Cherub Devine

By

SEWELL FORD

CHAPTER XI.

NOW, one doesn't expect to find a man in frock coat and silk hat dodging behind bushes on a place like Hewington Acres. Yet Cherub Devine had come to associate that particular part of Long Island with all sorts of surprises.

It appeared that this new arrival had intended to see without being seen, but he had not been quite quick enough. Without stopping to consider just why he was doing it Mr. Devine promptly joined in the game by stepping into the shrubbery also.

The Cherub parted the bushes cautiously. He discovered the stranger doing the same thing. Twice the Cherub stole stealthily around a bush, sure of having executed a successful flank movement on the unknown, only to find that he had disappeared like a flash.

Taking off his straw hat, the Cherub balanced it carefully on the top of a rhododendron and began making a cautious detour. To walk in a stooping position for any distance one need to be in good condition, and a thirty-eight waist measure doesn't help. The Cherub was already red of face and breathing heavily when he suddenly rounded a little thicket of stunted firs and found himself within arm's length of a slender, sallow faced person, who was holding a silk hat behind him and intently gazing at the crown of a straw one which showed above a bush some twenty yards away.

Even a side view from behind was enough to reveal the foreigner, for the jet black mustache and the little underlip tuft that curled over the chin were distinctly of alien cut and trim.

"Well, what's the game?"

The stranger was an amazingly cool sort. He merely turned quickly, measured Mr. Devine with one flash of keen brown eyes, lifted his brows expressively and shrugged his shoulders.

"Now, perhaps you'll tell me what it is all about," asked the Cherub.

The stranger's response to this was a politely impudent stare.

"I do not quite understand," he said, with just the slightest foreign accent.

"No?" drawled the Cherub mockingly. "Then there's two of us in the dark. But perhaps we can clear matters up. I found you skulking in the bushes. Now, why?"

"Beg pardon, sir, but I do not recognize your right to question me in that manner."

"Whe-e-ew! What a haughty little man it is!" laughed the Cherub. "Ah, come down off the stepladder! A minute or two ago you were dodging around as guilty as if you'd robbed a fruit stand. Now, what are you up to?"

"I am attending to my own affairs, sir."

"Then I'll help you," said the Cherub, "for I'm a good deal interested in this place and what is going on here."

"Indeed!" Again the stranger shrugged his shoulders. "But I don't know you, sir."

"Didn't act as if you wanted to, either. But here's where we get acquainted, just the same. My name's Devine—Cherub Devine."

"Eh? What?" gasped the stranger staring incredulously. "Why—er—a thousand pardons, Mr. Devine; allow me," and he hastily brought out a cardcase.

"Luigi Salvatore y Vecchi," read the Cherub, with some hesitancy in pronouncing the names. "Vecchi, eh? Ah, I see! Some relation of the late count's?"

The stranger smiled indulgently.

"I am known as Count Vecchi."

Had the Cherub been at all emotional he would have gasped then. As it was, he nearly did, but seemed to recover in time.

"But—but you're not the Count Vecchi who—who married Miss Hewington?"

The cigarette was waved toward the rim of his silk hat.

"I have that honor."

It was the Cherub's turn to stare incredulously.

"See here," he said protestingly, "either you're a dead count or a live liar, and I guess the last description fits best. Come, come! You've sprung that bluff on the wrong person. I happen to know that the real Count Vecchi has been dead for a couple of years."

"I can only quote the words of your own great humorist, that 'the reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.' Here I am, you see."

The Cherub noted that the leather cardcase which the stranger still held in his hand bore a silver crest similar to the one he had noticed on the writing paper of the Countess Vecchi.

"Yes, I see," he admitted without enthusiasm. "All a mistake, was it? And you've come over to give the countess a pleasant little surprise, eh?"

"I hardly think the countess will be surprised," and the count lifted his black eyebrows meaningly.

Instantly the situation cleared for the Cherub. So that was what she had meant by her mysterious protests.

"Oh, ho! Then she knew all along that—that— Oh, come! Do you think I can swallow that? Why, say, you

EVEN A SIDE VIEW FROM BEHIND WAS ENOUGH TO REVEAL THE FOREIGNER.

blamed bush dodger, do you expect me to believe she would deliberately tell me"—

"Ah, but that's just the point!" broke in the count. "Did she?"

