

## *Our New Pupil*

by Hester Bittersweet

It was the spring of 1858. I was head teacher in Professor Button's day and boarding-school for young ladies, an institution distant not a thousand miles from Chicago.

Our retiring bell, which always sounded at ten, had just stopped ringing. The monitress was on her customary round through the halls, giving the order of the hour, "Lights out! Lights out, young ladies!" when Barbara the chamber-maid stopped at my door, with the message that I was wanted downstairs in the Green Parlor.

It was poor little Mrs. Professor who wanted me, of course. She was always having one or another of the teachers down in the Green Parlor to quiz and cross-question, to *pump*, that is, in plain English.

I was vexed certainly. Those long vulgar gossips I detested upon general principle. Besides, at the moment, I particularly disliked being called away from my work.

I could not leave, of course, until I had established some sort of quiet in my range of halls. I waited, therefore, till Barbara had gathered up the dormitory lamps and carried them away, and till the girls had stopped blowing kisses through the key-holes of their doors and shouting good-nights and all manner of affectionate nonsense to each other from their beds in the different rooms.

At last, in no very amiable temper, I am afraid, I went down stairs; but not till I had slipped a budget of compositions and an unread letter from John into my pocket.

John, by the way, is my twin brother, and a great favorite of mine, though he is deaf and dumb, too, poor fellow! He has nothing more to do with my story, however.

I found a lighted lamp standing on a bracket just outside the Green Parlor door. I stopped there to correct a composition or two. You see, all I could accomplish before going in, would have so much the less to be fagged through on coming out.

The parlor door swung open a bit; Barbara had probably left it unlatched on her way up stairs. Within, Mrs. Professor sat lolling on an easy-chair before the grate. She was never warm, this little woman; but that is neither here nor there.

There were two other persons in the room, a man and a woman, both strangers. They seemed to be waiting for some one. It was for myself, as I learned upon entering. The woman was—well, she was, at a first glance, precisely nothing in particular; like a good many of the rest of us. She was, for instance, not tall, nor short, nor slender, nor stout; not very young, not at all old; and neither a blonde nor a brunette, nor yet a fright nor a beauty. She had fishy eyes; you could not look through them into her intellectual movements and her impulses. This I observed at once.

Further, the lady was dressed in the deepest of mourning. She was, on the whole, got up unexceptionably enough, but in a style somewhat inclining to the rural. “Steady and strong, but crude,” said I to myself concerning her.

The lady’s attendant was a dark, compact, muscular-looking man, with a hard square face and massive features. His forehead was specially noticeable. It was high enough, and very wide, but retreating; being particularly prominent just over the eyes, where phrenologists place the perceptives. The countenance of the man was an intellectual, but, on the whole, not an altogether agreeable one somehow. As John used to say, “It had one expression too many.”

Mrs. Professor Button addressed this person as doctor. He was rather undisguisedly oldish, I remarked. I fancied he might incline to a parade of his years, from professional motives. At any rate the doctor carried a gold-headed cane. He wore a wig.

It was a bushy one, of a sandy color, and it quite covered the upper portion of his side-face. He had on green spectacles with side-glasses and gold rims. He was so bewhiskered that I could not obtain a clear view of his face.

The girl, or the woman, or whatever she was, turned presently to a quantity of company-traps laid out on a table near her, and began to look them over. Directly she chanced upon a daguerreotype of myself. I knew it by the case, you observe. Looking at it a moment with a suppressed show of interest, she slyly passed it to the doctor for inspection. At the same time with the fingers of her disengaged hand she stealthily spelled out in the mute alphabet “*see sarpint,*” meaning thereby me, Hester Bittersweet.

The doctor on his part, appeared not to see altogether so well as one would expect, through those gold-rimmed, double-glassed spectacles of his. He turned the picture about nervously in a variety of lights, as if to obtain a better view of it. At last, seizing an opportunity when Mrs. Professor had turned her back for a moment, he furtively shoved up his glasses and took a square look underneath them.

