

THE EDGEMORE HAZARD

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BY GEORGE HORTON

SYNOPSIS.

Frederick Hardy, a fashionable Boston society man, lost his wealth, was jilted by a girl and sent by a friend to take charge of an American Trading Company store in Russia. On his journey through Japan he met Stanka, a Neville, supposedly an Englishman. They agreed to go together to Russia. Because of suspicious circumstances they were several times molested by the Japanese. Hardy was arrested and found upon his person were papers showing maps of Jap forts. Hardy was proven guilty. On the train he met Aisome, daughter of a Jap merchant. In Neville's shoes Jap found pictures of forts, proving him to be a Russian spy. Hardy departed for Russia on a steamer, which was wrecked shortly afterward. He was rescued by a Russian steamer. On reaching Vladivostok he was well treated. He started for Siberia, meeting Princess Romanovna on the train. Hardy boarded a vessel for Amur. Hardy showed the princess his expertise as a rifle shot. The steamer was stranded. The princess and her maid were attacked by Chinese. Hardy saved their lives by the princess's thanks Hardy for his heroism. Manchurians fired upon the craft. Hardy slew their chief. Burning arrows were hurled upon the Fuskin's decks. An attempt was made to board the vessel. The attacking Chinese were repulsed. Romanoff sneered at Hardy's solicitude for the princess. Stanka, a messenger sent for help, was nailed to a cross on the shore. To put an end to the awful torture Hardy himself put Stanka out of his misery, taking his own life in his hands. Forest fires menaced the vessel. Hardy volunteered to go for help. Refused permission he jumped overboard and started to swim with the princess's dress message. Romanoff was angry at Hardy for his brave efforts to rescue the princess. He waded her in his arms to safety. He saved Hardy had made love openly to a Japanese girl. Help came and the princess was rescued. Hardy journeyed on a raft. Arriving at his destination he took charge of the trading company's business. Hardy received a letter from a social leader in Boston and another from Aisome. Hardy took lesson in Russian of a Jew, thus connecting himself in a way with that race.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Mysterious Korean Boy.

This was the letter of the princess:

My dear Mr. Hardy: You have no doubt heard, long ere this, of our rescue from the ill-fated Puskin. Your own adventures on the river, and your safe arrival in Stryetensk, are all known to me, through the kindness of the police. Believe me that I was disappointed to the verge of exasperation, on learning that it was not through your efforts that we were saved. Your heroism loses nothing in my eyes from the fact, and you had already done enough to establish yourself in my estimation as a very gallant and noble gentleman. I hardly know how to thank you so modest and self-effacing as yourself for all that you have done for me. I can only repeat that I owe my life to you, and that I am deeply and eternally grateful. If you are ever in Moscow, I shall expect you to call on me at my house on the Boulevard Prechistenka—any one can tell you where it is. I hope that your affairs will bring you here before very long, that we may talk over our extraordinary experiences together. In the meantime, you must think of me as your very sincere and grateful friend, ELIZABETHA ROMANOVNA.

Hardy read this letter over half a dozen times, and the oftener he read it the more satisfaction it gave him. There was a certain delicacy in the expression of her gratitude, without any hint at reward other than the offer of her friendship, which betokened an entire appreciation of his character and understanding of his motives. He spent most of the day thumbing his English-Russian dictionary and composing his reply, which, being in a language in which he was as yet a novice, was somewhat stilted. This, in effect, is what he at last worked out:

Most Noble Lady: I beg that you will no longer give a thought to the part which I played upon the Amur. To be of service to so charming and exalted a lady as yourself is a happiness and distinction which calls for no further reward. If I am, in addition, to be honored by your friendship, my recompense is far greater than my desert. Very cordially yours, FREDERICK COURTLAND HARDY.

Baruch, when he came in the evening, cast a critical eye over the letter and pronounced it excellent.

"Even as it is," he declared, "it would be possible for the lady to understand it, and she would not laugh. Nevertheless, there are two or three little alterations to be made—you would scarcely call them corrections."

"You are as polite as a Frenchman, Mordecai. Your two or three little alterations have amounted to rewriting the whole thing. Now we will address the envelope. I think you had better do that, so as to get it exactly right. It goes to her highness, the Princess Elizabetha Romanovna, Prechistenka street, Moscow."

At the mention of this name, Baruch's face grew livid, and his eyes glowed with sudden hate.

"Romanovna!" he hissed, "of the Romanoffs of Moscow? I have good cause to hate and detest that name. That accursed house was most violent in the persecutions that resulted in the expulsion of the Jews from Moscow. They used all their influence to bring this about, because they coveted certain property owned by the Hebrews, which the latter refused to sell. A whole peaceful and industrious community was uprooted in a single night, driven from their homes and their vocations, ordered to leave with their wives and families, their sick and their old, and to make shift as best they could, in the accursed Pale. My father, the trusted and honored cashier of a bank, with a salary of 2,500 a year, a position to which he had risen through 20 years of faithful service, was kicked out like a dog, and told to go. You cannot realize what suffering all this led to. My fa-

ther, reduced to mental tasks to support his family, died in six months of grief. I have small love for the blood of Romanoff. They are all insolent tyrants and oppressors."

