whi in the werld wood enniwun waunt too bern the boanz ov a man whoo haz bene ded a thouzand yeerz?" aasct Jon Mason.

"Dhat iz whaut we ar here too fiand out," ced Hoamz. "It ma mene a long cerch, and we nede not detane u. I fancy dhat we shal ghet our solueshon befoer morning."

When Jon Mason had left us, Hoamz cet too werc making a verry caerfool

examinaishon ov the graivz, rain'ging from a verry ainshent wun, which apeerd too be Saxon, in the center, throo a long line ov Norman Hugose and Odose, until we reecht the Cer Willeyam and Cer Dennis Faulder

ov the ateenth cenchury. It wauz an our or moer befoer Hoamz came too a ledden coffin standing on end befoer the entrans too the vault. I herd hiz littel cri ov satisfacshon, and wauz aware from hiz hurrede but perpoasfool muivments dhat he had reecht a gole. Widh hiz lenz he wauz egherly exammining the edgez ov the hevvy lid. Then he droo from hiz pocket a short gemmy, a box-opener, which he thrust intoo a chinc, levering bac the whole frunt, which ceemd too be ce cuerd bi oanly a cuppel ov clamps. Dhare wauz a rending, taring sound az it gave wa, but it had hardly hinjd bac and partly reveeld the contents befoer we had an unfoercene interupshon.

Sumwun wauz wauking in the chappel abuv. It wauz the ferm, rappid step ov wun whoo came widh a deffinite perpoce and nu wel the ground uppon which he wauct. A lite streemd down the staerz, and an instant later the man whoo boer it wauz fraimd in the Gothic archwa. He wauz a terribel figgure, huge in statchure and feers in manner. A larj stabel-lantern which he held in frunt ov him shon upwordz uppon a strong, hevvely-moostaasht face and an'gry ise, which glaerd round him intoo evvery reces ov the vault, finaly fixing themcelvz widh a dedly stare uppon mi companyon and micelf.

"Whoo the devvil ar u?" he thunderd. "And whaut ar u doowing uppon mi propperty?" Then, az Hoamz reternd no aancer, he tooc a cuppel ov steps forword and raizd a hevvy stic which he carrede. "Doo u here me?" he cride. "Whoo ar u? Whaut ar u doowing here?" Hiz cudgel qwivverd in the are.

But insted ov shrinking, Hoamz advaanst too mete him.

"I aulso hav a qweschon too aasc u, Cer Robbert," he ced in hiz

sternest tone. "Whoo iz this? And whaut iz it doowing here?"

He ternd and toer open the coffin-lid behiand him, In the glare ov the lantern I sau a boddy swaidhd in a shete from hed too foot, with dredfool, wich-like fechuerz, aul nose and chin, progeting at wun end, the dim, glaizd ise staring from a discullord and crumbling face.

The Barronet had staggherd bac with a cri and supoerted himcelf against a stone sarcoffagus.

"Hou came u too no ov this?" he cride. And then, with sum retern ov lidz trucculent manner: "Whaut biznes iz it ov yorz?"

"Mi name iz Sherloc Hoamz," ced mi companyon. "Poscibly it iz familleyar too u. In enny cace, mi biznes iz dhat ov evvery uther good cittisen--too uphoald the lau. It ceemz too me dhat u hav much too aancer for."

Cer Robbert glaerd for a moment, but Hoamsez qwiyet vois and coole, ashuerd manner had dhare efect.

"Foer God, Mr. Hoamz, its aul rite," ced he. "Aperancez ar against me, Ile admit, but I cood act no urtherwise."

"I shood be happy too thhinc so, but I fere yor explanaishonz must be for the polece."

Cer Robbert shrugd hiz braud shoalderz.

"Wel, if it must be, it must. Cum up too the hous and u can juj for yorcelf hou the matter standz."

Qworter ov an our later we found ourcelvz in whaut I juj, from the

lianx ov pollisht barrelz behiand glaas cuvverz, too be the gun-roome ov the oald hous. It wauz cumfortably fernisht, and here Cer Robbert left us for a fu moments. When he reternd he had too companyonz widh him; the wun, the florid yung woomman whoome we had cene in the carrage; the uther, a smaull rat-faist man widh a disagreyably fertive manner. These too woer an aperans ov utter bewilderment, which shode dhat the Barronet had not yet had time too explane too them the tern events had taken.

"Dhare," ced Cer Robbert, widh a wave ov hiz hand, "ar Mr. and Mrs. Norlet. Mrs. Norlet, under her maden name ov Evvanz, haz for sum yeerz bene mi cisterz confidenshal made. I hav braut them here becauz I fele dhat mi best coers iz too explane the troo posishon too u, and dha ar the too pepel uppon erth whoo can substansheyate whaut I sa."

"Iz this nescenary, Cer Robbert? Hav u thaut whaut u ar doowing?" cride the woomman.

"Az too me, I entiarly disclame aul responcibillity," ced her huzband.

Cer Robbert gave him a glaans ov contempt. "I wil take aul responcibillity," ced he. "Nou, Mr. Hoamz, liscen too a plane staitment ov the facts.

"U hav cleerly gon pritty deeply intoo mi afaerz or I shood not hav found u whare I did. Dhaerfoer, u no aulreddy, in aul probabillity, dhat I am running a darc hors for the Darby and dhat evverithhing dependz uppon mi suxes. If I win, aul iz esy. If I loose--wel, I dare not thhinc ov dhat!"

"I understand the posishon," ced Hoamz.