To my unbounded astonishment, the gentleman telegraphed back again:

“The Bittersweet! Look out for her,” he added.

“Soon serve her out!” replied the young lady, coolly, in the same manner; and she accented the pantomime of winding an imaginary Bittersweet around her little finger.

The doctor tapped his forehead significantly.

“No you don’t! Too many brains.”

“Take her into confidence!” he pursued, reflectively, after a moment’s thought.

“Not!” answered the woman. “She’d blab. A woman always will. Too deuced orthodox! She’d kick us out of this here, quicker’n chain lightning—she would.”

The above *mute* dialogue, carried on by persons to whom I was myself a total stranger, impressed me as rather a piquant affair, on the whole. In fact it roused my feminine curiosity to the highest pitch. However, I'm not a sneak—at least, I don't think I'm a sneak, though if anything in the world will make a woman such, or a man either, for that matter, it is teaching a term of years, in a day and boarding-school for young ladies. I did not wait, therefore to observe further; but, executing a hypocritical little feint upon the door-knob, I walked in.

The couple in question, turned out to be a certain Doctor John S. Smith of Illinois Centre, and his sister Mary Ann, our pupil who was to be.

The doctor was exceedingly civil; apologized for the lateness of his visit; was compelled by professional business, a case of amputation, in fact, to return home by the next train; wished to make immediate arrangements for Mary Ann's tuition.

“Was she to pursue a full course of study with us?” I asked.

“O yes; a full course, certainly.”

Finally, “would I sound Mary Ann,” the doctor wanted to know, “and ascertain her proper place in the classes?”

With the greatest pleasure in life.

Decidedly, however, Mary Ann was averse to being sounded, as at once appeared. Generally, I can give as good a guess at a girl as another. Not, however, when like this one, she deliberately puts herself up in a brown paper parcel, figuratively speaking. On the whole, I could make nothing of her, but a female *x* for future elimination.

I assigned Mary Ann a place in the classes, notwithstanding, and selected her schoolbooks. The doctor paid for them; settled her bill for half the term in advance, according to our regulations; and chose her room. It was on the second floor front; and opened not into the hall like the other dormitories of that range, but into an outer passage which led down to the front door of our wing. The apartment was small, and it was fixed that the girl should have no roommate. The doctor was very particular on this—and kindred points—very.

“In consideration of her health, you know,” said he.

Mariannie—for so in true schoolgirl style she directly commenced to give out her name — Mariannie soon settled into the usual routine of school life. Personally, I abhorred the creature. The pupils, for the most part, disliked her cordially. They talked of her in their crude way as *too awful perfect*, and called her *B. B. G.* (Button's Body Guard). This behind her back always, for really they stood in wholesome awe of her strong practical common sense.

My suspicions concerning the girl early assumed definite form, but as little Mrs. Professor was at once an inveterate tattler, and the very quintessence of stupidity itself, I resolved to keep my own counsel and await future developments.

Mariannie seemed, at first, in a fair way to baffle me. She never did anything wrong; or, at least, if she did, she managed not to be caught at it. At table, by example, she never called for a second cup of tea or coffee or whatever it might be; you couldn't always tell by the taste. She never took too much butter to her buckwheats. She never took too much sauce to her pudding. She never applied for a second edition of any of the standard tea-table luxuries. She never stayed away from the weekly prayer meetings, religiously going, and what was more to the purpose, returning under the protecting wing of Professor Button.

On every Friday afternoon her standing was regularly read off to the school in tens— ten being our *ne plus ultra*. Mortal man could ask no more. Of course we were charmed with her.

“That Miss Smith of ours is *such* a treasure! and O, so useful,” was Mrs. Professor's unvarying compliment.