"My dear Mordecai," replied Hardy, "believe me, your tale of wrong fills me with pity and indignation, and I do not wonder at the strength of your feelings. I have small doubt that all you say of the Romanoffs is true, with one exception. You must except the princess, who is a sweet and noble lady, with as tender and as generous a heart as ever beat in a woman's breast."

The Jew made no reply, but quietly directed the envelope, and shortly after took his leave.

He had not been gone more than ten minutes before Hardy heard a tap at the door of his room, and called, "Come in!" in Russian. Vasil entered in great excitement.

"Is the Jew here?" he asked. His manner was bold, and he did not remove his hat.

"No," replied Hardy. "Why, what's the matter now? What do you want with him?"

"The people want him," cried Vasil, "the Christians. A Christian child has disappeared, and they think the ac-

clustered together in one quarter, while the house in which Baruch dwelt with his aged mother was at some distance from these. Perhaps it would be possible to reach Mordecai before the Christians got there and warn him. If necessary, he would offer the Jew the shelter of the store. He seized his hat and went out into the dimly-lighted street. He had gone only a short distance when a boy stopped him with a detaining hand. Hardy looked down and his eyes fell on a Korean youth. He knew instantly that it was a Korean from the costume: Baggy trousers, loose blouse and hat of bamboo frame covered with hair-cloth.

"Ten thousand pardons, excellency," said the boy in imperfect Russian, "I came to see if you could give me employment. I have been in town only two days, and must have work. I can run errands or carry packages. I shall be very useful to you—you don't know how useful and industrious I shall be! And I am intelligent, too, very, very intelligent!"

The plea was so ingenuous, the young voice so eager, that Hardy was touched.

"I am in a great hurry now, my boy," he said. "Be here when I come

back, and I will talk with you. We could use an errand boy. I was thinking of that very thing to-day!"

"But, excellency," persisted the boy, "perhaps I can be of use to you now. You will see how intelligent I am!" He spoke rapidly, and his Russian, though bristling with errors, was easily understood. "Hoping to get employment of you and to become useful, I have made inquiries. The people here hate you, and they are thirsting for the blood of the Jews."

"You are a very bright boy," he said at last. "I really believe you could do this thing better than I. Run then to the Jewish quarter and see what is going on. Then hasten to the house of Mordecai Baruch—do you know where it is?"

"Yes, excellency. You passed there this morning with him, and he went in."

"Well! You have been shadowing me. Tell Mordecai to bring his mother to my store, if they are in real danger, and I will try to protect them. The Russians will hardly dare attack American property. Then run back to me as fast as you can."

"Yes, excellency."

The boy was gone, and Hardy, after watching his slender form as it flew down the street until it disappeared around the corner, turned and re-entered the store. Removing his coat and hat, he sat down at his table, and awaited the boy's return. The more he thought of this occurrence, the stranger it seemed to him. Seldom had he acted so purely on impulse as in the present instance. But the boy had come up to him so suddenly, he was so quick-witted and his proposition so sensible, that there was no resisting him. Hardy had heard that

the Koreans were a bright race, naturally, but never before had he received personal evidence of the fact. He now concluded that they compared favorably in this respect with the precocious Japanese.

In less than half an hour the boy was back. The housekeeper brought him to the door of Hardy's living room and admitted him. He had the girlish cast of features that had made it so difficult for Hardy to distinguish between the Korean boys and girls in Vladivostok. His hair was drawn up into a tight knot on top of his head, and his face, save for a livid scar across his right cheek and temple, was positively beautiful.

"Well?" said Hardy.

"The worst is happening," said the boy, quietly. "The wolves are howling and have already smelled blood. They are maddened by the scent of it. They are demolishing the Jewish houses, are stealing their valuables and burning their furniture. A number of the Jews are barricaded in the Jewish store, and a great crowd is collected in front, howling for blood. Mordecai and his mother have disappeared."

"My God!" exclaimed Hardy. "I must go immediately to the police."

"It will do no good," said the boy, "the chief of the police has left town and the police themselves are assisting in the work of destruction. Your own life, unless you use great discretion, will be in danger. It is rumored that you are a friend and associate of Jews, perhaps a Jew yourself. I tore this from a wall."

He laid on a table a poster bearing a crude wood-cut of the Saviour's head, wearing the crown of thorns. Beneath were the words:

"Death to those who murdered our Lord!"

Hardy arose and paced the floor, his hands in his pockets. From time to time he stopped and listened, but all was silence without.

"Had you not better fly while you can?"

It was the voice of the boy, whose

man. The mob will be in here soon. Good-by! and good luck!"

He seized the terrified man's hand, which was cold and limp as the hand of a dead man, and then scrambled up the ladder. The uproar without had commenced again, and the pounding on the door was being renewed.

He threw open the shutter of the window and looked out. There were at least 500 people in the crowd, many of whom were carrying flaming torches, which they held high above their heads. All ages were represented, from babes in the arms of mothers to old men and bewildered countrymen in blouses and high boots. Hardy noticed several policemen in the throng, as well as two or three priests.