And when he came to think it over the Cherub could not recall that the Countess Vecchi had ever said or implied that her husband was dead.

"It strikes me that you don't help matters much by coming over here and playing tag around her shrubbery," suggested the Cherub. "I might add that it's apt to be a heap safer for you not to do so."

"Merci!" murmured the count, quite undisturbed. "But there's no danger. I haven't the least intention of seeing the countess, much less of speaking to her. I had much rather talk to her attorneys."

"Want to see her lawyers, eh? Well, she don't keep them out here in the bushes."

This time the count indulged in quite a genuine smile.

"My dear Mr. Devine," he protested, "you don't understand the situation. Perhaps if you did you could be of help to me. Allow me to state, then, that it was not to revive a long dead sentiment which brought me to America, but a sordid little matter of money. To be definite, there was a marriage settlement, a paltry affair in the shape of a promised yearly income. At first it was paid in full and regularly; then the payments came at irregular intervals and were only partial. Of late they have ceased. I am informed by Mr. Hewington that he finds it impossible to continue them. As though I would believe that! So I come here to see for myself if the rich Mr. Hewington has suddenly become a beggar. And this is what I find!" Count Vecchi shrugged his shoulders, spread out his palms and indicated the broad expanse of Hewington Acres.

"Such an estate does not suggest poverty to me. Now I am prepared to interview the attorneys of my wife, the countess."

A twinkle of amusement appeared in the blue eyes of Mr. Devine.

"Imagine you can collect, do you?" he asked.

"I can make the attempt. It depends, I suppose, on what value Mr. Hewington sets upon his word and whether or not he is willing to have his pleasant little fiction as to a defunct son-in-law exposed. What do you think?"

Mr. Devine could appreciate audacity. He grinned.

"I think you're a slick article," said he, "and I should say you had got 'em. Looks to me as if Mr. Hewington would either have to chloroform you or buy you off."

Count Vecchi indulged in a nonchalant shrug.

"I ask only what is justly due. One cannot live without money."

"There's more or less truth in that, count, only"— And Mr. Devine pursed her cherubic mouth quizzically. "Over here we don't make a practice of choking our wives to get it."

"Bah!" The count waved aside this reference to his brief domestic career. "Over here I shall make my demands through madame's legal representatives."

"You're improving. Going to call on them today?"

"As soon as I can get a message to the countess and learn the names of her attorneys."

"Oh, I see! Now, wait. Let me think that over a minute." The Cherub rubbed his pink chin thoughtfully. "You say you don't insist upon seeing the countess personally; all you want is the address of her lawyers."

The count nodded.

"Then I'll tell you what we might do," suggested Mr. Devine. "Let's go up and ask Timmins to find out. We can get to his office without being seen. What do you say?"

The count was quite willing. He offered Mr. Devine a cigarette in his most affable manner, and when the Cherub has rescued his straw hat they started off through the maze of bluestone walks for the stables.

On reaching the office he left the count outside and went in alone to consult Timmins.

"Ever see a picture of Count Vecchi?" he asked Timmins.

Yes, Timmins had, but not for a couple of years.

"Take a squint through the window at the chap outside," said Mr. Devine. "Did the picture look anything like him?"

Timmins peered through the glass.

"Yes, very like him, sir," he went on.

"Then that's him," declared the Cherub.

"Not the one that they said was"—

"Yes, but he says he isn't. Claims he never died at all. Now, what do you guess he's here for?"

"Judging by what I've heard, sir, I should say he might be after money."

"Timmins, you're a mind reader. That's just what he is after."

"Why, the sneaking, unmannerly villain!" exploded Timmins. "He ought to be put in jail, sir."

"Well, something ought to be done with him. What's that little stone coop without any windows down there by the swan lake?"

"That's the icehouse, sir."

"Full up, is it?"

"Oh, no, sir; not now, sir. It's very near empty, I think."

"Room for a cot bed and a chair or so, is there?"

Timmins grinned expressively.

"Plenty of room, sir."

"How about air, Timmins?"

"Excellent ventilation, sir. Has to be, you know."

"Good! Now, you slip out the back way and go down there, will you? Go inside and shut the door. When you hear me knock you'll know I've come with a caller. Get the idea, eh?"

