

# THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

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NO. 23

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**Any Cobwebs In Your Brain?**

By MOSS.

THE newspaper editor is the most villainous, abominable, infernal, not that I ever read them! No; I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper!

That's from "The Critic," one of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's satirical comedies back in the eighteenth century.

"This said, but true, that a few such wonderful 'critics' still exist today. Thus they rant of newspaper advertisements:

"The advertisements! Sir, they are the most villainous, abominable, infernal—Not that I ever read them! No; I make it a rule never to look at the advertisements!"

Honestly, folks, isn't it too bad that the fool killer germ hasn't been invented yet?

You certainly know that this is the age of PUBLICITY.

You certainly know that it is a PART OF THEIR BUSINESS; that it PAYS THEM, PAYS US, PAYS YOU.

Surely there are no cobwebs in your brain.

Please laugh at foolish "critics" if you happen to stumble across any.

This newspaper prints only what it believes to be HONEST ADVERTISEMENTS, accepted in GOOD FAITH from TRUST-WORTHY SOURCES.

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## The Secret of Lonesome Cove

By Samuel Hopkins Adams

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CHAPTER IV.  
My Lady of Mystery.

Being a single autobiographical chapter from the life of Francis Sedgwick, with editorial comment by Professor Chester Kent.

EAR Kent—Here goes! I met her first on June 22 at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Some wonderful cloud effects after a hard rain had brought me out into the open. I had pitched my easel in the hollow on the Martindale road so as to get that clump of pine against the sky. There I sat working away with a will. When I heard the drumming of hoofs, and a horse with a girl in the saddle came whizzing round the turn almost upon me. Just there the rain had made a puddle of thick, sticky mud, and the mud variety. As the horse went by at full gallop a fine, fat mud pie rose, soiled through the air and landed in the middle of my painting. I fairly yelled.

"To get it all off was hopeless. However, I went at it and was cursing over the job when the rider came back. 'I heard you cry out,' said a voice, very full and low. 'Did I hurt you? I hope not.'"

"No," I said without looking up. "Small thanks to you that you didn't!" My tone silenced her for a moment. Somehow, though, I got the feeling that she was amused more than abashed at my resentment. And her voice was suspiciously meek when she presently spoke again.

"You're an artist, aren't you?"

"No," I said, just scraping away at my easel. "I'm an archeologist engaged in exhuming an ancient ruin from a square mile of mud."

She laughed, but in a moment became grave again. "I'm so sorry!" she said. "I know I shouldn't come plunging around turns in that reckless way. May I—I should like to buy your picture?"

"You may not," I replied.

"That isn't quite fair, is it?" she asked. "If I have done damage I should be allowed to repair it."

"I'm not sure," I said. "How do you propose to do it? I suppose that you think a picture that can be bought for a hundred dollars bill can be painted with a hundred dollar bill."

"No; I'm not altogether a Philistine," she said, and I looked up at her for the first time. Her face (Elision and comment by Kent: I know her face from the sketches. Why could he not have described the horse? However, there's one point clear: she is a woman of means.)

She said: "I don't wonder you're cross. And I'm truly sorry. Is it quite ruined?"

At that recovered some decency of manner. "Forgive a hermit," I said, "who doesn't see enough people to keep him civilized. The dust doesn't matter."

She leaned over from the saddle to examine the picture. "Oh, but it isn't ruined," she protested. "I know a little about pictures. It's very interesting and curious. But why do you paint it on copper?"

I explained.

"Oh!" she said. "I should so like to see your prints!"

"Nothing easier," said I. "My shack is just over the hill. I'll show you."

"And there is a Mrs.—" her eyes suggested that I fill the blank.

"Sedgwick?" I finished. "No. There is no one but my aged and highly respectable Chinaman to play propriety. But in the case of a studio the conventions are not so rigid, but that one may look at pictures unchaperoned."

"I'm afraid it wouldn't do," she answered, smiling. "No, I'll have to wait until—" A shadow passed over her face. "I'm afraid I'll have to give it up."

Chance settled that point then and there. As she finished, she was in my arms. The girl had loosened and the saddle had turned with her. I had barely time to twist her foot from the stirrup when the brute of a horse bolted. As it was, her ankle got a bit of a wrench. She turned quite white and cried out a little. In a moment she was being held.

