



A. L. DRUMMOND.
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BLACKMAILING is the learned profession of the underworld. Thousands practise it. Its revenues are enormous. And in New York city alone its victims each year are numbered by the thousand. Therefore if I had only a simple story concerning this common crime I should not tell it. But the narrative I shall relate has not its counterpart in all the years of my professional experience, nor in anything I have ever read. It stands alone.

On April 5, 1898, a prominent attorney of New York called at my office. He said he had a wealthy client who was in great trouble. He had met a beautiful young woman in a fashionable restaurant. They became acquainted. He asked permission to call at her home. She said he might do so the following Thursday at five o'clock.

The wealthy merchant kept the appointment. The woman lived in a brown stone house in West Eighty-third street. A servant with red hair opened the door. A gray haired woman, apparently more than seventy, sat by a window in the sitting room, patiently plying a needle. The young woman whom he had called to see was in another room. She was dark, pink cheeked, trim figured. Her gown was of the same black—unrelieved by a touch of color—that she had worn when he saw her dining in the place down town.

The man remained in the house an hour. In two weeks he came again by appointment and remained another hour, the same servant letting him in, the same aged woman sitting quietly sewing. And then he went no more to see Mary Schmidt, the young German girl—for such were her name and her nationality, respectively, according to her story.

In seven months he was astonished to receive at his office a letter from the young woman. First, he was amazed that she should know his name and his place of business, as he had told her neither. Next, he was astonished at the contents of the note itself. She must see him without fail the next afternoon, Thursday, at five o'clock.

He was there at the minute. As he drew near the door he saw the red haired servant dusting the windows. Once inside the house he saw the older woman in her accustomed place engaged at her accustomed task. The "woman in black"—for I shall henceforth refer to her as such—was in the same room in which she had received him on the two other occasions.

But this time she was not in black. She wore a loose light gown trimmed with pink. She said she must have \$500 immediately. And, woman like, she then asked when she could have it.

The wealthy man happened to have brought with him just that amount, and gave it to her on the spot.

"But I want you to tell me something," he said. "How did you learn my name and my place of business?"

"By the merest accident," she replied. "A short time after you called here I was walking down Broadway with a gentleman. We met you and he stopped to talk with you while I went on a few steps and looked into a shop window. When he left you I said to him:—The face of the gentleman to whom you spoke seems strangely familiar to me. Isn't he Mr. So-and-So, of Fulton street? 'Oh, no,' he replied, 'he is—' and he told me your name and address."

The merchant's curiosity on this point apparently satisfied, he took his departure.

Two months later came another imperative letter to the merchant's office from the woman in black. Like the first letter, it said she must see him the next afternoon, Thursday, at five o'clock.

And again he obeyed her. The same red haired servant let him in. The same woman was sewing. Only the merchant's young woman friend had changed. She no longer wore a light, loose fitting gown, trimmed with pink. Again she was the woman in black.

She must have \$15,000 before noon of the next day. For herself? Not a penny of it. For another. She would depart at once for her old home in Germany, where dwelt her aged parents, who believed her husband had just died. And the money she would deposit in a bank and expend only for the support and education of the individual for whom she—not requested it, but demanded it.

All this the merchant heard, and more. More, because when he said he did not believe he could raise a penny in excess of \$10,000 in so short a time as twenty-four hours the white haired woman turned upon him with such a volley of rebuke and denunciation as he had never heard. He should be ashamed to treat a poor young German girl so! He was no man. He was a villain, a rascal!

The woman in black was not vehement. She was only firm. To the merchant's first statement that he did not have \$15,000 in cash she told him to sell some of his stocks and get it. And when he said the most he could give her the next day was \$10,000 she firmly refused to take anything less than the sum demanded, though she would give him two or three more days to raise it all.

Thus matters stood when the merchant, head a-whirl, left the house. Then the man did what all rich men do when they are in doubt about anything—consulted his lawyers. And his attorney, after hearing his story, came to me.

