

The Captain of the Janizaries

By JAMES M. LUDLOW

Copyright, 1886, by Dodd, Mead & Co.

Copyright, 1890, by James M. Ludlow

presenting him with a small knife, on the bone handle of which was a rude carving of the crest of Amesa. "Give it to the warden. He will recognize it."

Long before the arrival of Amesa and Drakul at the castle in company with Elissa, the stranger, whom the reader will recognize as Captain Ballaban,

arrested as an Albanian peasant, had been admitted. He had wandered about the court, mounted the parapet, inspected the drawbridge and portcullis, clambered down and up again the almost precipitous scarp of the rock and asked a hundred questions of the servants regarding the paths by which the castle was approached.

Upon Amesa's arrival late in the day Ballaban avoided much intercourse with him except in relation to the selection of the dog. To Elissa he gave a few words of advice to the effect that she was now the object of the young lord's adoration and that in order to secure her advantage she should make as much as possible a mystery of her previous life.

"I have made nether drawings than this for old Bestorf in the school of the Yen-Tscheri, but none that will please the aga more. There is not a goat path on the borders that I have not got. A sudden movement of our armies occupying ground here, and here, and here, where I have blazed the trees, would hold this country against Ivan Beg and Scanderbeg. And with my fingers—well! Let's see! I shall keep my vow with Amesa to help him against Scanderbeg. But the devil help them both!"



"A grapple! A rope!"

was struggling to break away from him. In his engrossment with the brute he did not seem to have heard the challenge. As he came nearer, the sentinel eyed him with a puzzled but half comical look as he soliloquized: "Ah, by the devil in the serpent's skin, I know him this time. He is the Albanian Turk we were nigh to hamstringing. If I mistake that red head again it will be when my own head has less brain in it than will balance it on a pikestaff, where Colonel Kabilovitch would put it if I molested this fellow again. I'll give him the pass-word instead of taking it from him. That will make up for past mistakes."

The sentinel saluted the newcomer with a most profound courtesy and, shouldering his spear, marched hastily past him, ogling him with a sidelong knowing look.

"Help me, Mary!" responded the man, adding to himself: "But this is fortunate. The fellow must be crazy. I thought I should have had to brain him at least."

upon the heads of the Turks when they tried to scale them.

The dog, panting with the heat, mounted one of the remaining stones and stretched his long neck far down to sniff the cool water which glistened a hundred feet below him. The man shouted angrily to the beast, and so clumsily attempted to drag him away that both dog and stone were precipitated together into the well.

"A grapple! A rope!" shouted the man to a crowd who had seen the accident from a distance. "Will no one bring one?" he cried, with apparent anger at their slow movements. "Then I must get one myself."

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN vain did Castriot assault the Turks who were entrenched about the walls and springs in the neighborhood. Now and then a victory over them would be followed by a long procession from the town, rolling casks, carrying buckets, pitchers, leather bottles and dugout troughs. The amount of water thus procured but scarcely sufficed to keep life in the veins of the defenders; it did not suffice to nourish heart and courage. It was foreseen that Sfetigrade must fall.

Constantine was in the madness of despair about Morsinia. Her fate in the event of capture was simply horrible to contemplate. Yet she could hardly hope to make her way through the Turkish lines. Castriot determined upon a final attack, during which, if he should succeed in uncovering any of the gates of the town, the people might find egress.

Constantine begged to be allowed the hazardous duty of entering by passing in disguise through the Turkish army and giving the endangered people the exact information of Castriot's purpose. Taking advantage of his former experience, he donned the uniform of a janizary, easily learned the enemy's password, and at the moment designated to the besieged by Castriot's signal—just as the lower star of the Great Dipper disappeared behind the cliff—he emerged from the dense shadows of an arched gate. He was scarcely opposite the gate when the drawbridge lowered and rose quickly. The portcullis was raised and dropped an instant later, and he was within the town.

"Throwing off his disguise, he went at once toward the commandant's quarters to deliver dispatches from Castriot. But a shout preceded him—"The destroyer! The destroyer! Death to the destroyer!"

Multitudes, awakened by the shouting, came from the houses and soldiers' quarters. Constantine was seized by the crowd, who yelled: "To the well with him! Let the dog's soul come into him!"