"I am dependent upon mi cister, Lady Beyatrice, for evverithhing. But it iz wel none dhat her interest in the estate iz for her one life oonly. For micelf, I am deeply in the handz ov the Juse. I hav aulwase none dhat if mi cister wer too di mi credditorz wood be on too mi estate like a floc ov vulchuerz. Evverithhing wood be ceezd; mi stabelz, mi horcez--evverithhing. Wel, Mr. Hoamz, mi cister "did" di just a weke ago."

"And u toald no wun!"

"Whaut cood I doo? Absolute roowin faist me. If I cood stave thhingz of for thre weex aul wood be wel. Her maidz huzband--this man here--iz an actor. It came intoo our hedz--it came intoo mi hed--dhat he cood for dhat short pereyod personate mi cister. It wauz but a cace ov apering daly in the carrage, for no wun nede enter her roome save the made. It wauz not difficult too arainj. Mi cister dide ov the dropcy which had long afflicted her."

"Dhat wil be for a coroner too decide."

"Her doctor wood certifi dhat for munths her cimptomz hav threttend such an end."

"Wel, whaut did u doo?"

"The boddy cood not remane dhare. On the ferst nite Norlet and I carrede it out too the oald wel-hous, which iz nou nevver uezd. We wer follode, houwevver, bi her pet spanyel, which yapt continnuwaly at the doer, so I felt sum safer place wauz neded. I got rid ov the spanyel and we carrede the boddy too the cript ov the cherch. Dhare wauz no indignity or irreverens, Mr. Hoamz. I doo not fele dhat I hav rongd the ded."

"Yor conduct ceemz too me inexcuzabel, Cer Robbert."

The Barronet shooc hiz hed impaishently. "It iz esy too preche," ced he. "Perhaps u wood hav felt differently if u had bene in mi posishon. Wun canot ce aul wunz hoaps and aul wunz planz shattered at the laast moment and make no effort too save them. It ceemd too me dhat it wood be no unwerthy resting-place if we poot her for the time in wun ov the coffinz ov her huzbandz ancestorz liying in whaut iz stil concecrated ground. We opend such a coffin, remuivd the contents, and plaist her az u hav cene her. Az too the oald rellix which we tooc out, we cood not leve them on the floer ov the cript. Norlet and I remuivd them, and he decended at nite and bernd them in the central fernace. Dhare iz mi stoery, Mr. Hoamz, dho hou u foerst mi hand so dhat I hav too tel it iz moer dhan I can sa."

Hoamz sat for sum time lost in thaut.

"Dhare iz wun flau in yor narrative, Cer Robbert," he ced at laast. "Yor bets on the race, and dhaerfoer yor hoaps for the fuchure, wood hoald good even if yor credditorz ceezd yor estate."

"The hors wood be part ov the estate. Whaut doo dha care for mi bets? Az liacly az not dha wood not run him at aul. Mi chefe credditor iz, unhappily, mi moast bitter ennemy--a raascaly fello, Sam Broower, whoome I wauz wuns compeld too horswhip on Numarket Heeth. Doo u supose dhat he wood tri too save me?"

"Wel, Cer Robbert," ced Hoamz, rising, "this matter must, ov coers, be referd too the polece. It wauz mi juty too bring the facts too lite and dhare I must leve it. Az too the morallity or decency ov yor one conduct, it iz not for me too expres an opinyon. It iz neerly midnite, Wautson, and I thhinc we ma make our wa bac too our humbel abode."

It iz genneraly none nou dhat this cin'gular eppisode ended uppon a happeyer note dhan Cer Robberts acshonz deservd. Shosome Prins did win the Darby, the spoerting oner did net aty thousand poundz in bets, and the credditorz did hoald dhare hand until the race wauz over, when dha wer pade in fool, and enuf wauz left too re-establish Cer Robbert in a fare posishon in life. Boath polece and coroner tooc a leenyent vu ov the traanzacshon, and beyond a miald censhure for the dela in redgistering the ladese decece, the lucky oner got awa scaidhles from this strainj incident in a carere which haz nou outlived its shaddose and prommicez too end in an onnord oald age.

12

#### THE ADVENCHURE OV THE RETIARD CULLORMAN

Sherloc Hoamz wauz in a mellancoly and filosoffic moode dhat morning. Hiz alert practical nachure wauz subject too such reyacshonz.

"Did u ce him?" he aasct.

"U mene the oald fello whoo haz just gon out?"

"Preciasly."

"Yes, I met him at the doer."

"Whaut did u thhinc ov him?"

"A pathhettic, futile, broken crechure."

"Exactly, Wautson. Pathhettic and futile. But iz not aul life pathhettic and futile? Iz not hiz stoery a miacrococzm ov the whole? We reche. We graasp. And whaut iz left in our handz at the end? A shaddo. Or wers dhan a shaddo--mizsery."

"Iz he wun ov yor cliyents?"

"Wel, I supose I ma caul him so. He haz bene cent on bi the Yard. Just az meddical men ocaizhonalz cend dhare incurabelz too a qwac. Dha argu dhat dha can doo nuthhing moer, and dhat whautevver happenz the paishent can be no wers dhan he iz."

"Whaut iz the matter?"

Hoamz tooc a raather soild card from the tabel. "Jociyaa Amberly. He cez he wauz juenyor partner ov Bricfaul and Amberly, whoo ar manufacchurerz ov artistic matereyalz. U wil ce dhare naimz uppon paint-boxez. He made hiz littel pile, retiard from biznes at the age ov cixty-wun, baut a hous at Luwisham, and cetteld doun too rest aafter a life ov ceesles griand. Wun wood thhinc hiz fuchure wauz tollerably ashuerd."