"Does your client believe," said I, "that this woman has a just claim against him?"

"He has no doubt of it."

"What have you advised him to do?"

"Well, at first I advised him to take his wife for a trip to Mackinac Island, remain with her there a few weeks, and during their stay tell her the whole story. Then I thought I would come over here and ask you what you thought about it."

"Has he bought his tickets?"

"Yes; they're going to-night."

"Can you see him before he goes?"

"Yes."

"Then advise him not to tell his wife a word, and I'll go to work on the case."

That was Saturday, if I remember correctly. The first thing I did was to send a man to watch the house. At the end of the first day he reported that the place seemed to be closed. The shades were all drawn and no one had entered or left. I asked him if he could get a room across the way so he could keep up the watch indefinitely if necessary without attracting at-

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HE FOLLOWED HER TO A LARGE DOWNTOWN STORE.

tenion. He inquired at a hotel opposite and engaged the front room on the second floor.

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday two of my men relieved each other in watching the house night and day, but the shades remained drawn and no one left or entered the house. About four o'clock Thursday afternoon, however, a red haired woman came down the street, entered the front door with a pass key and, as soon as she could remove her wraps, began to dust the windows. In a few minutes a gray haired woman went in the house. And lastly came the woman in black. Later a man came—and went.

A few minutes before seven o'clock the gray haired woman came out. One of my men followed her. She took five different street cars—doubled back and forth on her course, as if to throw off pursuers—and finally entered a splendid residence a little above 120th street West. Fifteen minutes later the red haired woman went into the same house.

The woman in black did not leave the Eighty-third street place until nearly half-past seven. Like the aged woman, she went home by a circuitous route, and eventually entered a residence in the vicinity of 100th street West.

When these facts were telephoned to me I put two men to watch each house, making six men in all, including the two on watch in Eighty-third street. For the following six days the watchers in Eighty-third street saw nothing—shades drawn, nobody around. The men watching the house near 100th street reported they had seen the woman in black at a window and once on the porch. They also reported that a very fine looking, well dressed business man left the house each morning and returned each evening, a little four-year-old girl meeting him at the door and calling him "papa."

On Tuesday, I think, a carriage drove up to the door and the woman in black drove away. One of my men tried to follow her on foot and by street car, but lost her. The next day she went out again, and this time he had a bicycle. He followed her to a large downtown store, took notice of the clerk who waited on her and, after her departure, said to him:—"I was almost on the point of speaking to Mrs. — while you were waiting on her, but, as she did not recognize me, I guess she has forgotten who I am. My sister used to work for her in her home, in Sixtieth street, and I have often spoken to her."

"That isn't Mrs. —," replied the clerk, "that's Mrs. — and she lives —" and he gave the number of her home in the street near 100th.

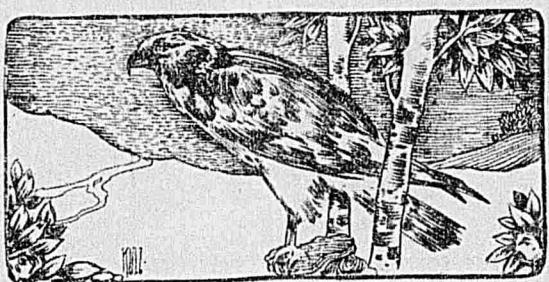
When this was reported to me I knew beyond the possibility of a doubt the name of the woman in black, since the name given by the clerk was the name of the family who, according to the directory, lived in the house. I looked up the marriage license records and definitely ascertained that the man who left the house each morning and returned each night was her husband. The birth records showed the little girl to be her daughter. I had also definitely learned the name of the red haired and the gray headed women.

The elderly woman I found to be the mother of the other two.

The woman in black was the wife of the president of a large corporation. We found, among other things, that he owned more than a hundred different pieces of real estate in Manhattan.

The red haired woman who played the part of a servant in the house in Eighty-third street I also found to be the wife of a wealthy man who was the president of a large corporation. Both sisters lived in the finest style, having horses, carriages and numerous servants.