To do Mariannie justice, she had a way of slipping into the Green Parlor of an evening, and making herself generally available. She was remarkably neat-handed. Whatever she touched fell immediately by some hocus pocus or another, into desirable shape. For instance, she trimmed hats and collars beautifully, and created perfect loves of bows out of odds and ends of condemned ribbon. All of which did not reconcile me to her in the least.

I was waiting for breakfast one morning, jaded with overwork, and stupid proportionally. There was a good deal of chattering going on in my hall, which I did not particularly care to notice. The morning was chilly, and the girls were huddled together in groups about the hall, some studying and others immersed, heart and soul, in a morning gossip.

As I was sitting idly at the window, watching the weather, which happened to be particularly gray and gloomy, and fidgeting for the breakfast bell to ring I caught sight of something like a human figure gliding stealthily along on the other side of the paling by which the school-grounds were set off from the public street.

I said to myself, “it is Jeff Humphrey,” Jeff Humphrey being sixteen, and distracted lover to one of the girls in my hall A moment afterwards, I caught sight of the same figure passing a spot where two or three boards happened to be missing from the fence.

It was not Jeff at all; but only a little old woman, hobbling along on a cane, with a pitcher of something in her hand, and with the skirt of her gown drawn over her head and huddled together under her chin.

I pitied the poor old creature. She looked thoroughly miserable; lame, crooked, wan and with her wretched tattered petticoats fluttering about her in the keen morning air. I had never seen her before, though I knew most people in our neighborhood, and I could not make out where she went to.

Still the girls in the hall kept up their chattering.

“False teeth! O my!” shrieked No. 10.

“La yes!” replied our parlor boarder, Miss Larkspur.

“Different sets, eh?”

“La, yes, to be sure! One of them was snags.”

“Snags?” reechoed No. 10.

“Yes, *snags!* Like an old woman’s mouth, you know. Here one and there another, yellow as the ‘gold of Ophir.’”

“Really, now?”

“La yes! Hope to drop dead and bone!” pursued Miss Larkspur, by way of solemn asseveration.

Miss Larkspur, I may as well mention, was our school gossip. She had a talent for rapid but superficial observation, and was far more apt at ferreting out and reporting facts than at making original deductions from them.

“There was a lot of old wigs in there, too,” continued the Larkspur.

“O the wigked, wigked creature!” shrieked pretty witty little Miss Mixer.

Here conversation floated into an eddy of general hubbub. Talking and laughing went on for a while *ad libitum*.

“What sort?” asked some logical body, by-and-by, again. I believe it was Carry Poser.

“I don’t half know, I’m sure,” returned Larkspur. “How should I, being in such a hurry? Stay though! One was a gray false front, for an old woman.”

“Dear me! Yes, of course ! That went with the teeth, I suppose.”

“There was a man’s wig there, too,” resumed Miss Larkspur, warming with her subject. “It had whiskers, and eyebrows and all. And a darkey’s wig,” she went on, “with the wool projecting to the cardinal and ordinal points of the compass.”

A question finally arose as to how the contents of Mariannie’s box had been ascertained, and was pursued with vehemence by Carry Poser.

On this point Miss Larkspur was not disposed to be communicative.

“La now, Poser, none of your business,” was her ultimatum.

“What is it?” piped a shrill voice, just then, from the door of No. 5.

The speaker was a young girl who had contracted the nickname of *Dim Dark Distance*, from an unfortunate flight of fancy in one of her school essays.

“It’s B. B. G.’s box,” answered somebody.

“B. B. G. has been and reported me to the Buttons,” exclaimed Dim Dark, “and so there! It’s all because Jeff Humphrey serenades me now and then of an evening.”

“La!” cried Larkspur, “if that isn’t what Dim Dark has been in sackcloth and ashes about this ever so long! Don’t you mind, though, child.”

“But I do mind!” persisted the other. “Here I’ve been and studied my algebra thirteen times over, and don’t know a thing.”

“Don’t know a thing?” echoed Miss Mixer. “Goodness gracious! That’s nothing new.”