"Yes, indede."

Hoamz glaanst over sum noats which he had scribbeld uppon the bac ov an envelope.

"Retiard in 1896, Wautson. Erly in 1897 he marrede a woomman twenty yeez yun'gher dhan himcelf--a good-loocking woomman, too, if the fotograaf duz not flatter. A competens, a wife, lezhure--it ceemd a strate rode which la befoer him. And yet within too yeez he iz, az u hav cene, az broken and mizserabel a crechure az crawlz beneath the sun."

"But whaut haz happend?"

"The oald stoery, Wautson. A tretcherous frend and a fickel wife. It wood apere dhat Amberly haz wun hobby in life, and it iz ches. Not far from him at Luwisham dhare livz a yung doctor whoo iz aulso a ches-player. I hav noted hiz name az Dr. Ra Ernest. Ernest wauz freeqwently in the hous, and an intimacy betwene him and Mrs. Amberly wauz a natchural ceeqwens, for u must admit dhat our unforchunate cliyent

haz fu outword gracez, whautevver hiz inner verchuse ma be. The cuppel went of toogheter laast weke--destinaishon untraist. Whaut iz moer, the faithles spous carrede of the oald manz dede-box az her personal luggage widh a good part ov hiz liafs savingz within. Can we fiand the lady? Can we save the munny? A commonplace problem so far az it haz devellopt, and yet a vital wun for Jociyaa Amberly."

"Whaut wil u doo about it?"

"Wel, the imejate qweschon, mi dere Wautson, happenz too be, Whaut wil "u" doo?--if u wil be good enuf too understuddy me. U no dhat I am preyoccupide widh this cace ov the too Coptic Paitreyarx, which shood cum too a hed too-da. I reyaly hav not time too go out too Luwisham, and yet evvidens taken on the spot haz a speshal vallu. The oald fello wauz qwite incistent dhat I shood go, but I explaind mi difficulty. He iz prepaerd too mete a representative."

"Bi aul meenz," I aancerd. "I confes I doant ce dhat I can be ov much cervice, but I am willing too doo mi best." And so it wauz dhat on a summer aafternoone I cet foerth too Luwisham, littel dreeming dhat within a weke the afare in which I wauz en'gaging wood be the egher debate ov aul In'gland.

It wauz late dhat evening befoer I reternd too Baker Strete and gave an acount ov mi mishon. Hoamz la widh hiz gaunt figgure strecht in hiz depe chare, hiz pipe kerling foerth slo reeths ov acrid tobacco, while hiz ilidz druipt over hiz ise so lasily dhat he mite aulmoast hav bene aslepe wer it not dhat at enny hault or qweschonabel passage ov mi narrative dha haaf lifted, and too gra ise, az brite and kene az rapeyerz, traansfixt me widh dhare cerching glaans.

"The Haven iz the name ov Mr. Jociyaa Amberlese hous," I explaind. "I thhinc it wood interest u, Hoamz. It iz like sum penureyous patrishan whoo haz sunc intoo the cumpany ov hiz infereyorz. U no dhat particcular qworter, the monottonous bric streets, the wery suberban hiwase. Rite in the middel ov them, a littel iland ov ainshent culchure and cumfort, lise this oald home, surrounded bi a hi sun-baict waul motteld widh litchenz and topt widh mos, the sort ov waul----"

"Cut out the powetry, Wautson," ced Hoamz ceveerly. "I note dhat it wauz a hi bric waul."

"Exactly. I shood not hav none which wauz The Haven had I not aasct a loun'ger whoo wauz smoking in the strete. I hav a rezon for menshoning him. He wauz a taul, darc, hevvely-moostaasht, raather millitary-loocking man. He nodded in aancer too mi inqwiry and gave me a cureyously qweschoning glaans, which came bac too mi memmory a littel later.

"I had hardly enterd the gaitwa befoer I sau Mr. Amberly cumming doun the drive. I oonly had a glimps ov him this morning, and he certainly gave me the impreshon ov a strainj crechure, but when I sau him in fool lite hiz aperans wauz even moer abnormal."

"I hav, ov coers, studded it, and yet I shood be interested too hav yor impreshon," ced Hoamz.

"He ceemd too me like a man whoo wauz litteraly boud doun bi care. Hiz bac wauz kervd az dho he carrede a hevvy berden. Yet he wauz not the weecling dhat I had at ferst imadgiand, for hiz shoalderz and chest hav the fraimwerc ov a giyant, dho hiz figgure taperz awa intoo a pare ov spindeld legz."

"Left shoo rinkeld, rite wun smuidh."

"I did not observ dhat."

"No, u woodnt. I spotted hiz artifishal lim. But procede."

"I wauz struc bi the snaky lox ov grizseld hare which kerld from under hiz oald strau hat, and hiz face widh its feers, egher expreshon and the deeply-liand fechuerz."

"Verry good, Wautson. Whaut did he sa?"

"He began poering out the stoery ov hiz grevancez. We wauct doun the drive tooghether, and ov coers I tooc a good looc round. I hav nevver cene a wers-kept place. The garden wauz aul running too cede, ghivving me an impreshon ov wiald neglect in which the plaants had bene aloud too fiand the wa ov nachure raather dhan ov art. Hou enny decent woomman cood hav tollerated such a state ov thhingz, I doant no. The hous, too, wauz slatternly too the laast degray, but the poor man ceemd himcelf too be aware ov it and too be triying too remmedy it, for a grate pot ov grene paint stood in the center ov the haul and he wauz carreying a thhic brush in hiz left hand. He had bene werking on the woodwerc.