"Do I, sir! Oh, my eye! Oh, my eye!" And, with one hand over his mouth, Timmins disappeared.

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The icehouse at Hewington Acres was a most substantial building. In the front were two doors—one at the top, reached by a permanent ladder; the other on a level with the ground. This latter was a double door, with an air space between. The outside half was of thick oak and swung on heavy strap hinges. In the upper panel was a diamond shaped design of auger holes. Standing outside and looking up at these perforations was Cherub Devine. He was not studying the design. He was talking to some unseen person behind the thick door, conversing easily and pleasantly in spite of the handicap. True, he was on the free side of the door. That makes a difference, of course.

On the whole, Cherub Devine felt a grim satisfaction in knowing that the count was safe under lock and key instead of dodging around the grounds, where he might come across the countess at any moment. Even if there was no danger of a tender reunion it was best to have the count shut up, for he was bent on making trouble. At that very moment he was so declaring to the full extent of his lung power. Through the auger holes he was shouting that Mr. Devine, the countess, Mr. Hewington and Timmins should all pay dearly for this high handed outrage.

"You're a cursed Yankee pig!" howled the imprisoned count.

"Sorry you're so stirred up over it," soothingly observed the Cherub.

"Kidnaper!" shrieked the count.

"Guilty," responded the Cherub. "First offense, though. Now for heaven's sake calm down."

"It's beastly in here! My shoes are getting full of something!"

"Nothing but sawdust," answered the Cherub. "I'll have Timmins spread a rug or something over it."

"I'll make it hot for you when I get out!"

"Sure! And for the Hewingtons, too, I expect?"

"You'll both have to pay for this as soon as I'm free."

"There! You see!" exclaimed the Cherub cheerfully. "You'd stir up a bad muss, of course. We could put you in jail for attempted blackmail, but that would bring out that the countess wasn't a widow, and all that old gossip would be dug up again and printed in all the papers, and I'd be held up as a kidnaper. No, my dear count, it wouldn't do at all."

The Cherub had wished him a pleasant evening and a good night's rest and was just turning to go to the stables to see Timmins when he found himself facing Mr. Hewington. Astonishment was stamped on every line of the old gentleman's aristocratic countenance.

"Why—why, Mr. Devine! You seem to be holding a conversation with some person in there." And he indicated the closed door of the icehouse.

"Guess I was," admitted the Cherub.

"How singular! And—er—might I—er—ask"—

"Suppose you don't," put in the Cherub. "It would simplify matters a lot if you didn't."

"I have been accustomed, Mr. Devine, to be told of all that went on about this estate, even to the smallest detail. I should like to know, sir, to whom you were talking just now."

"All right," said the Cherub, with a gesture of resignation. "There's the gentleman's card."

As Mr. Hewington replaced his glasses and read the full name of Count Vecchi an expression of complete consternation, not to say panic, spread over his features.

"Impossible!" he whispered hoarsely.

"Just what I thought when he sprung it on me," commented the Cherub. "I told him he was a dead one. He says he isn't."

"Then the count isn't dead, eh?"

Cherub Devine watched with mild amusement the confusion of mind into which Mr. Hewington was immediately plunged.

"My dear Mr. Devine," said he at last, taking the Cherub by the arm and leading him away from the icehouse, "I—er—ah—that is—I hardly know how to—to"—

"Yes; I understand. Why not let it come straight out, though?"

"Well, I must begin by making the regretful admission that we discovered soon after my daughter's marriage—indeed, on the very day of the ceremony—that he was a person of dissolute habits."

"Yes. I heard all that the first day I struck here. And then?"

"Then, sir, there was an immediate separation. For a time I continued to

"THE IMPUDENT SCOUNDREL!"

supply him with funds, however, but after we left Italy I gradually ceased to do so. About two years ago the count became so dissipated that it was necessary to confine him in a sanitarium. He disappeared from his old haunts. This gave rise to the rumor that he was dead. It was so reported here. Naturally the countess assumed appropriate mourning garb. A few weeks later we learned the falseness of the rumor. The count was still in the sanitarium and much benefited by his stay there. But this fact was not made public."

"I see," said the Cherub. "He says he's come to collect that income you promised him."

