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For the Boys and Girls

THE MAGICIAN OF MALMAISON

It was at the time when the artillery lieutenant, Napoleon Bonaparte, of Ajaccio, having attained the position of First Consul of the French Republic, and wedded Josephine, widow of General Viscount Alexandre de Beauharnais, was residing at her favorite villa, Malmaison, not far from Paris.

It was here that Josephine sat one evening quite alone, at supper, when, as the dessert was brought in, a man was announced who declined to give his name. Notwithstanding this, she permitted him to enter.

A man of about fifty years of age stood before her and begged the privilege of entertaining her with some amusing and wholly original exhibitions of legerdemain.

With her consent, the stranger drew forward a table, placing it close before her, spread a worn cover upon it, and produced from his pocket three tin goblets.

At first the juggler's movements and manoeuvres were only such as are common to the art, but soon he became more occult and interesting. Two balls which he threw from the cup into his left hand increased in a few moments to an almost countless number; allowing them to roll and clash upon the table, he blew upon them. They ran bewilderingly in and out, forming various figures, and then vanished suddenly before the eyes of the spectator.

Drawing forth now a small ebony wand, he struck three times the centre cup of the three standing inverted before him, remarking as he did so:

"Madame, I regret that your supper is finished; I would have provided you, table with the fish of all seas, from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. However, you will perhaps permit me to add to this aquarium here in the window some of these small, elegant silver-fish found in the land where, for the happiness of France, madame herself was born."

Josephine gazed with ever-increasing interest upon the achievements of the man whose skill amazed and enchanted her.

"What will madame now have?" asked the magician, to whom all nature seemed obedient. "Do you desire one of these goblets full of perfect, faultless diamonds, or a nightingale, or an owl, a bright-colored butterfly, a lizard or a cluster of fragrant hyacinths? You have only to command—I can produce all."

Josephine's astonishment could not but increase with the ever-bolder words of this enigmatical, incomprehensible being; but with her simple tastes she asked neither diamonds nor the flute of the May-singing nightingale, but merely a rose.

The magician raised the cup before touched by the magic wand, swung it once in the air, then breathing upon it, tossed upon the table toward the lady a magnificent, just-blossoming rose.

She seized it with new wonderment, hastily inhaled its delicious fragrance, then suddenly exclaimed indignantly: "But, mon Dieu! what do I see? You have cut the fairest rose in all

my greenhouse. I had intended presenting this rose to-morrow to my husband!"

"Madame, you are mistaken," replied the conjuror, smiling. "This rose is not from your greenhouse; it was mine alone till I had the honor of presenting it to you—the wife of the First Consul."

But Josephine was not convinced, and sent immediately to her gardener, while the stranger placidly continued his operations.

Upon examination, the rose intended for the Consul stood undisturbed in its place in the hot-house.

The information being at once returned to Josephine, credulous and superstitious like most Creoles, she now utterly abandoned herself to astonishment. The more enthusiastically she gave vent to her wonder, the more inexhaustible appeared the resources of the singular man.

Now a flock of birds flew from his coat pocket and pecked the crumbs from her evening meal on the table; now seizing a glass of water and whirling it round as though to scatter its contents in every direction, poured out upon Josephine a thick shower of flowers.

At last she drew forth a silken purse, from which she would have rewarded the juggler with gold, but observing this, he threw himself at her feet, exclaiming:

"Not with gold, madame, would I have you reward me for the simple pleasure which I hope amused you!"

"What, then, do you desire?" she asked, surprised.

The man quickly gathered together the disordered flowers lying around, put them into a basket, which he covered with a napkin, and shook it several times. When he again removed the cloth, the basket was filled with the most inviting rosy-cheeked apples.

He presented them to Josephine, without touching them, and asked that she would accept one.

Bewildered afresh, scarcely trusting her own senses, she seized an apple, and expecting some new surprise, cut it in two with a knife. Within she found a closely-folded fine paper—a petition to Bonaparte.

"Madame!" cried the magician, "before you stands an unhappy man. My name is George Marec. Becoming entangled with the affairs of the kingdom I took part in the struggle against the Republic. I fought in La Vendee under an ensign no longer that of my country. When our party succumbed, I found myself compelled to flee and live in foreign lands. Driven thus from my country, my name was stricken from the roll of citizens, and placed upon the emigrant list. One word from you, madame, can restore me to my country and my people."