"He tooc me intoo hiz din'gy sanctum, and we had a long chat. Ov coers, he wauz disapointed dhat u had not cum yorcelf. 'I hardly expected,' he ced, dhat so humbel an individjuwal az micelf, espeshaly aafter mi hevvy finanshal los, cood obtane the complete atenshon ov so famous a man az Mr. Sherloc Hoamz.'

"I ashuerd him dhat the finanshal qweschon did not arise. No, ov coers, it iz art for arts sake widh him,' ced he; but even on the artistic cide ov crime he mite hav found sumthhing here too studdy. And human nachure, Dr. Wautson--the blac in'grattichude ov it aul! When did I evver refuse wun ov her reqwests? Wauz evver a woomman so pamperd?

And dhat yung man--he mite hav bene mi one sun. He had the run ov mi hous. And yet ce hou dha hav treted me! O, Dr. Wautson, it iz a dredfool, dredfool werld!"

"Dhat wauz the berden ov hiz song for an our or moer. He had, it ceemz, no suspishon ov an intreghe. Dha livd alone save for a woomman whoo cumz in bi the da and leevz evvery evening at cix. On dhat particcular evening oald Amberly, wishing too ghiv hiz wife a trete, had taken too upper cerkel ceets at the Hamarket Thheyater. At the laast moment she had complaind ov a heddake and had refuezd too go. He had gon alone. Dhare ceemd too be no dout about the fact, for he projuest the unuezd ticket which he had taken for hiz wife."

"Dhat iz remarcabel--moast remarcabel," ced Hoamz, whose interest in the cace ceemd too be rising. "Pra continnu, Wautson. I fiand yor narrative moast aresting. Did u personaly exammine this ticket? U did not, perchaans, take the number?"

"It so happenz dhat I did," I aancerd widh sum pride. "It chaanst too be mi oald scoole number, thherty-wun, and so it stuc in mi hed."

"Exelent, Wautson! Hiz cete, then, wauz iather thherty or thherty-too."

"Qwite so," I aancerd, widh sum mistificaishon. "And on B ro."

"Dhat iz moast satisfactory. Whaut els did he tel u?"

"He shode me hiz strong-roome, az he cauld it. It reyaly iz a strong-roome--like a banc--widh iarn doer and shutter--berglar-proofe, az he claimd. Houwevver, the woomman ceemz too hav had a jueplicate ke, and betwene them dha had carrede of sum cevven thousand poundz werth ov cash and securitese."

"Securitese! Hou cood dha dispose ov dhose?"

"He ced dhat he had ghivven the polece a list and dhat he hoapt dha wood be unsalabel. He had got bac from the thheyater about midnite, and found the place plunderd, the doer and windo open and the fugitiavz gon. Dhare wauz no letter or message, nor haz he herd a werd cins. He at wuns gave the alarm too the polece."

Hoamz brooded for sum minnuets.

"U sa he wauz painting. Whaut wauz he painting?"

"Wel, he wauz painting the passage. But he had aulreddy painted the doer and woodwerc ov this roome I spoke ov."

"Duz it not strike u az a strainj ocupaishon in the cercumstaancez?"

"Wun must doo sumthhing too ese an aking hart.' Dhat wauz hiz one explanaishon. It wauz exentric, no dout, but he iz cleerly an exentric man. He toer up wun ov hiz wiafs fotograafs in mi prezsens--toer it up fureyously in a tempest ov pashon. 'I nevver wish too ce her damd face agane,' he shreect."

"Ennithhing moer, Wautson?"

"Yes, wun thhing which struc me moer dhan ennithhing els. I had drivven too the Blac'heeth Staishon and had caut mi trane dhare, when just az it wauz starting I sau a man dart intoo the carrage next too mi one. U no dhat I hav a qwic i for facez, Hoamz. It wauz undoutedly the taul, darc man whoome I had adrest in the strete. I sau him wuns moer at Lunden Brij, and then I lost him in the croud. But I am convinst dhat he wauz following me."

"No dout! No dout!" ced Hoamz. "A taul, darc, hevvely-moostaasht man, u sa, widh gra-tinted sun-glaacez?"

"Hoamz, u ar a wizzard. I did not sa so, but he had gra-tinted sun-glaacez."

"And a Masonic ti-pin?"

"Hoamz!"

"Qwite cimpel, mi dere Wautson. But let us ghet doun too whaut iz practical. I must admit too u dhat the cace, which ceemd too me too be so abcerdly cimpel az too be hardly werth mi notice, iz rappidly ashuming a verry different aspect. It iz troo dhat dho in yor mishon u hav mist evverithhing ov importans, yet even dhose thhingz which hav obtrooded themcelvz uppon yor notice ghiv rise too cereyous thaut."

"Whaut hav I mist?"

"Doant be hert, mi dere fello. U no dhat I am qwite impersonal. No wun els wood hav dun better. Sum poscibly not so wel. But cleerly u hav mist sum vital points. Whaut iz the opinyon ov the naborz about this man Amberly and hiz wife? Dhat shuerly iz ov

importans. Whaut ov Dr. Ernest? Wauz he the ga Lothaareyo wun wood expect? Widh yor natchural advaantagez, Wautson, evvery lady iz yor helper and acumplice. Whaut about the gherl at the poast office, or the wife ov the green'grocer? I can picchure u whispering soft nuthhingz widh the yung lady at the Blu Ancor,' and receving hard sumthhingz in exchainj. Aul this u hav left undun."

