

sending photograph and stating height to — Only clean-shaven men need apply, not earlier than seven p.m. Photographs will be returned.

Horne, from his vantage across the road, wondered at the load of letters that tumbled into the house where his enemy lodged.

Cartwright returned all the photographs but one, to the owner of which he sent a note asking him to call. In the interval between his landlady telling him someone had called and the entrance of the young man into the room Cartwright donned a great black beard.

"What's your name?" said Cartwright, "Richard Herrick."

"Age?" "Thirty-six."

"Excuse me a minute, I want to have a look at you," and, with this, Cartwright took a reading lamp from the table and held it high, so that the light came full to the caller's face. Herrick's eyes weakened for a moment in the glare, but then were steady. He had a very strong young face.

"You'll do," said Cartwright, replacing the lamp. "Subject to a few little conditions, of course. Do you mind staying indoors altogether for a few days?"

"I don't mind what I do," said Herrick. "I'm hard up."

"Ah!" Cartwright showed interest. "I've been like that. What have you been doing?"

"69th Yeomanry," said Herrick. "Nothing since."

"Well, look here," said Cartwright, "this job's between you and me, of course, but there's fifty pounds at the beginning of it. Is that all right?"

"Beautiful," said Herrick, with a smile.

"I'll give you my instructions. You're not to go near that window looking out on to the street. You'll better stop in the other room altogether for to-morrow. There's a lot of books you can classify a bit, and there's a pile of newspapers from which I want you to scissor cuttings on any of a list of subjects on the table there. Understand?"

"Exactly!" said Herrick. "They'll send your meals up. Your clothes—I'm sorry—are a bit shabby, aren't they?"

"I'm afraid they are," said Herrick, ruefully. "You see—"

"I've got a decent suit in the cupboard over there. I've hardly worn it. Don't think me a cad if I ask you to take them, but we're much of a height, and all that, we two."

"Certainly, I'll wear 'em," said Herrick.

"Put your old ones on the top shelf when you change. And to-morrow night at eight o'clock ring for coffee. They make decent coffee here. You'll like it."

"It's all above me," replied Herrick calmly, "but I don't mind doing it. If you'll excuse me, you seem all right. And if you're not all right, I'll pay you next time I see you. That's all."

Cartwright reached for his hand. "You're my sort," said he, "and I wish I was as young as you. I swear it's all right as rain for you, though I may come back in a hurry and want you to do something else—and quick—but that

you'll know later. If I'm not back to-morrow, you do the same again the next day. There's an address on that envelope to which I want you to write if anything happens, and inside the envelope is your money. Put the press-cuttings on those little stab files, according to the subjects. Good-bye."

Cartwright shut the door on Richard Herrick, ex-yeoman, who was puzzled. As he went down the dark stairs he to-morrow! I don't feel up to much, pulled away his black beard, and stuffed it into the little bag. A good deal depended now; but he met no one. He shouted down the bottom stairs to where the light streamed into the brick passage.

"I'm letting my friend out myself. Will you bring my meals to my room and I'm going straight to bed. Thanks very much."

He walked noisily along the passage, opened the door, said "Good night, then, old chap," aloud, and passed out into the street, still carrying his bag. He stood carelessly for a moment on the doorstep. He waited till up above him on the opposite side he saw the dim white patch of Bourne's face against the window, and then it was gone.

Cartwright walked briskly up the street. At the top he did no more than half turn his head. It was enough to enable him to see, far behind him, the creeping shadow of Bourne, intent upon his watching still.

III.

Herrick laboured at his newspaper slipping, pleased with the fifty pounds in his pocket, but impatient at this monotonous sort of work. The servant brought up his lunch, knocked, and left it on a tray outside the door. Herrick ate leisurely.

Afterwards, still cutting and clipping, he pondered the reasons of many things.

This acting arrangement was stupid. Why couldn't he go and have a look out of that window into the street? He tried to remember a fairy tale like this, but could only think of Bluebeard, which was not altogether similar.

Cartwright had his reason for this as for everything. Bourne might have occasion to leave off following him, and slip back to his rooms for something. It would not do to risk even the faint chance of Bourne's seeing a second Cartwright at the window of the house opposite.

An hour after lunch, Herrick could hear indistinctly the voices of the "early editions" in the Strand. He could not distinguish them clearly.

