

# APPLE MARY

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"The Vice Admiral of the Blue."

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HERE was just one person who knew all about it. I mean about prison life. There was just one person who knew and left and saw it from every point of view; who understood its greatness and its smallness, its tragedy and comedy, its romance and its pathos. It was none of the judges, black-robed and serious, weighted with the dignity of the law, moving in and out of chambers and looking down upon the courtroom as one looks at a chess-board, and regulating the moves without passion or feeling. They had ceased to appreciate the human side of it long ago. That which stood before them was not a human being, with heart throbs and capabilities—it was but an incident.

It was not the warden or any of the keepers of the old Tombs prison to whom I refer, for to them we came—the innocent and the guilty—before our little hour and were gone. They knew the dreary routine, and a great deal more, but it was only from the official side.

Certainly it was not the missionaries, whose varied motives led them into strange behavior, and who went poking around in the darkness, while calling on others to behold the light.

One of us? Ah, what could we know beyond the range of the little cells which bounded out into the sea, perhaps, glimpses into other cells just like our own. But of the without and the within, the cause and the effect, the reason and the right of it all—what could we know?

There was just one who knew it all, and that was "Apple Mary." If the judges, the warden, the keepers and the missionaries, and even ourselves, had limited viewpoints, Mary saw it all from the lofty height of actual knowledge.

She knew what the judges would do, and why. She understood what we had done, and very often, why. Political records, the juggling and housing, the strategy and struggling, all were open secrets to Apple Mary. She knew every detail of the endless conflict between the prisoners in the Tombs and the district attorney's office. The prisoners fighting for their liberty and the assistant district attorneys contending for what they call their honor—each striving for what they needed most.

If you had merely met in your daily passing you would never have dreamed of how wonderful she was. You would never have fancied that those kindly Irish eyes had looked into many a dark soul secret and shed many a tear for the innocent. You could not have imagined that the broadly smiling mouth could tell things that the whole officialdom of New York would give much to know and much to hide.

Mary too was an autocrat. She did not look it, dear soul. She was very stout, but built as one might say, for utility, not beauty. Mary spent no unnecessary hours in pursuit of Marcel waves or furbelows. Mary's absolute and uncompromising plainness won respect. Mary had made her place in the world not from outward seeming, but from inward reality. But woe to the young attorney, new to the ways of the criminal courts or the district attorney's office, who dared to treat Mary with indifference or slight. It did not take him many hours to learn that the bearer of that fruit basket, who steered her way down the corridors like an overland balloon in a gale of wind, was decidedly to be reckoned with when it came to winning cases in the criminal courts.

"Apple Mary" had the run of all the courts and prisons. Doors barred in more than one sense to others were wide open to her. With her great basket of fruit she trucked here and there as freely as though she owned that part of the world in which she moved. Her cheerful presence was in the Tombs, the criminal courts building, Ludlow street jail, the house of detention and all the other places made necessary by crime and trouble. They all knew her, but they will never know her again—no, nor her like.

She had gone to her reward. She always had a kind word for us, whether we bought of her or not, and every one reacquainted. Always we would give her a lift up the narrow stairs and show her in other small ways that we were glad of her coming. The basket was always too heavy for her. Once, I remembered, told her she should not work so hard, that she should rest.

Rest! With the first of the month approaching, the landlord's birthday. Indeed, she had no time to rest.

"Apple Mary" was a particular source of joy to us in the Tombs. She had



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no objection to expressing her candid opinion of the actions of those of whom she disapproved. "Mike" fell under her ban. "Mike" had offered to carry her basket one day long ago and had taken an apple. Mary never forgot it. Whenever she saw "Mike" she would scream:

"Get out, yer harp yer. Yer daylight robber!" Clear and strong the old lady's voice would ring out, floating through the prison and reaching the topmost tier.

Yet immediately afterward she would be in "Murderer's Row," giving away from her little store freely to those who could not buy, and with each gift would go her blessing.

It was evident also that Mary had her preferences, and once they got the better of her judgment.

But then, "Apple Mary" knew his story—all of it—and that makes all the difference in the world.

It happened in the Tombs—the saddest place in New York. In one of the cells in "Murderer's Row" was a young Irish lad. The bloom of his native

country had scarcely left his face, the inexperience of youth was still with him. There had been a murder of a Chinese laundryman, "Terry" had been near the place. He was something tangible, at least, so the police arrested him. To save themselves three Chinamen helped the police to make a case; they swore they saw "Terry" do the killing.

He was innocent, but that made very little difference when it was a choice between their lives and his.

So the police locked Terry up in the Tombs. When they searched him they found no money. The Chinamen who had been killed was rich. The police immediately announced this a motive for the murder. Nothing could be clearer. "Terry" was poor and had committed murder, hoping to secure his victim's money.

Later, however, they searched him again more thoroughly. This time they found his savings secreted in a belt. Now, indeed, there was great joy at police headquarters. The possession of money proved that he had killed to

get it. Could any further proof be wanted? The money was the "proof." "Terry" was damned if he had it, likewise damned if he hadn't.

