

THE FACE OF ROSENTEL.

CHARLES HOWARD MONTAGUE.
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CHAPTER VII.

MAXEY MAKES A BEGINNING.
Maxey read the letter in the fading light by the window, while the messenger who had brought the note to his room waited, cup in hand. It was as follows:

HOSPITAL, Dec. 20, 1884.

The girl has spoken. Her name is Dye. Her father lives in Flood street. LAMAR. Short, epigrammatic, to the point. "There will be no answer," said Maxey.

He heard the door close behind the rattling messenger and began to pace the floor, his hair erect and his necktie a-flow, while his impatient thoughts traveled over the wide range of possibilities which the information in the doctor's letter seemed to open before him. Barely now he was on the verge of the most important revelations, and yet he hesitated for the moment how to act in the emergency.

It was a question to him whether it were better at once to intrude this matter to those whose business it was to investigate crime or to attempt that investigation by himself, alone and unaided.

In the first case there would be the experience and educated attentiveness of a craftsman plying his vocation. In the second case there would be the native shrewdness of a novice whose heart was fired with an enthusiasm, and whose mind was stimulated by an interest, for the intensity of which Maxey himself was sometimes, in the rare moments when he indulged in self-examination, an less to account.

While the artist was still debating with himself this problem Miss Maxey came in. She cried out almost before she opened the door:

"Oh, Julian, have you heard from the hospital?"

"I have, Annette has spoken. She has told her father's name."

Miss Maxey uttered a glad cry and somewhat astonished her brother by impulsively throwing her arms about his neck and kissing him.

"I am so glad I could cry," she exclaimed. "She will get well, Julian. She will get well in spite of everything! Tell me the rest at once. Who pushed her from the roof? Why did he do it? Why didn't her father answer the advertisement?"

"My dear sister, you forget that she must still be a very sick girl. It is a terrible operation to survive. Dr. Lamar told me something about it. Ugh! They have to go into the very brain itself."

Miss Maxey shuddered. "Don't, Julian—please don't!" "Forgive me, I forgot your sensitiveness. Let us come to other things. I want to know what you think about a certain matter that has been troubling me. Shall I put this new clew in the hands of the police, or shall I undertake to investigate it by myself?"

"By yourself, in the name of all that leads to success. How many times have we been to the police? And what have they done for us? Julian, we have tried them. We know what they can do. Now try yourself, and if you fail!"

"Yes," assented Maxey, "if I fail!" "Why, then we shall see what I can do."

This was so good a joke that both of them—so ignorant as we are of what which even a few days may bring forth—both of them laughed.

"Still I think you are right, Ellen. Our private affairs have been sufficiently discussed in the public prints already. It is about time that we again relapsed into obscurity. The police includes the press. That is my first objection, and that decides me. I will go on alone—at least till I encounter something that looks too big for me to open with. Yes, I'll do that, and I'll begin at once."

So Julian Maxey, the artist, putting on his outer garments, set forth from his lodgings in the gathering dusk of a December evening; to begin the unraveling of a very tangled skein.

"Dye! Dye! I am very positive I never heard that name before," he said to himself as he went along.

"It is hardly probable that there is more than one family of that name in the city."

To assure himself of this fact as well as to save himself the trouble of undertaking a lengthy task in Flood street, Maxey went into a store and consulted a directory. He was very much disappointed, though not a great deal surprised, when an attentive perusal of the names beginning with Dy showed him that no such person as Dye was recorded in this registry. The possibility of Lamar's having made a mistake occurred to him and led him to devise some curious combinations of letters which he thought might be susceptible of a similar pronunciation. But his success was no better than before. Dye, Dye, Dye and similar barbarous experiments met with the same disheartening fate. Clearly there was nothing to do but to plunge into Flood street and question the inhabitants.

Fortunately this was not an extensive avenue, but it made up in the density of its population what it lacked in length. There was more humanity here to the square foot than in 10 streets out of any average dozen in the city. It was a cross street stretching between two brilliantly lighted thoroughfares, easy of access and not a dangerous neighborhood, but pervaded with a general air of dilapidation and thronged with a most heterogeneous collection of people.

"Cheap lodging houses," thought Maxey as his glance wandered along the fronts of the dingy brick structures. "Truly I have undertaken a serious task. I may as well begin at the first house and go through in order. I shall never find out anything by random queries."

Maxey did not at all overestimate the magnitude of his undertaking. If he had been on an ordinary errand or in an ordinary mood, he would have retraced in disgust ere he was half through. He rang at least two-thirds of the bells in the street and followed each ring with a more or less tedious inquiry into the

personnel of the inmates of that house before he met with an encouraging response. At the door of No. 40 he put the usual question to an overgrown urchin, who answered his summons, and received the customary reply:

"No such person here, sir."

"Sure?"

"I am sure," said the boy, "but I will ask you if you say so."

Pa was a small, wiry man, with a sly face, who came up from the basement wiping his mouth on his sleeve when the overgrown urchin called to him. He looked at Maxey with no small degree of curiosity while the artist repeated his inquiry.