He was borne along as helplessly as a leaf in the foaming cataract. "To the well! To the well with the poisoner!" The cry grew louder and shriller, the multitude maddening under the intense fury of their mutual rage, as each coil in hotter when many glow with it in the fire. Women mingled with soldiers, shrieking their insane vengeance, until the crowd surged with the victim around the well. The planks were torn off by strong hands. The horror of the deed they were about to commit made them pause. Each waited for his neighbor to assume the desperate office of actually perpetrating what was in all their hearts to do.

simple girl to be a vengeful spirit and shrink from this horrid murder to the very brink of which your ignorance and wretched superstition have led you. Blessed Mary need not come from heaven to tell you that a man—a man for whom her Son Jesu died—should not be made to die for the sake of a dead dog. I, a child, can tell you that."

"The dog was as accurate as the people die," said a monk, throwing back his cowl and reaching out his hand to seize her.

"And such words from you, a priest of Jesu!" answered the woman, warding him off by the scathing scorn of her tones. "Did not Jesu say, 'Come unto me and drink, drink out of my veins as ye do in holy sacrament?' Will he curse and kill, then, for drinking the water which you need because a dog has fallen into it?"

These words, following the awe awakened by her unexpected appearance, stayed the rage of the crowd for a moment. But soon the murmur rose again.

"It is just to take vengeance on a murderer!" The woman raised her hand as if invoking the witness of heaven to her cause and exclaimed: "But I am not a murderer. A curse on him who slays the innocent. I will be the sacrifice. I fear not to drink of this well with my dying gasp. Unhand the man, or as sure as heaven sees me I shall die for him!"

A shudder of horror ran through the crowd as the light form of the young woman raised itself to the very brink of the well. It seemed as if a movement or a cry would precipitate her into the black abyss. The crowd was paralyzed. The silence of the dead fell upon them as she leaned forward for the awful plunge.

Those holding Constantine let go their grip. At this moment the commandant appeared. "I will judge this case," he cried. "Man, who are you?"

"I bear your orders from General Castriot," replied Constantine, handing him a document.

By the light of a torch the officer read: "In the event of being unable to hold out, signal and make a sally according to directions to be given verbally by the bearer. CASTRIOT."

THE KING OF DIAMONDS

(Continued from page 3.)

Philip grew red. "Is it fair," he said, with a curious tone, "that a man of your age should use his position and knowledge to try and trip a boy who is brought before you on a false charge?"

It was the magistrate's turn to look slightly confused. There was some asperity in his reply. "I am not endeavoring to trip you, but rather to help you to free yourself from a difficult position. However, do I understand that you refuse to answer any questions?"

"I do." The young voice rang out through the building with an amazing fierceness. Mr. Abingdon bent over the big book in front of him and scribbled something.

"Remanded for a week," he muttered. "Downstairs," growled the court-jailer, and Philip disappeared from sight. The magistrate was left gazing at the packet of diamonds, and he called Isaacstein, the clerk of the court, and two police inspectors into his private office for a consultation.

Meanwhile London was placarded with Philip's adventures that Saturday evening. Contents bills howled in their blackest and biggest type, news-vendors bawled themselves hoarse over this latest sensation, journalistic ferrets combined theory and imagination in the effort to spin out more "copy," Scotland Yard set its keenest detectives at work to reveal the secret of Philip's identity, while Isaacstein, acting on the magistrate's instructions, wrote to every possible source of information in the effort to obtain some clew as to recent meteoric showers.

No one thought of connecting the great storm with the "Diamond Mystery." Meteors usually fall from a clear sky, and are in no way affected by atmospheric disturbances, their normal habitat being far beyond the influence of the earth's envelope of air.

And so the "hunt for the meteor" commenced, and was kept up with zest for many days. "Have you found it?" became the stock question of the humorist, and might be addressed with impunity to any stranger, particularly if the stranger were a nice-looking girl. No one answered "What?" because of the weird replies that were forthcoming.

The police failed utterly in their efforts to discover Philip's identity or residence. Johnson's Mews, Mile End Road, might as well be in Timbuctoo for all the relation it bore to Ludgate Hill or Hatton Garden. An East End policeman might have recognized Philip had he seen him, but the official description of his clothing and personal appearance applied to thousands of hobbledehays in every district of London.