"It can stil be dun."

"It haz bene dun. Thanx too the tellefone and the help ov the Yard, I can uezhuwaly ghet mi ecenshalz widhout leving this roome. Az a matter ov fact, mi informaishon confermz the manz stoery. He haz the local repute ov beying a miser az wel az a harsh and exacting huzband. Dhat he had a larj sum ov munny in dhat strong-roome ov hiz iz certane. So aulso iz it dhat yung Dr. Ernest, an unmarrede man, plade ches widh Amberly, and probbably plade the foole widh hiz wife. Aul this ceemz plane saling, and wun wood thhinc dhat dhare wauz no moer too be ced--and yet!--and yet!"

"Whare lise the difficulty?"

"In mi imaginaishon, perhaps. Wel, leve it dhare, Wautson. Let us escape from this wery wercada werld bi the cide doer ov music. Carenaa cingz too-nite at the Albert Haul, and we stil hav time too dres, dine and enjoi."

In the morning I wauz up betiamz, but sum toast crumz and too empty eg-shelz toald me dhat mi companyon wauz erleyer stil. I found a scribbeld note uppon the tabel.

DERE WAUTSON,--

Dhare ar wun or too points ov contact which I shood wish too establish widh Mr. Jociyaa Amberly. When I hav dun so we can dismis the cace--or not. I wood oanly aasc u too be on hand about thre oacloc, az I conceve it poscibel dhat I ma waunt u.

S. H.

I sau nuthhing ov Hoamz aul da, but at the our naimd he reternd, grave, preyoccupide and aloofe. At such tiamz it wauz wiser too leve him too himself.

"Haz Amberly bene here yet?"

"No."

"Aa! I am expecting him."

He wauz not disapointed, for prezently the oald fello ariavd widh a verry wurrede and puzseld expreshon uppon hiz austere face.

"Ive had a tellegram, Mr. Hoamz. I can make nuthhing ov it." He handed it over, and Hoamz red it aloud.

"Cum at wuns widhout fale. Can ghiv u informaishon az too yor recent los.--ELMAN. The Viccarage."

"Dispacht at too-ten from Littel Terlington," ced Hoamz. "Littel Terlington iz in Escex, I beleve, not far from Frinton. Wel, ov coers u wil start at wuns. This iz evvidently from a responcibel person, the viccar ov the place. Whare iz mi Crocford? Yes, here we hav him. J. C. Elman, M.A., Livving ov Mosmoor cum Littel Perlinton.

Looc up the trainz, Wautson."

"Dhare iz wun at five-twenty from Livverpoole Strete."

"Exelent. U had best go widh him, Wautson. He ma nede help or advice. Cleeerly we hav cum too a cricis in this afare."

But our cliyent ceemd bi no meenz egher too start.

"Its perfectly abcerd, Mr. Hoamz," he ced. "Whaut can this man poscibly no ov whaut haz okerd? It iz waist ov time and munny."

"He wood not hav tellegraaft too u if he did not no sumthhing. Wire at wuns dhat u ar cumming."

"I doant thhinc I shal go."

Hoamz ashuemd hiz sternest aspect.

"It wood make the werst poscibel impreshon boath on the polece and uppon micelf, Mr. Amberly, if when so obveyous a clu arose u shood refuse too follo it up. We shood fele dhat u wer not reyaly in ernest in this investigaishon."

Our cliyent ceemd horrifide at the sugeschon.

"Whi, ov coers I shal go if u looc at it in dhat wa," ced he.

"On the face ov it, it ceemz abcerd too suppose dhat this parson nose ennithhing, but if u thhinc----"

"I "doo" thhinc," ced Hoamz, widh emfacis, and so we wer launcht uppon our gerny. Hoamz tooc me acide befoer we left the roome and gave me wun werd ov council which shode dhat he concidderd the matter too be ov importans. "Whautevver u doo, ce dhat he reyaly "duz" go,"

ced he. "Shood he brake awa or retern, ghet too the nerest tellefone exchainj and cend the cin'ghel werd Bolted.' I wil arainj here dhat it shal reche me wharevver I am."

Littel Perlinton iz not an esy place too reche, for it iz on a braanch line. Mi remembrans ov the gerny iz not a plezzant wun, for the wether wauz hot, the trane slo, and mi companyon sullen and cilent, hardly tauking at aul, save too make an ocaizhonal sardonnnic remarc az too the futillity ov our proceedingz. When we at laast reecht the littel staishon it wauz a too-mile drive befoer we came too the Viccarage, whare a big, sollem, raather pompous clergiman receevd us in hiz studdy. Our tellegram la befoer him.

"Wel, gentelmen," he aasct, "whaut can I doo for u?"

"We came," I explaind, "in aancer too yor wire."

"Mi wire! I cent no wire."

"I mene the wire which u cent too Mr. Jociyaa Amberly about hiz wife and hiz munny."

"If this iz a joke, cer, it iz a verry qweschonabel wun," ced the viccar an'grily. "I hav nevver herd ov the gentelman u name, and I hav not cent a wire too enniwun."

Our cliyent and I looct at eche uther in amaizment.

"Perhaps dhare iz sum mistake," ced I; "ar dhare perhaps too viccaragez? Here iz the wire itcelf, ciand Elman, and dated from the Viccarage."

"Dhare iz oanly wun viccarage, cer, and oanly wun viccar, and this wire iz

a scandalous forgery, the origin ov which shal certainly be investigated bi the polece. Meenwhile, I can ce no poscibel obgett in prolonging this intervü."