Presently a boy came running down the street. "Shocking murder in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Special!"

"I should like a paper," said Herrick, "but I can't break my word."

The boy's feet stopped, and Herrick heard the door shut, and then someone coming up the stairs. A damp paper came under the door.

"He has one every day, then," said Herrick, and picked it up. The police were already (he read) on the scent, for addresses had been found in the pockets of the dead man.

Herrick resumed his paragraph cutting.

A thundering knock at the street door pulled him from his chair, and he stood upright, scissors dangling on a finger. He heard the landlady's high, shaking voice. Then there was the heavy tramp of a small army up the creaking stairs.

He longed to walk over to the window and look down into the street, but he stood still.

The door was flung open. In the rear of the inspector in the doorway Richard Herrick saw a couple of policemen, and pictured a long procession of them behind, stretching down the stairs and along the passage.

"James Cartwright," began the inspector.

"Wrong address," said Herrick. "Try again."

"I've got a cab waiting." The inspector ignored the interruption. "I arrest you for the murder of William Bourne, early this morning in Lincoln's Inn Fields."

"May I go to the window now?" said Herrick, absently, considering himself free of his bargain. He stepped across and looked out. The two constables were now at his elbow.

His mind would not take all this in at once; he could only see a little, dimly—a very little. If it came to the finish, the man with the black beard would have got a cheap bargain for his fifty pounds. He turned away.

"I'm ready," said he.

Suddenly outside there was the sound of a swift-racing cab, and Herrick returned to the window. The driver sawed at the reins, the man in the cab dashed out through the open door of the house, and up the stairs. The next minute he was in the room and staring at Herrick.

"What's this?" cried the inspector.

"You've got the wrong man, Inspector Ford, though I don't blame you. I'll explain later. My name's Hadley, and a cousin of yours had me in Australia for the Pilot's Mound affair."

"Easy on," said the inspector. "What do you want me to do? Where do you come in?"

"Bourne was a chum of mine. We were working together."

He awung round upon Herrick. "What was your man's name?"

"Cartwright."

"Did he give you any address to which you were to write?"

"Corder-street, Stamford-street, Blackfriars."

"That's the place, inspector!" cried Hadley. "You may catch him there. He would have been as right as rain, but he didn't know I was in England. Come along there quickly, and we'll have him!"

The inspector stood irresolute.

"I tell you, man!" shouted Hadley, "it's the thing to do. This man's nobody. It's Cartwright you want, Hell Michael, of Australia. Besides, you're running no risks. You can take this man with you."

A minute afterwards two cabs were racing along to Blackfriars.

Corder Street is a peculiarly nasty little street. As they turned the corner Hadley craned out of the cab window. A black-bearded man, carrying a bag, stood on the steps of a house near them. When he saw the two cabs he turned

and passed swiftly into the house.

"We've got him," said Hadley. "Number fifteen, and that's it."

The stranger had banged the door, and they were kept waiting a little time. They poured in without a word of explanation, the two policemen still oblivious of Herrick.

But when they were crammed in the narrow stairs a shot rang through the house. The sound echoed through the stuffy passage, and buffeted between the shaking walls. For a little they stood together, powerless to go on. Hadley recovered first, and his hand was on the door of the landing. He was the first to enter. Hell Michael, alias James Cartwright, of The Cedars, Sutton, lay dead on the floor, having missed escape by some three minutes or less.

"But I don't understand," said Richard Herrick, in a bewildered way, and the inspector's face, too, was blank.

Hadley knelt down beside the dead man. With a quick movement of his wrist and fingers he snatched away the black beard, and they stared into a face that was a twin to the face of Richard Herrick.

"I see now," said the inspector, softly.

"Yes," said Hadley, "it would have come off splendidly, too, only he thought I was in Australia still, instead of here. You were the alibi, Mr Herrick, and it's lucky for you I was here."—From the "Pictorial Magazine."

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"Fiddle-diddle-dee," said the addlers three,

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For flavour rare, there's no compare— WHITTORE, STEVENSON, & CO.'S for me.

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He called out loud for a LIMEJUICE straight,

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A very fine flute had he—

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"Twang-Twang-Twang—Go hang," said the harpists

"Fiddle-diddle-dee," said the addlers three—

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