“In my opinion the creature is an actress,” continued the Larkspur, pursuing the thread of her thoughts, through the above tangle of small talk.

“In my opinion she’s a murderess and a horrid old hag and no less,” said the aggrieved Dim Dark.

“Or a witch,” suggested No. 10.

“The witch of End (do) or,” remarked Miss Mixer.

The Mixer was enthusiastically encored. The girls had a fashion that term of pelting genius with impromptu imitation-bouquets done in twisted paper.

I heard a shower of these missiles flying about the hall for some tune. Then a voice called out:

“Where is B.B.G.?”

That was what nobody seemed to know. Mariannie had not been seen that morning it appeared. She was not in the study room, her usual place at that hour, and, indeed, at all hours not devoted to prescribed duties. She was not in her own room.

The girls began peeping about for her in one spot and another. They could not find her. They searched the building from garret to cellar thoroughly. Finally, communicating their anxiety to the family, and joined by the whole household, servants, teachers and proprietors, they extended their investigation to the adjoining grounds, but quite without success.

Mrs. Professor would never allow a boarding-pupil to leave the school-grounds without her own special permission. This gave importance to the fact of Mariannie’s disappearance.

The box under discussion that morning, was standing in a little closet at the foot of Mariannie's bed. You would call it rather a square trunk than a box. It was a heavy clumsy affair, and was fastened by a large odd-looking lock of peculiar construction.

This trunk was full of disguises, according to Larkspur, who, to be sure, was not the best of authority. I felt, however, that she was not in error here. Perhaps Mariannie was out masquerading at that very moment, in an old woman's wig, etc., for instance. Nobody could say she was not, certainly.

As the key was not in the lock of the trunk, I, of course, forbore investigation in that direction. Looking sharply about me, however, I discovered that a certain small earthen pitcher usually on duty in the apartment, was not in its accustomed place, and indeed was not to be found elsewhere.

I forthwith instituted proceedings which I need not here detail. Suffice it to say, I eventually discovered our charming Miss Smith snuggled away in a narrow lane back of the Button premises. She was got up *a la* old woman, and was the veritable shambling wretch whom I had observed and pitied a while before.

The girl was stepping out of her disguises when she met my eyes.

"Good-morning!" said I.

"Good-morning!" she returned, stoutly.

"A lovely morning for a promenade," I continued, with a wicked glance at her dripping clothing; for by this time it was raining with a will.

Mariannie set her firm-looking teeth hard together, and looked me over with a sort of baffled stare which I could not readily translate.

"You are making a great mistake for once in your life," muttered the creature, half aloud.

Not particularly caring to commit myself, I executed a detestable little French shrug with one shoulder and said:

"Indeed!"

Mariannie went on a few steps then stopped and faced me.

"Can you keep a secret, Miss Bittersweet?"

"O yes!" I answered.

"May I confide one to you?"

“Dear me, no! I don’t believe in you, you observe.”

“Listen to me!” said Mariannie, with a ludicrous affectation of consequence. “Really you must listen.”

“Miss Smith,” I returned, “your time has come. You are a persistent liar; you are a base woman, and you are a fool to fancy yourself humbugging me. I detest you; I shouldn’t believe a word you would utter if you were to talk from now till doom’s day.”

Miss Smith passed into her own room, and closed her door quietly—very quietly.

I, for my part, made a dry toilet as speedily as practicable, and descended to the dining hall, where I proposed to announce my success in due season.

Breakfast was over, I found, and the apartment deserted, even by the servants. The table, however, was still spread for me, and my cup of coffee stood cooling beside my plate.

Before I had finished breakfast an unaccountable languor invaded my system. I could not understand it; I could not very well understand anything, in fact, my brain seemed bound, my limbs grew lumpish and refused service.

I was found by the servants a short time afterwards sitting with my head in my hands, and with the latter serenely folded in my plate of hash. I had been drugged. At first I slept.