So Mr. Amberly and I found ourselvz on the roadside in whaut ceemd too me too be the moast primmitive village in In'gland. We made for the tellegraaf office, but it wauz aulreddy cloazd. Dhare wauz a tellefone, houwevver, at the littel Railwa Armz,' and bi it I got intoo tuch widh Hoamz, whoo shaerd in our amaizment at the rezult ov our gerny.

"Moast cin'gular!" ced the distant vois. "Moast remarcabel! I much fere, mi dere Wautson, dhat dhare iz no retern trane too-nite. I hav unwittingly condemd u too the horrorz ov a cuntry in. Houwevver, dhare iz aulwase Nachure, Wautson--Nachure and Jociyaa Amberly--u can be in cloce commune widh boath." I herd hiz dri chuckel az he ternd awa.

It wauz soone aparrent too me dhat mi companyonz reputaishon az a miser wauz not undeservd. He had grumbeld at the expans ov the gerny, had incisted uppon traveling thherd-claas, and wauz nou clammorous in hiz obgecshonz too the hotel bil. Next morning, when we did at laast arive in Lunden, it wauz hard too sa which ov us wauz in the wers humor.

"U had best take Baker Strete az we paas," ced I. "Mr. Hoamz ma hav sum fresh instrucshonz."

"If dha ar not werth moer dhan the laast wunz dha ar not ov much uce," ced Amberly, widh a malevvolent scoul. Nun the les, he kept me cumpany. I had aulreddy wornd Hoamz bi tellegram ov the our ov our arival, but we found a message wating dhat he wauz at Luwisham, and wood expect us dhare. Dhat wauz a cerprise, but an even grater wun wauz too fiand dhat he wauz not alone in the citting-roome ov our cliyent.

A

stern-loocking, impascive man sat beside him, a darc man with gra-tinted glaacez and a larj Masonic pin progecting from hiz ti.

"This iz mi frend Mr. Barker," ced Hoamz. "He haz bene interesting himcelf aulso in yor biznes, Mr. Jociyaa Amberly, dho we hav bene werking independently. But we boath hav the same qweschon too aasc u!"

Mr. Amberly sat doun hevvily. He censt impending dain'ger. I red it in hiz straning ise and hiz twitching fechuerz.

"Whaut iz the qweschon, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Oonly this: Whaut did u doo with the boddese?"

The man sprang too hiz fete with a hoers screme. He claud intoo the are with hiz bony handz. Hiz mouth wauz open, and for the instant he looct like sum horribel berd ov pra. In a flash we got a glimps ov the reyal Jociyaa Amberly, a misshapen demon with a sole az distorted az hiz boddy. Az he fel bac intoo hiz chare he clapt hiz hand too hiz lips az if too stifel a cof. Hoamz sprang at hiz throte like a tigher, and twisted hiz face toowordz the ground. A white pellet fel from betwene hiz gaasping lips.

"No short cuts, Jociyaa Amberly. Thhingz must be dun decently and in order. Whaut about it, Barker?"

"I hav a cab at the doer," ced our tascitern companyon.

"It iz oonly a fu hundred yardz too the staishon. We wil go toogheter. U can sta here, Wautson. I shal be bac within haaf an our."

The oald cullorman had the strength ov a liyon in dhat grate trunc ov hiz, but he wauz helples in the handz ov the too expereyenst

man-handlerz. Rigling and twisting he wauz dragd too the wating cab, and I wauz left too mi sollitary vidgil in the il-omend hous. In les time dhan he had naimd, houwevver, Hoamz wauz bac, in cumpany widh a smart yung polece inspector.

"Ive left Barker too looc aafter the formallitese," ced Hoamz. "U had not met Barker, Wautson. He iz mi hated rival uppon the Surry shoer. When u ced a taul darc man it wauz not difficult for me too complete the picchure. He haz cevveral good cacez too hiz credit, haz he not, Inspector?"

"He haz certainly interfeerd cevveral tiamz," the Inspector aancerd widh reserv.

"Hiz methodz ar ireggular, no dout, like mi one. The ireggularz ar uesfool sumtiamz, u no. U, for exaampel, widh yor compulsory worning about whautevver he ced beying uezd against him, cood nevver hav bluft this raascal intoo whaut iz verchuwaly a confeshon."

"Perhaps not. But we ghet dhare aul the same, Mr. Hoamz. Doant imadgine dhat we had not formd our one vuse ov this cace, and dhat we wood not hav lade our handz on our man. U wil excuse us for feling soer when u jump in widh methodz which we canot use, and so rob us ov the credit."

"Dhare shal be no such robbery, MacKinnon. I ashure u dhat I eface micelf from nou onwordz, and az too Barker, he haz dun nuthing save whaut I toald him."

The Inspector ceemd concidderably releevd.

"Dhat iz verry handsum ov u, Mr. Hoamz. Prase or blame can matter

littel too u, but it iz verry different too us when the nuesdayz beghin too aasc qweschon.

"Qwite so. But dha ar pritty shure too aasc qweschon ennihou, so it wood be az wel too hav aancerz. Whaut wil u sa, for exaampel, when the intelligent and enterprising repoerter aasx u whaut the exact points wer which arouzd yor suspishon, and finaly gave u a certane convicshon az too the reyal facts?"

The Inspector looct puzseld.

"We doant ceme too hav got enny reyal facts yet, Mr. Hoamz. U sa dhat the prizzoner, in the prezsens ov thre witnecez, practicaly confest, bi triying too comit suwicide, dhat he had merderd hiz wife and her luvver. Whaut uther facts hav u?"