Two persons among the six million of the metropolis alone possessed the knowledge that would have led the inquiries along the right track. The doctor who attended Mrs. Anson in her last illness, had he read the newspaper comments on the boy's speech and mannerisms, might have seen the coincidence supplied by the christian name, and thus been led to make some further investigation. But his hands were full of trouble on his own account. A dispenser mixed a prescription wrongly, and dosed a person with half an ounce of arsenic instead of half an ounce of cream of tartar. The subsequent inquest gave the doctor enough to do, and the first paper he had leisure to peruse contained a bare reference to the "Diamond Mystery" as revealing no further developments. He passed the paragraph unread.

ocratic-looking woman, with eyes set too closely together, a curved nose, like the beak of a bird of prey, and hands covered with a leathery skin suggesting talons. Her attire and pose were elegant, but she did not seem to be a pleasant sort of a person. Her lips parted in a vinegary smile as she read. She evidently did not believe one word of the newspaper report insofar as the diamonds were concerned.

"A vulgar swindle!" she murmured to herself. "How is it possible for a police magistrate to be taken in in such manner! I suppose the Jew press knows more about it than appears on the surface. But how came the boy to give that name? It is sufficiently uncommon to be remarkable. How stupid it was of Julie to mislay my dressing case. It would be really interesting to know what has become of those people, and now I may have to leave town before I can find out."

How much further her disjointed comments might have gone it is impossible to say, but at that moment a French maid entered the room and gazed inquiringly around the various tables with which it was filled. At last she found the lady, who was breakfasting alone, and sped swiftly toward her.

"I am so glad, milady," she said, speaking in French. "The bag has found itself at the police station. The cabman brought it there, and, if you please, milady, as the value was given as eight pounds, he claimed a reward of one pound."

"Which you will pay yourself. You lost the bag," was the curt reply. "Where is it?" "In milady's room. I paid the sovereign."

Her ladyship rose and glided gracefully toward the door, followed by the maid, who whispered to a French waiter—bowing most deferentially to the guest as he held the door open—that her mistress was a cat. He confided his own opinion that her ladyship was a holy pig, and the two passed along the corridor.

Lady Morland hastily tore open the recovered dressing case, and consulted an address book. "Oh! here it is," she cried, triumphantly. "Number three, Johnson's Mews, Mile End Road, E. What a horrid-smelling place. However, Messrs. Sharpe & Smith will now be able to obtain some definite information for me. Julie! My carriage in ten minutes."

Thus it happened that a dapper little clerk in the neighborhood of Johnson's Mews, had begun his enquiries as all Londoners do, by consulting a policeman. Certain facts were forthcoming.

"A Mrs. Anson, a widow, who lived in Johnson's Mews? Yes, I think a woman of that name died a few weeks ago. I remember seeing a funeral leave the Mews. I don't know anything about the boy. Sometimes, on passing at night, I have seen a light in the house. However, here it is. Let's have a look at it."

night and Sunday. Nevertheless, the order, the cleanliness, the comparative comfort of a prison, were not wholly ungrateful to him. His meals, though crude, were wholesome, luxurious, even, compared with the privations he had endured during the previous fortnight. The enforced rest, too, did him good, and, being under remand, he had nothing to do but eat, take exercise, read a few books provided for him, and sleep.

With Monday came a remarkable change in his fare. A pint of first-rate cocoa and some excellent bread and butter for breakfast evoked no comment on his part, but a dinner of roast beef, potatoes, cabbage and rice pudding was so extremely unlike prison diet that he questioned the turn-servant.

"It's all right, kid," came the brief answer. "It's paid for. Eat while you can, and ask no questions."

The door slammed, and at the next meal Philip received in silence a cup of tea and nice tea cake. This went on during three days. The good food and rest had really made a marvelous change in Philip. He looked like a starved dog. When he rose on the Thursday morning and washed himself, no one would have recognized him as the same boy who was in his clothes. After dinner, he was tidying his cell and replacing the plates and the rest on a tin tray, when the door was suddenly flung open and a warder cried:

"Come along, Morland. You're wanted at the court." "At the court!" he could not help saying. "This is only Thursday."