Miss Smith explained this phenomenon by a fictitious account of a fictitious remedy which she professed to have seen me administer to myself for an attack of neuralgia. Hence my condition occasioned no alarm.

When I awaked, it was with all my senses sharpened to a preternatural acuteness. It was a long while before I threw off that deathlike stupor. In the meantime I could hear, and did hear slight noises and low conversation at points quite remote from my chamber.

It was recreation evening. The girls were amusing themselves in No. 5, the room occupied by Dim Dark Distance. They were executing a grand series of tableaux called Reception at Court. I perfectly comprehended the details of the proceedings, although I was at the other extremity of the hall, and was, besides, more than half dreaming. All the jewelry of the establishment, even to Baby Button’s corals, had been brought into requisition for this occasion. In the midst of this last crowning scene the retiring bell rang. I heard the girls throw off their finery and scamper away to bed. I heard Miss Grimshawe order them—she never *advised* anybody—*order* them to leave their jewelry where it was, proposing to assort it herself, and return it to the owners in the morning.

Miss Larkspur demurred; she had her diamonds out, very foolishly. They had been deposited in Professor Button’s safe. Somebody else wanted a coral set, and our small Dim Dark was running frantic and fairly wringing her hands and tearing her hair over her pearls.



However, to oppose Miss Grimshawe was to take the surest way not to get what you wanted of her if Dim Dark had but known it. Though the former had only two grains of sense, and those, mathematical, she had any quantity of authority. So the girls went away grumbling, but leaving behind them their whole array of watches, chains, bracelets, necklaces, etc. I wanted Miss Grimshawe to take the collection down stairs and deposit it with Professor Button, and I dropped asleep and dreamed that I had told her to do so.

By-and-by, from a great way off it seemed, a low, persistent, grating sound came to my ear. I rose upon my elbow and listened closely; then, thoroughly startled, I crawled without noise to the outer door of my room, which opened upon an upper piazza, and looked out.

The sound came from beneath, at the further extremity of our wing. Some one seemed to be tampering with a lock there. Presently, I caught a glimmer of light from that point, and leaning over the balustrade found it to proceed from a dark-lantern. A bull's eye, I afterwards heard it called. Another gleam discovered to me the shadows of two men. I heard them whisper to each other. They seemed to be inspecting some difficulty in their work, for the light appeared but a moment, and then the rasping sound recommenced.

What to do? To shriek out on the spot and frighten the ruffians away? I confess to a momentary womanly impulse in this direction—or to convey the alarm to Professor Button and the male servants? I felt that I did not understand robbers nor know how to deal with them. I therefore chose the latter course.

The only access to the professor's room, by the by, was through the identical hall into which the burglars were now endeavoring to force their way. However, I reflected that while I could hear the sound of their implements on the outside I should surely be in no immediate danger within; and in short, like Watts's sinner, or somebody else's, "if I perished I resolved I'd perish only there."

I stole down to execute my plan. My brain, my limbs, my entire person never rendered me more exquisitely perfect service than on that eventful night. Every muscle seemed instinct with a special intellect of its own. My physique followed the dictates of my flashing will with a precision wonderful to reflect upon.

I went below as still as the dead. I made but slow progress, for the halls and passages were perfectly dark, and I was obliged to grope my way along them by the sense of touch alone.

At last I reached the dreaded door at which the burglars were working. Beside it, but opening at right angles to it, there was an entrance into the studio, through which I must pass.

Just as I gained the studio door the robbers stopped work; and one of them held the lantern up to the front keyhole. The light shone through upon my bed-gown. The same person tried the door softly; it opened. He did not come in, but left it ajar. He and his associate were then silent, and I felt that they were moving away.

I entered the studio and pressed forward as fast as I dared. The studio windows were always secured at night by inside cross-bars and oaken shutters; now, however, to my intense horror, I perceived that one of them was standing wide open. Some of the household within had unclosed it to the robbers. So much was clear.