The case was very plain against "Terry." It always is, for when in contact with police officials no circumstance can be by any possibility tend to establish innocence. Facts are to convict, not to clear.

While "Terry" came to abide with us the Chinamen were sent to the house of detention.

"Terry" was a merry lad. He did not seem to fear what was to become of him; he was so sure that they could not convict him of something he had never done. Though he suffered from the confinement and other numerous unpleasantnesses, to put them mildly, he never complained and bore it all with such engaging patience and unflinching good humor that every one came to be fond of him—keepers and prisoners alike.

When "Apple Mary" heard him singing "Killarney" in his cell and her eyes rested upon his young Irish face, she straightway rushed to greet him. He was from county Clare. That was Mary's home. Day after day found her in front of his bars, her merry sallies cutting forth merrily from him. Woman though she was, he would not let her have the last word. He would shout to her as she went

away down the corridor some laughing bit of blarney.

But there came a time when "Terry" began to realize that things were looking about as badly as possible for him.

"Terry" knew, as the time went on, that he was done for.

"Terry" began to laugh less, then he grew thin and white. As though afflictions enough had not settled upon him, he went blind. We all grieved for him. But Mary had grown to love him as her own son.

Mary looked the Chinamen. When she went to the house of detention she abused them roundly. She would not sell them fruit. She told them they should not have a single apple, though their tongues hung out for it to their very teeth. She called them names.

"The dirty flannel mouths what talked through a sieve." But all that could not save "Terry." The rest of us speculated as to what "Terry" would get. Not as to acquittal or conviction—the latter was certain. "Would the sentence be death or life? Only "Terry," worn to a shadow now, seemed not to care. As for Mary, she was frantic.

For the day before the trial had arrived, and with all Mary's cunning and trying, she had been able to convince no one in authority that "Terry" was innocent.

"Where were his witnesses to prove he didn't do it? Who was to dispute those three Chinamen up in the House of Detention?" they asked her.

Still, with all her woman's love, she tried to cheer him and to hide her fears.

"Don't yer worry; yer all right!" she

questioned them. They told of the awful warnings which they had received.

"Where did they come from?" the judge asked.

The Chinamen shook their heads. How should they know who had sent them? It would have been more comforting if they had known. They would know whom to avoid in future.

"The white devil with the basket brought them," they explained, trembling, as they produced the warnings.

"Poor Jim" gasped.

Mary was sent for.

Basket and all, she marched to the judge's chambers, as triumphant as though all the pipes of Old Ireland played before her.

The judge was stern. He looked at Mary as though the safety of the world had been brought in question. "Poor Jim" was frantic. His witnesses had been tampered with. His witnesses! The offense was unpardonable.

"Mary," the judge looked at her severely.

"Where did you get them?"

It was "Poor Jim" who enlightened the judge. They had been his. Mary had stolen them from his office.

The judge grew very grave indeed. "Honest to God, judge," Mary burst out, "I never touched them. 'Never at all at all!'"

"Liar!" howled "Poor Jim."

"So help me, judge."

"They were in her basket," chattered the Chinamen.

"How did they get into your basket?" The stern, blue-eyed judge was not to be trifled with.

"The wind blew them in, yer honor."

"Poor Jim" roared something unintelligible.

"The wind, Mary?" The judge looked incredulous.

"Sure, Mary prepared to demonstrate. 'I hold my basket like this (Mary stood near the table) and the wind came so.'

And Mary puffed out her cheeks.

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## MINERS TO BE TRIED FOR MURDER.

The eyes of every labor union in the United States are focussed on Caldwell, Idaho, where will begin the trial of the members of the Western Federation of Miners, who are charged with being accessories to the murder of former Gov. Frank Steuneger, who was blown to atoms by a bomb which had been placed at his own gateway, Dec. 26, 1905. The men who are to be called upon to answer to the law for this crime are Charles H. Moyer, president, and William D. Haywood, secretary-treasurer of the miners' federation, and George A. Pettibone, formerly a member of the executive board of the federation, while Harry Orchard, a miner, has confessed, will plead guilty and take the stand to give evidence for the state. Orchard is said to have confessed that he alone has committed 39 murders as agent for the miners' federation. The officers of the federation have retorted that such a confession is perjury and charge that they are the vic-

tims of a conspiracy by the Mine Owners' association. The feud between the last named association and the Miners' Federation has lasted for years, cost more than 100 lives by assassination and destroyed property valued at millions of dollars. Thirty murders in all are charged against the federation officers who are to be tried and who are held to have planned them and hired the tools to put their plans into execution. Labor organizations throughout the entire country have subscribed to a defense fund for the prisoners and have engaged Clarence S. Darrow, a famous Chicago criminal lawyer, to conduct the case. James McPartland, the man who ran down Orchard and obtained the terrible confession, has been for years a great detective and for four years did valorous work in the coal regions of Pennsylvania against the "Molly Maguires," many of whom he was instrumental in sending to the gallows.