"What a boy you are for arguing. Pick up your hat and come. Your carriage waits, my lord. I hope you will like your quarters as well when you come back. A pretty stir you have made in the papers the last few days."

Philip glanced at the man, who seemed to be in good humor. "I will not come back," he said quietly, "but I wish you would tell me who supplied me with food while here."

They were passing along a lofty corridor, and there was no superior of fiercer in charge. The warder laughed. "I don't know, my lord, but the men came from the Royal Star Hotel, opposite."

Philip obtained no further news. He passed through an office, a voucher was signed for him, and he emerged into the prison yard, where the huge iron van awaited him. He was the only occupant, just as on the first memorable ride in that conveyance. When he came to the prison from the police court he had several companions in misery. But they were "stretch ed." His case was the only "remand."

During the long drive Philip endeavored to guess the cause of this unexpected demand for his presence. Naturally, he assumed that Johnson's Mews no longer held safe the secret of his meteor. Such few sensational romances as he had read credited detectives with superhuman sagacity. In his mind, Johnson's Mews was the center of the world. It enshrined the marvellous—how could it escape the thousands of prying eyes that passed daily through the great thoroughfares of the East End, but a few yards away? Judging from the remark dropped by the warder, all London was talking about him. A puzzling feature was the abundant supply of good food sent to him in the prison. Who was his unknown friend—and what explanation was attached to the incident?

he asked: "May I go now, sir?" "Mr. Abingdon leaned back in his chair and passed his hand over his face to conceal a smile.

"I have something more to say to you," he answered. "It is an offense against the law to withhold your name and address. I admit the powerful motives which actuated you, so I make the very great concession that your earlier refusal will be overlooked, if you privately tell me what you are unwilling to state publicly."

Philip instantly decided that it would be foolish in the extreme to refuse the offer. He pocketed his diamonds, looked the magistrate right in the face, and said:

"I will do that, sir. As the information is to be given to you alone, may I write it?" The policeman and other officials sniggered at this display of caution, but the magistrate nodded, and Philip wrote his name and address on a sheet of foolscap, which he folded before handing it to the usher.

To his great surprise, Mr. Abingdon placed the paper in a pocketbook without opening it. "I will make no use of this document unless the matter comes up officially. I wish to point to you that I have brought you from prison at the earliest possible moment, and have spared you the publicity which your movements would attract were your case settled in court. You are not aware, perhaps, that you figure largely in the eyes of the public at this moment. There are newspapers which would give a hundred pounds to get hold of you. There are others who would shadow your every movement, waiting for a chance to betray and rob you—murder you, if necessary. I have taken precaution, therefore, to safeguard you, at least within the precincts of this court, but I cannot be responsible beyond its limits. May I ask what you intend to do?"

Philip, proud in the knowledge that he was cleared of all dishonor, was no less for words now. "First, I wish to thank you, sir," said Philip, "and when I am older, I hope to be permitted to acknowledge your thoughtfulness better than a possible to-day. I will endeavor to take care of myself. I am going now to see Mr. Isaacstein. I do not expect that he will send for a policeman again. If he does, I will bring him before you."

The magistrate himself laughed at this sally. "You are a strange boy," he said. "I think you are acting wisely. But—er—you have no money—that is, in a sense. Hatton Garden is some distance from here. Let me—er—lend you a cab fare."

"Thank you, sir," said Philip, and Mr. Abingdon, unable to account for the interest he felt in the boy, put him five shillings and shook hand with him.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Business Transaction. Outside the police court, Philip drew as invigorating a breath of fresh air as the atmosphere of Clerkenwell permitted. He knew that an inspector and a couple of constables were gazing at him curiously through an office window, and the knowledge quickened his wits.

(To be continued.)

Advertisements on the right margin including 'CH...', 'Lad...', 'HDKS...', 'COLLAR...', 'BELTS...', 'GLOVES...', 'PURSES...', 'Linen...', 'Tender...', 'Special...', 'Ladies...', 'Ladies...', 'New Raisins, Currants, Figs, Peels, Spices, etc.', and 'T. BRADY East of Benson House.' Also includes 'DR. H. A. NESBITT, L.D.S., D.D.S.' and 'Graduate of Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, and Honor Graduate of Toronto University.'