I felt a flutter near me like that of a woman's drapery, flitting by between myself and the wall. The tableaux jewelry was in process of transfer no doubt. I had not thought of the jewelry before. We had been betrayed by that flattering, smooth-faced female villain of a Mariannie, after all; and she was escaping.

Not so! I was inspired with a new project. Instantly I tore open a door just opposite me; —it was that of the paint-room—and, entirely unguarded as the creature was, I easily pushed her through it. I heard her fall with a dead heavy thump upon the earthen floor.

The paint-room, as I must explain, was a sort of cave, or cellar, underneath the western wing of the house. It had formerly been used as a laboratory, but was now devoted to the storage of paints and dangerous chemicals. The stairs had been removed as a precautionary measure; Professor Button always used a light ladder, from the loft, in going up and down. However, down Mariannie went without ladder or preamble.

In a moment I became aware that there was some other person in the room. I was sure of it, I heard a breathing near me. It was hard and half-panting, but repressed, and so low that in my normal condition I should not have heard it at all.

I stood stiff and still as a block of marble. Nobody could have heard me breathe. Whoever it was brushed against me.

It was one of the burglars; at least it was a man. I caught him by the arm. He attempted to grasp me by the throat, but I was too nimble for him. I whirled about in such a way as to bring him close to the open door of the paint-room. Evidently he did not understand his position; I slapped him in the face—if anything will confuse a man that will do so.

The fellow endeavored to seize my hands. At the same moment he stepped back. I gave him a thrust in the pit of the stomach, and had the pleasure of hearing him flounder backwards and tumble into the depths after Mariannie.

I thought he did not fall quite to the floor, but fancied he had caught at some support in his descent. Quick as lightning I slammed the door together behind him, drew the bolt, and ran as if possessed by the furies to report matters to Professor Button.

In the meantime the burglars made off with our jewelry and also, as we soon found, with the school plate.

Mariannie raved like a madman. She stormed, she cajoled, she threatened, she protested, she swore.

We heard nothing from our other prisoner; not a sound escaped him. We spoke to him, of course, but obtained no reply.

“Is he hurt?” I asked Mariannie.

She laughed a little low fierce chuckle, which was a fresh revelation of her nature.

“Let me up!” shrieked she, with a howl of rage a moment afterwards.

“Wind me around your little finger, my dear,” said I; and I walked away. That was the woman of it.

The train which passed through town a few minutes later conveyed the following message to certain members of the Chicago police:

“Button High School is robbed. Come direct. Two prisoners for you.”

On arrival of the six o’clock train next morning, there was a pull at the doorbell, followed by a call for Professor Button and Miss Smith. By request I went down. A gentleman stood before me whose face seemed familiar; but whom, nevertheless, I did not immediately recognize. He had close-cut black hair, black whiskers and keen—no, not keen exactly, but incisive gray eyes; eyes which expressed a profound capacity for intelligent observation. The gentleman’s figure was peculiarly wiry and elastic. He had a wide retreating forehead. He was, in short, Doctor John S. Smith of Illinois Centre, but without wig, spectacles, embonpoint or cane.

The doctor offered me his hand.

“Good-morning, good-morning! I want Miss Smith, Mary Ann.” This in a bustling, business-like way.

“Sir, Miss Smith is our prisoner, awaiting the police,” I replied, bowing stiffly.

“The deuce she is! Why ma’am, Miss Bittersweet, ma’am, I’m the police myself.”

I observed a discreet silence.

“Some mistake, Miss Bittersweet, I assure you. Look here! I want Professor Button and Miss Smith. You’ve two prisoners, eh? Who is the other one?”

“I don’t know,” said I. “He is one of the burglars. He won’t speak.”

Professor Button came in at this juncture, and between us both we managed to give the doctor, that is to say Detective Hausleigh, a tolerably accurate account of the night’s adventure.

Mariannie, meanwhile, was stamping about on the earthen floor, and occasionally growling, “Let me up! Let me up!”

Detective Hausleigh ordered down a posse of men and brought the prisoners out.