"The impudent scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Hewington, lifting his clinched fists.

"That's the talk! I wouldn't give up to him if I were you. But he says if he isn't paid he'll bring suit and advertise the fact that he's still alive."

"The villain!" gasped Mr. Hewington.

"I had him sized up that way from the start. That's why I chucked him in on the ice."

"On the—the ice, Mr. Devine?"

"Why, sure! I thought he'd cool off quicker in there than anywhere else."

"Ah, I had forgotten! That is the icehouse, of course. And he threatens to make public his identity? This is terrible, Mr. Devine. I have told every one that he was— Why, just think! It will be known that I have stooped to—to deception."

The trembling jaw of De Courcey Hewington grew firm.

"Devine," said he, "this must not be. That man must not be allowed at large."

"Oh, I'll attend to that, all right. You just stay mum and I'll keep him on the ice. But not a word to the countess."

"Not a word," promised Mr. Hewington. "And in a month or so I will build another icehouse for next summer's use."

"For next summer!" And the Cherub's gaze widened as the full significance of this remark became clear to him. "Then you're planning to give the count a good, long term, eh? Well, say, there's nothing slow about you, is there? Whew! Guess I'll have to think it over."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Night Blindness.

Inability to see by day is matched by the commoner night blindness which most of us have known in friend or relative. This defect, which includes an inability to see even by artificial light, is congenital with some people and never overcome. It is often hereditary. It may also be caused, however, by long exposure to an overbright light, coupled with fatigue. A strange story is told concerning a ship's crew two centuries ago which were overcome by night blindness so extreme that their captain was obliged to force a fight with a Spanish privateer during the day, knowing that by night his men would be helpless. In order to obviate this difficulty for future occasions he ordered each sailor to keep one eye bound during the daytime, discovering, to his gratification, that this eye, having rested, was then free of the defect. The sailors were very amusing in their efforts to retain the bandage well over the eye that must be ready for night duty, and so a method of modifying this trouble was discovered—London Strand Magazine.

Sarcastic.

The Manager—I've got a new idea for a melodrama that ought to make a hit. The Writer—What is it? The Manager—The idea is to introduce a cyclone in the first act that will kill all the actors

The Attorney In England.

The use of the word attorney denotes a belated mind. Since Nov. 1, 1875, attorneys have ceased to exist, their title merged by law into that of solicitor of the supreme court of judicature, says a writer in the London Mail. The name had long been used as a term of abuse. Johnson observed of an acquaintance that "he did not care to speak ill of any man behind his back, but he believed the gentleman was an attorney."

Archbishop Trench, in 1859, noted that the word attorney was going out of favor and that the lower branch of the legal profession preferred to be called solicitors. So when the judicature act of 1873 was before parliament a clause was inserted abolishing the obnoxious title. But with our delightful conservatism we still honor the "attorney general."

How to Strengthen Facial Muscles.

When one is very tired and the facial muscles seem to be twisted into a tight knot, try mopping them with a soft sponge or cloth wet with very cold water. Besides resting the muscles of the face, the cold water acts as a tonic. Here is a tip for the woman who feels herself a "sight" from fatigue. Not only will she feel rested after her cold mopping, but the tiny wrinkles and tired lines will disappear and she will look years younger. Quite as strengthening as the cold water is the ice rubbing. Put a small lump in a clean linen cloth and pass it across the face in opposite directions to the wrinkles or fatigue lines.

Hardly.

An English political speaker was addressing an audience. Urging his hearers to give utterance to their views, he said, "If we remain silent the people will not hear our heart-rending cries!"

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION,
ESTATE OF
ELIZABETH J. BOYD, late of Damascus, Pa.

All persons indebted to said estate are notified to make immediate payment to the undersigned; and those having claims against the said estate are notified to present them duly attested, for settlement.

THOMAS Y. BOYD,
Boyds Mill, Pa., April 26, Administrator.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF WAYNE COUNTY.

Bessie M. Hector v. Claud J. Hector.
No. 79 October Term 1909. Libel in Divorce.

To CLAUD J. HECTOR: You are hereby required to appear in the said court on the third Monday of June next, to answer the complaint exhibited to the judge of said court by Bessie M. Hector your wife in the cause above stated, or in default thereof a decree of divorce as prayed for in said complaint may be made against you in your absence.

