

How We Caught Him

The banking house of Shavewell Brothers had been victimized by an extensive forgery, so cleverly planned and executed that, in detective circles, there was but one opinion as to its authorship. There was but one hand skillful enough for such a piece of work—that of Durnford Marwick, a most accomplished rascal, whose craft and cunning had carried him safely through a long career of roguery in spite of the best laid schemes to trap him. On this occasion a heavy reward was offered for his apprehension.

I had but lately been enrolled a member of the detective force, and was ambitious of rising. Here was a golden opportunity—golden in every sense, for whoever caught Marwick would not only be a made man, but would put a round sum into his pocket.

While others were beating the bush in different directions, I resolved to go on a still-hunt of my own. I had information that Marwick had a set of associates in a place about a hundred miles away, with whom, it was not unlikely, he had sought and found a hiding place. At any rate, it could do no harm to make a reconnaissance in the neighborhood.

I took the next train with a view to carrying out my plan. Securing a seat favorable for observation, I commenced glancing over the morning paper and my fellow-passengers. I had no particular expectation of finding any one answering to Warwick's description among them—still it was well enough for one in my place to keep his eyes open.

It was not long, however, till my occupation was interrupted. A plain looking countryman, entering from a forward car, asked and was accorded permission to share my seat. He proved one of those irrepressibly sociable fellows who will make your acquaintance in spite of you.

He told me his name without waiting to be asked—it was Seth Wiggins, he said—and straightway inquired what mine might be. I didn't care to tell him I was Detective Tyke, so I merely answered: "Smith."

"Do tell!" returned Mr. Wiggins, looking as much surprised as if I said Heliogabalus. He was evidently one of those who think it proper to receive whatever you may say with a certain polite astonishment.

When Mr. Wiggins had exhausted politics and the "craps," and given me a census of the young ones, he broached the subject that was uppermost in my mind or would have been but for his eternal clatter.

"That was a nation smart trick that 'ere Marwick played onto the bank," he remarked.

"I know very little about it," I replied.

"No more do I," said Mr. Wiggins; "only I hearn he done 'em outer a mint o' money."

“I’ve understood as much,” I answered.

“I tell *yeou*, mister, you’ve got some pesky cute fellows down to York—rale talented chaps as a countryman like me haint no business buckin’ agin. One on ‘em, t’other day, got me to bet five dollars I could tell which o’ three keards hed a picter onto it. He laid ‘em down in a row— ‘t was in a place he’d invited me inter to hev a social Tom and Jerry and then turned to chin with the barkeeper while I was studyin’ which keard to pick.

“I’ve got you now!” think’s I, turnin’ up the middle keard, which sure enough it had the picter onto it. I was poorty sartin of it afore; for the man’d handled the keards so awk’ardly ‘at I could see their faces e’enamost as easy as the backs; but I thought I’d just make sure, an’ havin’ done so, I put the keard back ‘ithout lettin’ on.

“‘Air you ready?’ sez he, turnin’ round.

“‘Hit’s—hit’s the middle one I guess,’ sez I speakin’ doubtful like; for I didn’t want to seem too sure lest he’d suspicion me o’ heavin’ looked.

“‘No ‘taint,’ sez he, turning it up which ‘twere as blank as that ere prize I drewed once inter the Gulltrap literary.

‘How’s it done?’ sez, I, feelin’ poorty streaked as he pocketed my money.

“‘I’ve got a patent onto it,’ sez he, ‘but I wouldn’t mind sellin’ you a country right for another V.’

“I told him I was much obliged, but didn’t think it ‘ud do for a stiddy business in the country.”

I was glad when Mr. Wiggins gave me a gushing good-day at the next stopping-place, and left the train.

Another hour brought us to a place where ten minutes were allowed for refreshments. We had hardly stopped when a boy came hurrying through the car inquiring if Mr. Tyke was aboard.

“That’s my name,” I answered.

“Here’s a telegram for you.”

I tore it open, as the boy hurried into the next car as if to deliver another message. Mine was this:

“Marwick is on the train with you, and will get off at —. He wears a slouch hat and gray

coat. Is thick-set and bandy-legged, and has a slight stoop in the shoulders; also carries a black leather satchel. Arrest him on sight. 'BEAKES'“

I hustled out, and the very first person I encountered tallied so exactly with the description in the telegram as to leave no doubt I had found my man.

He made no attempt to flee, but advanced boldly, looking me directly in the face.

“You're my prisoner!” I said, abruptly seizing his collar.

“That's what I call cheeky!” he replied, pulling loose, and tackling me, adding: “I rather think you're my prisoner!”

A vigorous scuffle ensued. For a time neither of us went further than trying to keep his hold on the other. But my opponent lost temper at last, and planted a blow of his right, fist directly over my right eye. I “countered” on his nose, “tapping the claret” freely. Both called on the bystanders for assistance; but they only formed a ring and exhorted us to “go it!”

And we were “going it” lively when a sharp voice brought us to an armistice.

“Hello! what's this?” inquired a keen-eyed, jolly-faced man, in whom I recognized Captain Beakes, my chief, whose name was to the telegram.

“I— I've got him!” I said, out of breath.

“I've—I've got him!” panted my antagonist, quite as much blown as myself.

“Now who is that you've both got, pray?” queried the Captain, looking puzzled.

“Durnford Marwick!” we shouted simultaneously.

I thought the Captain would split his sides.

“I have your telegram to arrest the scoundrel!” I said, not a little piqued at such levity.

“I have your order to nab the villain on sight,” rejoined my adversary.

An active renewal of hostilities was imminent, but the Captain stepped between us.

“Hold on, Sleuth! Hold on, Tyke!” he interposed. “Let me see those messages.”

Two scraps of paper were thrust into his hand.

The Captain laughed louder than ever.

“So you’ve each been telegraphed to arrest the other!” he said. “Who could have played you such a trick?”

Then the Captain introduced me to Dick Sleuth—with whom I had already *scraped* a rather informal acquaintance—as a brother detective from a neighboring city.

A fresh telegram was put into the Captain’s hand.

“Ha! this explains it!” he exclaimed. “Marwick has just been caught disguised as a countryman. It was doubtless he who sent the two telegrams. He must have smoked you both out on the train.”

Dick and I shook hands, looked foolish and hauled off for repairs. - N.Y. Ledger.

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Nebraska Advertiser, June 16, 1881

Fort Dodge [IA] Messenger, October 21, 1881