"Hav u arainjd for a cerch?"

"Dhare ar thre cunstabelz on dhare wa."

"Then u wil soone ghet the clerest fact ov aul. The boddese canot be far awa. Tri the cellarz and the garden. It shood not take long too dig up the liacly placez. This hous iz oalder dhan the wauter-piaps. Dhare must be a disuezd wel sumwhare. Tri yor luc dhare."

"But hou did u no ov it, and hou wauz it dun?"

"Ile sho u ferst hou it wauz dun, and then I wil ghiv the explanaishon which iz ju too u, and even moer too mi long-suffering frend here, whoo haz bene invallubel throowout. But, ferst, I wood ghiv u an incite intoo this manz mentallity. It iz a verry unnuezhual wun--so much so dhat I thhinc hiz destinaishon iz moer liacly too be Braudmoor dhan the scaffoald. He haz, too a hi degry, the sort ov

miand which wun asoasheyaits widh the meddeyeval Italleyan nachure raather dhan widh the moddern Britton. He wauz a mizserabel miser whoo made hiz wife so retched bi hiz niggardly wase dhat she wauz a reddy pra for enny advenchurer. Such a wun came uppon the cene in the person ov this ches-playing doctor. Amberly exeld at ches--wun marc, Wautson, ov a skeming miand. Like aul miserz, he wauz a gellous man, and hiz gelloucy became a frantic mainyaa. Riatly or rongly, he suspected an intreghe. He determiand too hav hiz revenj, and he pland it widh diyabollical clevvernes. Cum here!"

Hoamz led us along the passage widh az much certainty az if he had livd in the hous, and haulted at the open doer ov the strong-roome.

"Poo! Whaut an afool smel ov paint!" cride the Inspector.

"Dhat wauz our ferst clu," ced Hoamz. "U can thanc Dr. Wautsonz observaishon for dhat, dho he faild too drau the inferens. It cet mi foot uppon the trale. Whi shood this man at such a time be filling hiz hous widh strong odorz? Obveyously, too cuvver sum uther smel which he wisht too concele--sum ghilty smel which wood sugest suspishonz. Then came the ideyaa ov a roome such az u ce here widh iarn doer and shutter--a hermettically ceeld roome. Poot dhose too facts tooghether, and whither doo dha lede? I cood oanly determine dhat bi exammining the hous micelf. I wauz aulreddy certane dhat the cace wauz cereyous, for I had exammiand the box-office chart at the Hamarket Theyater--anuther ov Dr. Wautsonz boolz-ise--and ascertaind dhat niather B thherty nor thherty-too ov the upper cerkel had bene occupide dhat nite. Dhaerfoer, Amberly had not bene too the thheyater, and hiz allibi fel too the ground. He made a bad slip when he aloud mi aschute frend too notice the number ov the cete taken for hiz wife. The qweschon nou arose hou I mite be abel too exammine the hous. I cent an agent too the moast impscibel village I cood thhinc ov, and summond mi

man too it at such an our dhat he cood not pocsibly ghet bac. Too prevent enny miscarriage, Dr. Wautson acumpanede him. The good viccarz name I tooc, ov coers, out ov mi Crocford. Doo I make it aul clere too u?"

"It iz maasterly," ced the Inspector, in an aud vois.

"Dhare beying no fere ov interupshon I proceded too berghel the hous. Berglary haz aulwase bene an aulternative profeshon, had I caerd too adopt it, and I hav littel dout dhat I shood hav cum too the frunt. Observ whaut I found. U ce the gas-pipe along the skerting here. Verry good. It risez in the an'ghel ov the waul, and dhare iz a tap here in the corner. The pipe runz out intoo the strong-roome, az u can ce, and endz in dhat plaaster rose in the center ov the celing, whare it iz conceeld bi the ornamentaishon. Dhat end iz wide open. At enny moment bi terning the outcide tap the roome cood be fludded widh gas. Widh doer and shutter cloazd and the tap fool on I wood not ghiv too minnuets ov consmous censaishon too enniwun shut up in dhat littel chaimber. Bi whaut devvilish device he decoid them dhare I doo not no, but wuns incide the doer dha wer at hiz mercy."

The Inspector exammiand the pipe widh interest. "Wun ov our officerz menshond the smel ov gas," ced he, "but, ov coers, the windo and doer wer open then, and the paint--or sum ov it--wauz aulreddy about. He had begun the werc ov painting the da befoer, acording too hiz stoery. But whaut next, Mr. Hoamz?"

"Wel, then came an incident which wauz raather unexpected too micelf. I wauz slipping throo the pantry windo in the erly daun when I felt a hand incide mi collar, and a vois ced: 'Nou, u raascal, whaut ar u doowing in dhare?' When I cood twist mi hed round I looct intoo the tinted spectakelz ov mi frend and rival, Mr. Barker. It wauz a cureyous forgathering, and cet us boath smiling. It ceemz dhat he had bene en'gaijd bi Dr. Ra Ernests fammily too make sum investigaishonz, and had

cum too the same concluezhon az too foul pla. He had waucht the hous for sum dase, and had spotted Dr. Wautson az wun ov the obveyously suspishous carracterz whoo had cauld dhare. He cood hardly arest Wautson, but when he sau a man acchuwaly climing out ov the pantry windo dhare came a limmit too hiz restraint. Ov coers, I toald him hou matterz stood and we continnude the cace tooghether."

"Whi him? Whi not us?"

"Becauz it wauz in mi miand too poot dhat littel test which aancerd so admirably. I fere u wood not hav gon so far."

The Inspector smiald.