While Marec spoke these words, Josephine had been carefully examining with fingers and eyes the pieces of apple that lay on the plate before her, but was unable to discover any disturbance of the peel.

"Very gladly will I aid you, Monsieur Marec," said she, after hearing his speech. "This very evening, I will endeavor to lay your petition before my husband, and be assured I will spare neither words, trouble, nor sacrifice to insure its success."

The magician gathered up his cups, took the table upon his arm and, bowing profoundly, disappeared with hasty steps.

Scarcely had he withdrawn when Josephine hurriedly rang her bell, which was answered by the chamberlain.

"Do not permit the man who has just left the room to leave the house," said she. "I wish the Consul to know him. Provide him a room and offer him every comfort."

Her command was at once obeyed. It so happened that evening that under the pressure of business, Bonaparte was unable to reach Malmaison till late in the night, and it was therefore impossible for his wife to present the petition to him.

As early as six o'clock on the following morning, he had breakfasted, and stood in the dining-hall, while the vehicle that was to convey him to Paris, waited in the palace-court without.

Josephine entered as he was on the point of leaving. "Good-morrow, my dear!" he said, pleasantly. "I was so hurried and

overworked yesterday that I could not find time to see you, and it will be much the same to-day. At present, France is a tangled ball, and needs a strong, steady hand to unravel it. Nevertheless, I will yet accomplish the difficult task. You must pardon me, therefore, if for a time I see but little of you. How did you amuse yourself yesterday? Who visited you?"

"I was most excellently entertained," answered she; "and when we dine together to-day you shall enjoy a pleasure—a surprise—such as never yet— But that reminds me. Pray allow this name to be removed from the emigrant list."

With these words, she presented the magician's petition to her husband.

"What a Chouan!" (During the French Revolution, the Royalists on the Loire, in Bretagne, and La Vendee were called "Chouans.") cried the Consul, with a darkening countenance, when he had glanced over the page. "One of the fanatical followers of Charette and Laroche-Jaquein! Yes, yes, Marec! Marec! He has come from England, and landed secretly upon our coast, some infamous plan of Pitt, doubtless, to accomplish. My friend Fox has already written to me. I shall have this artful fellow carefully looked after. And how do you know him? Where have you seen him? How came these lines in your hand?"

At this violence of her husband, Josephine began to weep.

"Do not weep, child!" said Napoleon, soothingly. "Tell me how this man came to you with his petition. Your goodness has been imposed upon. These traitors imagine that any request coming through you could not be refused. If it were so, they would carry on their nefarious tricks before my very eyes in Paris. No, no. Fouche was right when he said, 'These men can never be changed for the better.'"

"I do not know the man in the least," replied Josephine. "Burn the paper, and do not excite yourself further. We will not speak of the matter again."

"Well, well," said the Consul; "but only tell me this—how come this petition into your hands?"

"As by a miracle," replied Josephine.

Then she eagerly related what had occurred the previous day.

"I will commend this trickster to Fouche, and they will—"

"Oh, Bonaparte!" interrupted Josephine, "I pray you do not betray one in my house. Honor hospitality, at least!"

"Is it possible he is still here with you at Malmaison?" cried her husband.

"Yes," she murmured, anxiously, dreading a violent outburst of rage; but Bonaparte answered quietly: "Fouche will soon get him, wherever he may be."

Josephine was in despair. She sent immediately for her guest, Marec, but he was not to be found in his room. The entire grounds about Malmaison were subjected to diligent search, but in vain. That she might save him, Josephine was determined to provide him with the means of escape, if he would only come in time.

Already noon was near at hand, and with uneasy steps she paced up and down the room, fearing Bonaparte might arrive at any moment and encounter the magician.

Her anxiety increased with each second. At last the folding door flew open, and Marec appeared, with all his apparatus of the previous day.

"Fly, sir—fly at once!" cried Josephine, meeting him. "Here is money, but hasten, or you are lost."

Marec remained standing, and looked quietly at her. After a short pause, he said, with a smile of conviction:

"Madame, they have mistaken me for another person. If I may remain with you a moment, I will doubtless be a witness to the explanation that awaits you."

Scarcely had he spoken, when again the door opened, and a courier from Paris entered the room, presenting a paper to the wife of the Consul.