I next learned of a man who was a cousin of the two women. I visited him myself, making no secret of my identity or of my purpose in calling upon him.



THE HAWK.

By Tudor Jenks.
EVERY morning when I rise I see him cruising in the skies. High and low, to and fro, sailing, swooping—see him go, Now fast, now slow. The pirate of the air is he, Every course to him is free.

As his shadow chills the ground, Flees the hare with timorous bound— Thus the merchantman of old Fled the dire black flag unrolled. For the hawk must slay and slay, To live by murder is his way; Armed he goes with talons keen, With hooked beak his eyes between, To strike, to hold, to tear and rend. From such a fate, ye gods, defend The trembling creatures in the grass That shrink to let the quick death pass!

But as the pirate had his lass, The hawk has his; and on the nest Awaits the mate he loves the best. Nestlings, too, there are to rear, For whom the moors must live in fear. Away he sails, till, growing dim, He fades on the horizon's rim.



He readily admitted the relationship and added:—

"I don't want to help send my own relatives to State's prison, but the fact is my aunt and her two daughters are the wickedest women in New York. And the worst of it is, the old woman is as bad as her daughters. The red haired one even tried once to blackmail me, but she couldn't do it."

I still lacked, however, one bit of evidence that I wanted—a specimen of the handwriting of the woman in black—I mean a specimen made at her real home, near 100th street, to compare with the letters written to the merchant from Eighty-third. I was keeping up the watch on the house and early the next week came the opportunity to forge this last link in the chain.

A messenger boy was called to the house, received a note and away he whirled on his wheel. At least he started to do so. One of my men caught him at the first corner.

"Give me back that letter," he said rather brusquely, "my wife made a mistake, I think, in directing it." The boy handed over the note. It was not sealed. It was directed to a well known Fifth avenue modiste. Without changing the direction, my man returned the note to the boy, who proceeded to deliver it. I obtained the note, however, the same afternoon from the person to whom it was sent.

Then I called up the lawyer and asked him how soon he could get his client back to the city. He told me he returned the night before.

"Have him at my office to-morrow morning," said I. "And you come along, too."

When they came I held before the merchant the woman in black's letter to the dressmaker.

"Do you recognize that handwriting?" said I.

I thought he would drop in his tracks.

"Mary Schmidt," was all he could say.

Then I told the story of all I had learned about the strange occupants of the house in Eighty-third street, the merchant visibly becoming stronger as the facts were related to him. At the close I said to his lawyer:—

"Advise your client to write a letter to this woman, telling her he is now ready to pay her the \$15,000 and asking when she will see him."

The letter was written and in the shortest possible time the reply came back:—

"Thursday afternoon at five o'clock."

Everything at the Eighty-third street house took place Thursday afternoon at five o'clock.

And an hour before the time set my men, who were watching at the uptown houses, saw the aged woman and her two daughters depart, one by one, and my men at the downtown house saw them enter the place in the same manner. The red haired woman put up the shades and began her dusting. We never got inside to see if the gray haired woman was sewing.

There was a chain on the door, and when the woman in black, who answered the bell, saw the lawyer she pointed to the merchant and said:—

"He can come in, but you can't!"

"But I'm his attorney," said the man.

"That makes no difference."

Then followed the most marvellous exhibition of nerve that I ever saw displayed by a woman.

The man told her she must let his client alone.

"I'll do nothing of the sort," she snapped back through the crack in the door. "If \$15,000 is not here by eight o'clock to-morrow morning I will be at his home talking with his wife at ten."

"You try it and I will have you in jail before noon and in State's prison within a month."

Her only answer was a derisive laugh.

Then the lawyer took a new tack.

"Trouble my client any more," said he, "and I will go to your husband's home in the street near One Hundredth, giving the correct number and tell him what you have done. And I'll go to the home of your red haired sister and tell her husband about her."

"You are too busy a man to go away up town to my husband's house. Go to his office down town, it is nearer. You know where his office is." And she gave his correct business address.