"There he is!" shouted some one, and the cry went up:

"The Jew! The Jew! Throw him out to us. Let us in to him!"

"What do you want of him?" asked Hardy.

"We want to play with him!" came the reply, followed by horrid, cruel laughter.

"Friends," said Hardy, "you must be careful what you do here. This is not Jewish property. It belongs to an American, a Christian—Frederick Emery, a good man, whom we all know."

Hardy did not realize till that moment how much Russian he knew. He felt that he could have talked Chinese had it been necessary.

"We do not want to destroy the property. We want the Jew, Mordecai. Pitch him out to us."

"No," said a tall Russian, who seemed to be a ringleader. "We do not want to destroy the property, but we will burn it to the ground if you do not give up the Jew. The Jews must die. They crucified our Saviour, they sacrifice Christian children."

"But I assure you, good friends," argued Hardy, "that Mordecai had nothing to do with crucifying the Saviour. That happened 2,000 years ago."

"He is making sport of us!" howled the mob. "He is a Jew himself!"

"Tell us," sneered the tall man, "are you a Jew?"

"I am not a Jew," replied Hardy, firmly. "I am a Christian. There is not a drop of Hebrew blood in my veins."

"Then prove it to us. It has been said that you are a Jew. If you are a Christian, you will throw out the Jew, that we may tear him in pieces, that we may beat him to death. Act quickly, for we must have the Jew!"

And again that awful cry went up. "The Moschke! The Moschke! The Jew! The Jew!"

Hardy felt a light touch on his arm, and Wang whispered to him:

"He is gone, he has got away!"

"Friends," said Hardy in a calm, clear voice, "I cannot meet your test. There is no Jew here. I give you my word that Mordecai is not here."

Vasil now stood out from the others.

"Mr. Hardy," he said, "we saw him run in this direction. We are sure he was coming here. Where else could he seek protection, save in the house of his companion and friend?" This sneeringly.

"Do you doubt my word, sir?" asked Hardy. "You had better help me in this trying situation, if you know on which side your bread is buttered. This is your opportunity to win Mr. Emery's favor."

"I do not doubt your word, sir, but these people will be hard to convince."

"I saw the Jew go into the store!" shrieked a boy. "He crawled under the iron door."

"He is lying to us," howled the mob. "Beat in the door. Death to the Jew! to the Jew!"

Pandemonium now broke loose again. Heavy rocks were hurled against the doors and windows, and three or four stout Russians brought up a log, to batter in the iron shutter.

"Oh, my dear master," pleaded the Korean boy, "fly while there is yet time! They will kill you, they will tear you in pieces! They are madmen!"

"I shall not fly," said Hardy. "They may kill me, if they wish, but I will teach them a lesson first."

At this moment a droschky drove up through the throng, the driver furiously lashing his horses, and stopped before the door.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Mean Thing!

Mrs. Poyndexter was just drooping off to sleep, but her husband was wakeful. "I heard a story to-day," he began, "about—"

"Oh, don't bother me, Jason!" she murmured. "I'm sleepy."

"I was only going to say—"

"I don't want to hear it!"

"It's about—"

"Can't you let me go to sleep!"

"About Mrs.—"

"Mrs. who?" demanded his wife, sitting straight up, wide-eyed and interested.

"I've always noticed," said Mr. Poyndexter, yawning, "that the way to get a woman's attention is to tell her a story about some other woman."—Youth's Companion.



"Is the Jew Here?" He Asked. His Manner Was Bold.



"Hark!" He Whispered, "the Christians After Me!"

presence he had for the moment forgotten.

"Fly? No! I came here to stay, and whoever attempts to interfere with me will find that he has caught a Tartar and no Jew. What is your name?"

"Wang, excellency."

"Wang what?"

"Just Wang."

"Well, Wang, you are a good boy, and I shall find you a place to sleep. I can make use of you. Hello, what's that? Do you not hear something?"

They both listened.

"Yes, sir, I hear the feet of a man running, as if for his life, and hoarse shouts in the distance."

CHAPTER XXV.

"War, my Boy, War!"

Hardy ran through the large principal room of the store, lighted by a single kerosene lamp with reflector, to the door. This he opened and be-

ley with the mob. He ran toward the ladder, but was stopped by Wang, who glided up to him.

"I have an idea," said the boy. "Are there no priests' robes in the store?"

Hardy gazed at him for a moment, and then sudden comprehension seized him.

"Good!" he cried, "good!"

Springing to a counter he jerked down a long priest's robe and tall hat. Mordecai was crouching between bales of cloth. From these Hardy dragged him forth.

"Here, man," he commanded, "put these on and go out by the back door and walk hurriedly away! Walk all night, then throw them away. You will be safe as soon as you are out of Stryetensk. Come, come, man, hold out your arms! There! It's your only chance. Here, put on the hat and let me hang this cross about your neck. When you hear me talking to the mob, let him out of the back door, Wang. Go with the boy, I tell you,