Hastily she broke the seal, and as she read even the first lines a visible expression of satisfaction overspread her face.

When she read to the end, she gave a sigh of relief, and, smiling, extended the document to Marec. He read:

"Madame: I have just delivered to the First Consul proof to the effect that this man, who has the honor to appear before you is not the murderer of French soldiers, and neither deserves the rigor of the law. He whom you desire to assist is an honorable man, who took part in the expedition to Ambron, and has fought bravely, but emigrated after the defeat of the Royalists. He has not been in England, but Germany. The name of the other Marec is not George, but Yves, and he still remains in England, where his steps are carefully watched. I am glad to inform you that your protegee's name has been removed from the emigrant list. With profoundest veneration, Paris. FOUCHE."

"I was aware of all this, this forenoon, madame," said Marec. "I also knew that courier, bearing this information, was on the way here. Perhaps I have proven to the Minister of Police that I am capable of rendering him useful service. But now, to you, madame, my warmest thanks, for you have restored to me my country and my people!"

He threw himself at her feet, while tears of gratitude checked the utterance of further words. A few days later George Marec was made a member of the secret police,

A STRANGE TALE OF THE SEA THE SHIP THAT VANISHED

BY ELLIOTT O'DONNELL

What happened to H.M.S. Atalanta, one of Britain's old wooden sailing ships, which sailed from the Bermuda Islands westward bound—and simply disappeared? In spite of one of the most thorough sea-searches in history, no trace of the ill-fated vessel was ever found.

Probably no disappearance at sea in modern times caused such a great sensation as that of H.M.S. Atalanta.

The affair has a personal interest for me because my family were intimately acquainted with one of the officers of the ill-fated ship. He came to see us shortly before sailing on what proved to be his last voyage, and, though a child in the nursery at the time, I distinctly recollect seeing him.

An Omen of Evil

The Atalanta was a three-masted wooden sailing-ship, technically termed a sailing frigate, of 958 tons displacement—a mere baby as compared with the majority of ocean-going vessels to-day. She was a sister ship to the Eurydice, whose appalling end, a few years before, was regarded by many sailors as of singular ill-omen to the Atalanta. It was—and I dare say still is, a popular belief among seamen that if one sister ship perished the other would follow suit. Both ships were originally intended as active units in our naval fighting forces, and for that purpose carried guns, the complement of the Atalanta being twenty-six. After some years of service, however, they were both converted into training ships for young R. N. seamen. So far, the resemblance between the two ships was pretty close, but there were also distinct differences.

For instance, the Eurydice was a "bad sailor," usually beaten in a stiff gale by other frigates of the same size through her inability to carry sail. But the Atalanta was deemed of great stability, until her return from the trip before her last tragic one.

Masts That Were Too High

Her officers then complained that she was over-masted. The admiralty, on hearing what they had to say, at once communicated with the experts at Portsmouth, who, after a lengthy and presumably thorough examination, reported that while in their opinion it was not necessary to reduce the height of the masts, as her officers suggested, it would be advisable to make certain alterations in her gear.

This they did, apparently to the satisfaction of the Admiralty, though not altogether to the satisfaction of the Atalanta's officers.

On November 7th, 1879, the Atalanta left Portsmouth for the West Indies. Her captain, Francis Stirling, was a sailor of great experience, who had seen service in the Crimean, Chinese, and Malay Wars. His officers were also highly qualified and experienced men. The crew, who numbered three hundred, came mostly from Portsmouth and Devonport.

"Combing" the Atlantic

The ship reached the Bermudas safely, and the general impression received in the islands was that she had proved tolerably satisfactory at sea, and that there had been contentment and harmony on board. Captain Stirling wrote home saying he might be expected at Spithead the first week in March.

That was the last letter his wife ever had from him.

On January 31st, 1880, the Atalanta raised her anchor and left the Bermudas homeward bound.

She was never seen again. When the time fixed for her arrival at Spithead came and she did not put in an appearance some anxiety was caused, as the weather at sea had been distinctly unfavorable. One storm, at least, had been reported, and much strong wind.

Still, the Admiralty's opinion of the Atalanta was so good that no great alarm was felt for some time, it being quite possible that she was sheltering in some remote port. As the days went by, however, and no tidings came, apprehension grew and at last developed into something akin to panic.