Mariannie appeared dressed in a man's suit of substantial sheep's gray.

The second prisoner was our poor, simple, little Dim Dark Distance. Imagine my unbounded astonishment, my chagrin, my helpless mystification. Dim Dark, when drawn out of the paint-room, was handcuffed and gagged.

"Better look to those bracelets;" remarked Mariannie, coolly, "they're too big to be safe."

Detective Hausleigh exchanged the girl's handcuffs for a smaller pair procured from one of his assistants.

"Secure her feet," said Mariannie, "she's spiteful." Done.

"Remove the gag. Send for a physician. The girl is rather badly hurt, I believe. Somebody find a room for her with a bed in it. Let it be absolutely secure." Done again.

"See here, you, Hausleigh; I want the girl searched the first thing, mind. Have the job done up right. Set a couple of picked men to watch her. Look sharp, now!"

It dawned upon me at last. There was no mistake in the case, Dim Dark was the real accomplice of the burglars. She had planned the tableaux of the preceding evening for the express purpose of collecting our jewelry and having it at hand.

Dim Dark was the person whom I had mistaken for Mariannie and first pushed in the cellar.

The forcing of the outer door was a mere feint, on the part of the robbers, to divert suspicion from the real criminal. She had evidently laid her plans to remain at school till the heat of pursuit should be over, and had stolen a set of pearls from herself, in furtherance of this project.

And Mariannie—why, Mariannie was a man, "a great, awful man." I hereby give him public credit for having been a remarkably discreet one. He had been regularly trained, by the way, to womanly occupations of a certain sort, having served an apprenticeship of several months in a millinery establishment belonging to his sister.

Dim Dark had, it seemed, delivered up her booty, and was stealthily slipping back to her room when I entrapped her.

Dick Masters was Mariannie's masculine name. He had been watching the game. He had given orders to his men in the morning, during his brief masquerade as an old woman, and was on his way at the proper moment to signal them when I arrested him.

Dick had worked up this case beautifully. Before coming to us he had only a slight clue to the intended robbery, which, by the way, had been planned for months. He did not know the actors in the drama, but understood that some woman was mixed up with the business who would be a

student at Button High School. He had slowly unravelled the whole plot, and had made every disposition to seize the acting members of the gang and their booty. I thwarted his plans; no wonder he raved. So much for trying to wind a woman around one's little finger instead of being frank with her.

Dick Masters glared fiercely at me, and I glowered at him. I being a woman, was naturally the first to speak:

“Why did you drug me?” said I.

“For the same reason that I gagged one of you—to keep your mouth shut.”

“O ho! So I could have spoiled your sport?”

“*Pre-cisely!*”

“And why did you call me a *see-sarpint?*”

“I didn't,” said Dick.

“But you *did!*” retorted I. “I saw you.”

“Well then, I did, but I don't remember it. We knew all about you before coming here, at any rate. The name fits you well enough I should say.”

Dick Masters, I am glad to add, did not entirely lose his labor.

Dim Dark, though severely injured by her fall, at length recovered. She was tried, found guilty and sentenced to a long imprisonment.

The trial in question created a great sensation throughout the country. Developments then made led to the detection of the gang of ruffians with whom Dim Dark had been associated, and to the seizure of a quantity of booty, among which was our plate, and all our jewelry, except Miss Larkspur's diamonds.

In consequence of this stroke of good fortune Dick Masters was eventually promoted to a post, towards which he had for a good while in vain cast longing glances. He afterwards married a woman whom I like vastly; but of that another time.

I visited at Mr. Masters's not long since. We are excellent friends now-a-days, and the Masters, myself and our old common friend, Chief of Police Hausleigh, have many a hearty laugh together over the days when Dick was *our new pupil*.

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A year after “A New Pupil” was published, *Ballou’s* printed a sequel to the story, called “Miss Larkspur’s Diamonds.” This story can also be found on the WDL website.