M. LEE BRAMAN,
Lee, Att'y. Sheriff.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF WAYNE COUNTY.

Gustave Kleeman v. Claire Kleeman.
No. 34 October Term, 1909. Libel in Divorce.

To CLAIRE KLEEMAN: You are hereby required to appear in the said Court on the third Monday of June next, to answer the complaint exhibited to the judge of said court by Gustave Kleeman, your husband, in the cause above stated, or in default thereof a decree of divorce as prayed for in said complaint may be made against you in your absence.

M. LEE BRAMAN,
Searle & Salmon, Att'ys. Sheriff.
Honesdale, Pa., March 25, 1910. 25eo4t

SHERIFF'S SALE OF VALUABLE REAL ESTATE.—By virtue of process issued out of the Court of Common Pleas of Wayne county, and State of Pennsylvania, and to me directed and delivered, I have levied on and will expose to public sale, at the Court House in Honesdale, on

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 1910, 2 P. M.

All of defendant's right, title and interest in the following described property, viz:

All that certain piece or parcel of land situate in the township of Palmyra, county of Wayne, and State of Pennsylvania, bounded and described as follows, to wit: Beginning at a post on the side of the public road leading from Hawley to Honesdale; thence along said road south seventy-two and one-half degrees east twelve and one-half rods to a pine tree; thence south twenty-six degrees east four and three-tenths rods to a post; thence by lands of George Atkinson north sixty-seven and one-half degrees east thirty-six rods to a heap of stones by a chestnut tree; thence north twenty-two and one-half degrees east one hundred and thirty-three and one-half rods to a stones corner in line of lands late of Russell Daniels; thence along said line of land south sixty-seven and one-half degrees west seventy-seven and one-fourth rods to a post on the berme bank of the Delaware & Hudson canal; thence along said berme bank of the canal its several courses and distances to a stake near and below lock numbered 32 on said canal, and thence along the lands of the Del. & Hudson Canal north 16 and one-half degrees east 3 and eight-tenths rods to post corner; north 55 degrees east 2 rods to post corner and north 36 degrees west 14 rods to place of beginning. Containing 45 acres and 76 perches. See Deed Book No. 89, page 257.

About 6 acres of above lands are improved. Upon same is two-story frame house and two small frame barns.

Seized and taken in execution as the property of Marie E. O'Donnell at the suit of F. L. Tuttle. No. 278 June Term 1909. Judgment, $172.60. Mumford, Attorney.

TAKE NOTICE—All bids and costs must be paid on day of sale or deeds will not be acknowledged.

M. LEE BRAMAN, Sheriff.
Honesdale, Pa., Apr. 9, 1910.

NOTICE OF UNIFORM PRIMARIES—In compliance with Section 3, of the Uniform Primary Act, page 37, P. L., 1906, notice is hereby given to the electors of Wayne county of the number of delegates to the State conventions each party is entitled to elect, names of party offices to be filled and for what offices nominations are to be made at the spring primaries to be held on

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 1910.

REPUBLICAN.

1 person for Representative in Congress.
1 person for Senator in General Assembly.
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.
2 persons for delegates to the State Convention.
1 person to be elected Party Committeeman in each election district.

DEMOCRATIC.

1 person for Representative in Congress.
1 person for Senator in General Assembly.
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.
1 person for Delegate to the State Convention.
1 person to be elected Party Committeeman in each election district.

PROHIBITION.

1 person for Representative in Congress.
1 person for Senator in General Assembly.
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.
3 persons for Delegates to the State Convention.
3 persons for Alternate Delegates to the State Convention.
1 person for Party Chairman.
1 person for Party Secretary.
1 person for Party Treasurer.

Petition forms may be obtained at the Commissioners' office.

Petitions for Congress, Senator and Representative must be filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth on or before Saturday, May 7, 1910. Petitions for Party officers, committeemen and delegates to the state conventions must be filed at the Commissioners' office on or before Saturday, May 14, 1910.

J. E. MANDEVILLE,
J. K. HORNBECK,
T. C. MADDEN,
Commissioners.

Attest:
George P. Ross, Clerk.
Commissioners' Office,
Honesdale, Pa., April 4, 1910.