The woman's remarkable effrontery amazed the attorney. Here was a woman, the wife of a wealthy man, well known among a large number of neighbors and friends, a woman who had committed crimes for which she could be put in a felon's cell, yet impudently defying a man who had the evidence in his possession that would not only ruin her standing in the community but put her in prison. Yet he kept a firm front in her presence, and the last thing he said to her was to tell her the house was surrounded with detectives who would arrest her if she attempted to go to his client's residence—a warning that brought from her only the more defiant profanity. But after we had left he said to me:—

"Drummond, now do you diagnose this case? How does this woman dare to tell me to go to her husband's office and tell him all? Is he conspiring with her to blackmail this man, and is the husband of her sister also a conspirator?"

"I don't think so," said I. "In fact, I am sure the husband of neither woman knows what she is doing. Both are men of affairs. Both have large numbers of business and social acquaintances. No man of their standing would countenance such acts on the part of his wife. The woman is bluffing. She felt sure you would not go to her husband because of your client's desire to save his own reputation. It required wonderful nerve to say what she did, but she wouldn't have said it if she had believed you would make a move toward exposing her."

"Tell your client," I continued—I seldom addressed the merchant himself, because the lawyer had called me into the case—"tell your client to go home and get a good night's rest. He need not fear. And tell him not to pay the woman another dollar."

The next morning the lawyer called me over the 'phone.

"Here's a telegram I have just received," said he. "I'll read it:—

"If you are ready to cry quits we are, Mary Schmidt."

Of course that ended the case. The merchant could not afford to prosecute the woman, because to do so would have exposed himself. And he never heard again from the woman in black.

I have used no names in this article because the women and their husbands still live in New York. The women continue to drive out in fine carriages, and their husbands are, now as then, at the head of important business concerns. I don't know whether the women have reformed.

And the wealthy merchant is still here. I saw him once in a street car and he looked as if he would like to jump out the window. I had rather a strange experience with him, by the way, when the attorney and I presented our bills. The lawyer asked me what I thought he should charge.

"Send him a bill for a thousand dollars," said I.

The lawyer didn't know whether he ought to or not. I insisted and he did. My bill was about eight hundred dollars.

A few days passed and no money came. Then the lawyer told me the merchant thought we had charged too much.

"He'll pay my bill as it stands," said I. "If he doesn't pay it by to-morrow night I'll file a suit against him the next morning."

The lawyer felt the same way about his own bill. So he went to the merchant and demanded an immediate settlement of both statements. The merchant demurred. He would send it later. But the lawyer made him draw a check on the spot for both sums and sent me his own check for what was due me.

The utter depravity of the women was equalled only by the meanness of the man.

FOREIGN STUDENTS IN AMERICA.

It is only of recent years that American colleges and universities have been patronized by foreigners to any considerable extent, but of late the number of such students has increased very rapidly. The tide which has flowed from America to European seats of learning is beginning to turn. The enrollment of foreign students in colleges throughout the United States this fall is much greater than ever before. The majority of these foreign students come from South American countries, but with an increasing proportion of late from England and the Continent.

Foreign students are usually attracted by the special and technical courses offered in America. The fame of the Massachusetts School of Technology has spread, for instance, over both continents. The dental and veterinary courses of the University of Pennsylvania attract many more. The school of forestry at Cornell, again, has an international reputation, while many of the special courses at Harvard are well considered abroad. The law course at Columbia expects a similar attraction.

There are more than one hundred foreign students enrolled this fall in the Massachusetts School of Technology, and upward of two hundred in several departments at Harvard. It is expected that more than two hundred foreign students will attend Columbia this year, there are more than fifty at Princeton, while fully ten per cent of all the students at the University of Pennsylvania are foreigners.

Many of the foreign students this year come from Australia and New Zealand. The number of Japanese students is rapidly increasing. Practically all of the Central and South American countries are represented, as well as European countries, while even Africa is represented.