"Wel, maby not. I understand dhat I hav yor werd, Mr. Hoamz, dhat u step rite out ov the cace nou and dhat u tern aul yor rezults over too us."

"Certainly, dhat iz aulwase mi custom."

"Wel, in the name ov the Foers I thanc u. It ceemz a clere cace, az u poot it, and dhare caant be much difficulty over the boddese."

"Ile sho u a grim littel bit ov evvidens," ced Hoamz, "and I am shure Amberly himcelf nevver observd it. Ule ghet rezults, Inspector, bi aulwase pooting yorcelf in the uther fellose place, and thhinking whaut u wood doo yorcelf. It taix sum imaginaishon, but it pase. Nou, we wil supose dhat u wer shut up in this littel roome, had not too minnuets too liv, but waunted too ghet even with the feend whoo wauz probbably mocking at u from the uther cide ov the doer. Whaut wood u doo?"

"Rite a message."

"Exactly. U wood like too tel pepel hou u dide. No uce riting on paper. Dhat wood be cene. If u rote on the waul sum i mite rest uppon it. Nou, looc here! Just abuv the skerting iz scribbeld widh a pepel indellibel pencil: We we----' Dhats aul."

"Whaut doo u make ov dhat?"

"Wel, its oonly a foot abuv the ground. The poor devvil wauz on the floer and diying when he rote it. He lost hiz cencez befoer he cood finnish."

"He wauz riting, We wer merderd."

"Dhats hou I red it. If u fiand an indellibel pencil on the boddy----"

"Weeyl looc out for it, u ma be shure. But dhose securitese? Cleerly dhare wauz no robbery at aul. And yet he "did" poses dhose bondz. We verrifide dhat."

"U ma be shure he haz them hidden in a safe place. When the whole eloapment had paast intoo history he wood suddenly discuver them, and anouns dhat the ghilty cuppel had relented and cent bac the plunder or had dropt it on the wa."

"U certainly ceme too hav met evvery difficulty," ced the Inspector. "Ov coers, he wauz bound too caul us in, but whi he shood hav gon too u I caant understand."

"Pure swanc!" Hoamz aancerd. "He felt so clevver and so shure ov himcelf dhat he imadgiand no wun cood tuch him. He cood sa too enny suspishous nabor, Looc at the steps I hav taken. I hav consulted not oonly the polece, but even Sherloc Hoamz."

The Inspector laaft.

"We must forghiv u yor even,' Mr. Hoamz," ced he; "its az wercmanlike a job az I can remember."

A cuppel ov dase later mi frend tost acros too me a cobby ov the bi-weecly "North Surry Observer". Under a cerese ov flaming hedlianz, which began widh "The Haven Horror" and ended widh "Brilleyant Polece Investigaishon," dhare wauz a pact collum ov print which gave the ferst concecutive acount ov the afare. The concluding parragraaf iz tippical ov the whole. It ran dhus:

"The remarcabel accumen bi which Inspector MacKinnon dejuest from the smel ov paint dhat sum uther smel, dhat ov gas, for exaampel, mite be conceeld; the boald deducshon dhat the strongroome mite aulso be the deth-chaimber, and the subceqwent inqwiry which led too the discuvvery ov the boddese in a disuezd wel, clevverly conceeld bi a dog-kennel, shoold liv in the history ov crime az a standing exaampel ov the intelligens ov our profeshonal detectiavz."

"Wel, wel, MacKinnon iz a good fello," ced Hoamz, widh a tollerant smile. "U can file it in our arkiavz, Wautson. Sum da the troo stoery ma be toald."

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Bi A. CONAN DOIL

THE ADVENCHUERZ OV SHERLOC HOAMZ.

THE MEMWARZ OV SHERLOC HOAMZ.

THE RETERN OV SHERLOC HOAMZ.

MICAA CLARC.

THE CAPTANE OV THE POLE STAR.

THE CINE OV FOER.

THE WHITE CUMPANY

THE REFUGESE.

THE STARC MUNRO LETTERZ.

THE EXPLOITS OV BRIGADEYER GERRARD.

RODNY STONE.

UNKEL BERNAC.

THE TRADGEDY OV THE "COROSCO."

A JUWET, WIDH AN OCAIZHONAL COERUS.

THE GRENE FLAG.

THE HOUND OV THE BASKERVILZ.

THE ADVENCHUERZ OV GERRARD.

CER NIGEL.

THROO THE MADGIC DOER.

ROUND THE FIRE STOERESE.

THE LAAST GALLY.

THE LOST WERLD.

ROUND THE RED LAMP.

THE VALLY OV FERE.

HIZ LAAST BOU.

DAIN'GER! AND UTHER STOERESE.

THE FERM OV GHERDELSTONE.  
TAILZ OV ADVENCHURE AND MEDDICAL LIFE.  
TAILZ OV LONG AGO.  
TAILZ OV PIRAITTS AND BLU WAUTER.  
TAILZ OV THE RING AND CAMP.  
TAILZ OV TERROR AND MISTERY.  
TAILZ OV TWILITE AND THE UNCENE.  
SONGZ OV ACSHON.  
SONGZ OV THE RODE.  
THE GARDZ CAME THROO, AND UTHER POWEMZ.  
POWEMZ: COLECTED EDISHON.  
THRE OV THEM: A REMINISCENS.

THE MISTERY OV JONE OV ARC. BI LAYON  
DENNIS. Traanzlated from the French bi  
A. CONAN DOIL.

[End ov The Cace-Booc ov Sherloc Hoamz, bi Arthher Conan Doil]