"I am looking for a man named Dye."

"Well, sir, you won't find him here. What did you want with him?"

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that she wore the clothes of a remane and of a melancholy disposition."

"How do you know that?"

"Because the partitions are not over thick, and the lodger in the next room heard her crying."

"Is that all he heard?"

"You are surprised, Mr. Maxey, at that lodger's stupidity. So was I. The man was an ass. Why, he didn't even take the trouble to put his ear to the wall. When I talked with him about it afterward and expressed my feelings plainly in a pitying smile, he could not see it even then. 'You don't know what you've missed,' says I. 'Don't want to,' says he. 'If I got out of bed to listen every time I heard a woman squall, I shouldn't sleep at all. Women are always crying.'"

"Well, and what became of this man Dye?"

"As I was telling you, Mr. Maxey, he was invisible for two days, and then one night I met him coming down stairs with the key of his door in his hand."

"Mr. Dye," he says, "business calls me out of town—been with his very words—my daughter has taken her opportunity to go and visit friends of hers in the city. Unfortunately she went away in a hurry, and I forgot two things—to leave the key to the rooms with her or to give her any money. And thereupon he handed me the key and fished out of his pocket this very identical bill which I show you now, Mr. Maxey, and went his way."

Mr. Belfry passed over for the artist's scrutiny a clean, new \$20 bill.

"This I was to give to the woman should she come back in his absence; but, as you have gathered, I have never set eyes on either of them from that day to this, which, if I do say it, in the estimation of Belfry has all the earmarks of shy-canary on the face of it."

"Mr. Belfry, you referred to another lodger after Mr. Dye. Did I understand you it was a woman?"

"Very like, Mr. Maxey. Do you know her?"

"Well," returned Maxey in a non-committal way, "what if I do?"

The landlord's left eye closed and opened in a suggestive manner.

"Name begins with F, eh? Pretty well up? Something of a stunner for looks?"

Maxey's blank face almost caused the sly landlord to smile, but he bit his lip and went on:

"Oh, well, if you don't come from her, I shouldn't feel at liberty to speak about a confidential matter, of course. That wouldn't be proper, not unless I felt and believed that I was working in a good cause. A man's conscience might sometimes lead him to do something which, generally speaking, he mightn't be anxious to do."

Maxey deliberately took a \$10 bill from his pocket and placed it on the table.

"You are working in the best of causes," he said. "Let us know all about the lady. I know I am trespassing on your valuable time, Mr. Belfry, and I simply want to show you that I do not mean to overlook the fact that this is money."

"Oh, don't mention it, Mr. Maxey. I shouldn't think of charging you anything for my little trouble, only I would like to feel sure that you are on the right side and that all is confidential between us."

"Rest assured of all this, Mr. Belfry."

The sly landlord's glance rested abstractedly on the bank note on the table. He seemed to have entirely forgotten its presence.

"The word of a gentleman ought to be enough for me, Mr. Maxey, and I will conceal nothing. Within the last three weeks a certain mysterious female has rung at my bell at least four times. She always comes in the night pretty late, alone and with a dowdy shawl on and a good, thick veil over her face. But don't think I'm an idiot, Mr. Maxey. After being in the lodging-house business for 10 years I am used to shy-canary a little. She's no servant girl, for people like her can't pick up the ways of servant girls so very easy, and they only nuzzle the matter when they try to pull the wool over the eyes of so old a bird as Belfry."

The sly landlord checked and continued:

"First two times she acted nervous and only came to the door and seemed to be covering up her real voice. The next two times she was nervous, but she came in. The last time she got a little scared at her own boldness and left a letter to be delivered to this man Dye immediately on his return, to save herself the trouble of calling again, she said."

"A sealed letter?"

"Oh, ho, of course, of course, Mr. Maxey. Don't think she would tell Belfry any of her business. Oh, no! She was mighty particular about that, but she brought me this envelope all sealed and directed in as pretty a little hand, as nice as you please."

"I suppose," began Maxey hesitatingly, "I suppose it would be scarcely justifiable for us to open that letter?"

The landlord responded promptly:

"Oh, no, certainly not. And besides it—it wouldn't do you any good. I think—in fact, I—I kinder guess what's in that letter."

"Guess? How? I don't understand you."

The sly landlord winked so profusely that he actually succeeded in stimulating Maxey's limited knowledge of human depravity into a comprehension of the situation.

"Oh, I see. You mean you have already opened the letter."

"The letter is just as good as over it was," returned Mr. Belfry coolly.

"It is sealed up as good as before, but a man keeping a humble lodging house can't afford to countenance any under-

handness, you know. I like to know the nature of any mail I'm carrying. Belfry is cautious, or he's nothing."

Maxey smothered his secret contempt and smiled.

"Well," he questioned, "and what did the letter say?"

"The letter said," replied Mr. Belfry, marking off the words on the tips of the fingers of a not superlatively clean hand, "the letter said: 'Lodger Dye—Come to me in the evening at 16 Livingston street. Come for your own interests and fail to come at your peril. I have some money for you. The sister.' That was the only signature. What do you think of that?"