Then began a search the like of which was probably never known before, and most certainly has never been known since. The Atlantic was scoured by warships all on the look out for the Atalanta, and cables were sent to all likely ports asking for any information regarding her.

The result was an absolute blank. The Atalanta and her entire crew had vanished, without leaving behind them a boat or even a lifebelt. There was nothing that could give the slightest clue as to the fate of the ship.

Then the gunboat Avon, from China, arriving at Portsmouth on April 19th, reported that off the Azores she had seen an immense quantity of wreckage strewn on the beaches. But there was nothing to indicate that any ship had actually gone down, and nothing that could be identified as belonging to the missing vessel. The officers of the Avon thought it very lively the Atalanta had experienced bad weather and drifted north, possibly encountering on the way an iceberg, but both they and the Admiralty experts scouted the idea of her having turned turtle.

The barque Columbia, arriving at Queenstown in May, reported having passed, on April 27th, a raft made of spars lashed together with what seem-

ed to be ship's ropes, but there was nothing on it to tell its history or to connect it with any particular vessel.

ed to be ship's ropes, but there was nothing on it to tell its history or to connect it with any particular vessel.

Lost "Without Trace."

Again, Captain Sarratt, of H.M.S. Wye, who left Gibraltar on April 20th to join in the search for the Atalanta, came across a small boat with a solitary old man, who was too ill to speak, in it. Every effort was made to save the man, but he died without being able to say who he was or where he came from. At first it was thought he was possibly a survivor of the Atalanta, but it was subsequently decided that he belonged to some foreign fishing fleet.

But what had become of the Atalanta? The experts refused to accept the view that the weather alone had caused her to sink. A storm there had been, but not sufficiently severe to seriously damage her. We have seen also that the idea of her having turned turtle—an eventuality which was considered possible at one time by her own officers—was generally ridiculed. But, wrecked or turned turtle, would she not have left a tell-tale something behind her? She had left nothing.

Was it Mutiny?

Even if she had struck an iceberg some trace of her would surely have been left, unless, of course, she had sailed right under its crest, in which case the crest might have broken off, and, falling on her, have sent her to the bottom. This, however, hardly seems feasible, especially considering the great experience of Captain Stirling.

Naturally, many ingenious theories were published. The possibility of a mutiny on the Atalanta was hinted at, and it was suggested that the mutineers, having killed the officers, had taken the vessel to some far-away island in the Pacific. But if this had happened the truth would assuredly have been made known by now. Besides, there was never any hint of discontent on the Atalanta.



FLOWERED MATERIALS OF MANY COLORS FASHION SUMMER FROCKS.

Of irresistible charm is this light-some frock of flowered voile, worn over a slip matching the deeper tone of the flowers. Long sleeves find their way into the newest frocks, and this version of the regan sleeve is softly gathered with the round neck, into a narrow band. Circular panels express the side flare, and are held in place by two-toned satin ribbon tying in front. Smartly dressed women are choosing this type of fluttering frock for summer wear, to the exclusion of other modes, and the diagram accompanying this frock shows how simple and easy it is to put together. Sizes 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust. Size 36

Heft it Once! Then You Will Want One for Your Own Kitchen

The very feel of it will make you want to own it. It balances so nicely, seems to be just right. The handle is rigid and does not tip around like a hinged handle. That means no slipping, scalded hands or accidents. See how you fill it? You lift the hinged lid and can fill it right under the tap or by dipper because the opening is at the side, not the centre. Most important, these new up-to-date kettles cost no more than the old fashioned kettle.



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For First Aid—Minard's Liniment.

Something New in the Bible.

The minister called when all the family were out except Eva, aged seven. After he had asked her whether she attended Sunday school regularly he said:

"And do you know your Bible?" "Oh, yes, sir," the little girl replied. "Perhaps you can tell me something that's in it," he persisted. Eva brightened. "There's a lock of my baby hair way at the back."

Rose or Nose?

In reporting a flower show a newspaper used an "n" for an "r" with the following result:

"As Mr. Smith mounted the stage all eyes were fixed on the large red nose he displayed. Only years of patient cultivation could have produced an object of such brilliance."

London's smallest church, St. Ethelburga within Bishopsgate, dates back to before the Fire of London, and so cannot be demolished.

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