Maxey was silent.

"As for me," went on the sly landlord, "all these circumstances look queer."

"What did Mr. Dye leave in his room?"

"He left two trunks locked and nothing in them but old clothes, one of them women's and the other men's. There wasn't much flimsy. His rent ain't up for over two months, you understand."

"Understand. What sort of a looking man is Mr. Dye?"

"Belfry's notion of it is that he's some very badly run down person. Belfry may be wrong, but that's the way he sizes up L. Dye. He might have been enjoying himself too much and the congregation got down on him. It's my experience, Mr. Maxey, after years in the lodging-house line, that most of the reverses of this world can be traced, more or less direct, to shy-canary. If a man's record for the reason of it, 40 to 1 you'll run against a piece of shy someone, and bigger rather than littler, generally, too. That's Belfry's ultimatum."

The sly landlord might have moralized for half an hour if the impatient Maxey had not interrupted him.

"I understand all about that. But what I am after now is Mr. Dye. Can you tell me the exact date of his coming and his disappearance?"

Mr. Belfry referred to a greasy pocket diary.

"At last, by the advice of my friends, I went to Peekskill, where I remained for some time, and my friends as I was growing thinner and expressed the opinion to one another that I was in a decline."

"The doctor suggested that I take cod liver oil, but I told him I couldn't bear the looks or the taste of it, either in its natural state or as an emulsion. He looked grave at this, but said no more about it. So I lay there and lingered and sank; that is all there is to say of the result of my trip to the country."

"Every time I went up to visit my wife," said Mr. Cook, "I could see she was much thinner and more feeble than before, although she didn't like to admit it."

"Well," continued the lady, "I felt that if it were physically possible I must get home, and so, on the 31 of November, they wrapped me up and brought me home, was left of me; and what there was of me weighed just 98 pounds, 37 less than I weighed when I got home strength. At the end of a week, I had gained two pounds, and at the end of two weeks, two more. And so on, gaining two pounds every week."

"It is eight weeks now, and I weigh 114 pounds, just 16 pounds more than when I came home. I can eat anything, have no pain, no cough, no headache, can run up stairs like a girl, and I know you will believe me when I say it is all due to Peaskola."

"And you think the pre-digested food Peaskola did all this for you, Mrs. Cook?"

"Certainly; if it didn't, what did? I never felt so well and like living in ten years as I do now."

"It isn't my wife's increase in weight alone," remarked Mr. Cook, "but look at her! her strength! her enjoyment of herself! her bright spirits! She had none of those things until Peaskola gave them to her. If it can do as much for other people, through her statement being published, why it ought to be published."

"What my husband says, I say," added Mrs. Cook; "anything less would be ingratitude on my part and culpable indifference to the suffering of others."

"Has this case any lesson for you? Are you thin? Are you famishing for food which the palate refuses and the stomach cannot digest? Are you pale for the want of red blood? Are you chilly because you have not flesh to feed the vital fire? Are you weak because your food is not assimilated? Are you slowly sinking like a scuttled ship? Millions are. Abandon the use of drugs and medicines, and test the modern scientific treatment, Peaskola is a food, and enables the patient to use all other foods. It arrests emaciation, re-establishes nutrition, fills up the hollow cheeks, and out of weakness develops power."

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AN INTERESTING STORY Told By Mrs. Cook, of Brooklyn.

AND CAREFULLY RECORDED A Page From Real Life Which Can Be Read With Interest and is Certain To Be of Value.

On a recent Sunday afternoon the writer gave interested attention to the narration which follows. It is here reproduced almost exactly in the words of the lady from whose lips it fell—Mrs. S. B. Cook, of 250 Tompkins avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.

"I was sitting at the front window of our home overlooking the park, as Mrs. Cook gave this leaflet out of her life, one of her children nestling against her knee."

"My husband and I have been married," said the lady, "almost nine years. Before my marriage I was often tired, weak, languid, and my strength was fast leaving me. I was then troubled a great deal with indigestion and dyspepsia, and sometimes since. I would be well two or three months and sick two or three months, off and on. That was the history of several years—sleeping badly and suffering. I could not eat any solid food. I lived on boiled milk, taken hot, right off the stove. That was my diet, and I got very tired of it; but I was afraid to touch anything else."

"Now to get back to the year 1893, last year, was a long and sad one for me. As the warm weather came on I hoped to get better, but did not. The spring broke up in a heavy rain, and the park flooded me as well as low and miserable as I had been in the winter. I was losing flesh and strength, slowly but surely, all the time. My nerves were feeble and shaken so that my sleep was habitually bad."

"At last, by the advice of my friends, I went to Peekskill, where I remained for some time, and my friends as I was growing thinner and expressed the opinion to one another that I was in a decline."

"The doctor suggested that I take cod liver oil, but I told him I couldn't bear the looks or the taste of it, either in its natural state or as an emulsion. He looked grave at this, but said no more about it. So I lay there and lingered and sank; that