"King Cole has been acting badly all day," she said. "I shall have a time catching him." She limped forward a few steps.

"Here, that won't do!" said I. "Let me."

"You couldn't get near him, though, perhaps, if you had some milk!"

"I can get some at my place," said I, gathering up my things. "Your horse's headed that way. You'd better come along and rest there while King Cole and I round up your mount."

(Comment by C. K.: Here follows more talk, showing how young people inappropriately and unconsciously comment an acquaintance, but not one word upon the vital point of how far the horse seemed to have come, whether he was ridden out or fresh, etc.)

At the bungalow I called Ching, and we set out with a supply of salt. King Cole (Comment by C. K.: Probably a dead black cow) was coy for a time before he succumbed to temptation. On my return I found my visitor in the studio. She had said that she knew a little about pictures. She knew more than a little—a good deal, in fact—and talked most intelligently about them. I don't say this simply because she tried before she went to buy some of mine. When I declined to sell she seemed put out.

"But surely these prints of yours aren't the work of an amateur?" she said. "You sell?"

"Oh, yes, I sell—when I can. But I don't sell without a good bit of bargaining, particularly when I suspect



## News Snapshots Of the Week

Admiral Dewey, now seventy-seven years old, went to Manhattan Beach, New York, for the summer, his physician believing the seashore air would strengthen his health. Ex-President Theodore Roosevelt received delegations urging him to run for the governorship of New York and resigned from the staff of the Outlook. Mrs. Florence Carman of Freeport, N. Y., was arrested on Turkey, protested against sale of United States warships to Greece. Charles Francis Joseph, archduke, and his consort, Princess Zita, are the new heirs to the Austria-Hungarian throne. Dynamite exploded in the home of a group of anarchists in Lexington avenue, New York city, wrecking the building and killing several people. The dynamite was intended for use in making bombs.

my purchaser of wishing to make amends by a purchase. "It isn't that at all," she said earnestly. "I want the pictures for themselves."

"Call this a preliminary, then, and come back when you have more time." She shook her head, and there was a shadow over the brightness of her face. "I'm afraid not," she said. "But I have enjoyed talking again with someone who knows and loves the best in art. After all," she added with a note of determination, almost of defiance, "there is no reason why I shouldn't come some time."

"Then I may look for you again?" I asked.

She nodded as she moved out across the porch. "If you'll promise to sell me any print I may choose. Goodbye, and thank you so much, Mr. Sedgwick."

She held out her hand. It was a hand for sculptor to model, as beautiful and full of character as her face. (Comment by C. K.: Bosh!) Afterward I remembered that never again in our friendship did I see it unglowed. (Comment by C. K.: "Bosh" retracted. Some observation that.)

"Au revoir, then," I said. "But you have the advantage of me, you see. I don't know what to call you at all."

"She hesitated, then, with a little soft quiver of her eyelids, which I afterward learned to identify as an evidence of amusement, said: 'Daw is a nice name, don't you think?' (Comment by C. K.: False name, of course, but highly probable first name is Marjorie.)

"By the way, what time is it?" "Quarter to six," Miss Dewey."

She smiled at the name. "King Cole will have to do his best if I am to be back for dinner. Goodbye." (Comment by C. K.: Good! The place where she is staying is a good way off, assuming a 7:30 dinner hour. Say twelve to fifteen miles.)

There was a first of many visits of days that grew in radius for me. It isn't necessary for me to tell you, Kent, how in our talks I came to divine in her a spirit as wistful and pure as her face. You do not want a love story from me, yet that is what it was for me almost from the first; not openly, though.

There was that about her which held me at arms' length—the mystery of her, her quickly given trust in me, a certain strained look that came into her face, like the startled attention of a wild thing poised for flight, whenever I touched upon the personal note. Not that I ever questioned her.

After her first visit she did not ride on her horse, but came across lots and through the side hedge, swinging down the hillside yonder with her light dipping stride that always recalled to me the swoop of a swallow, her gloved hands usually holding a slender stick.

All those sketches that you saw were but studies for a more serious attempt to catch and fix her personality. (Comment by C. K.: Couldn't he have given me in two words her height and approximate weight? I did it in pastel, and if I missed something of her tender and changeful coloring I at least caught the ineffable wistfulness of her expression—the look of one hoping against hope for an unconfessed happiness. Probably I had put more of myself into it than I had meant. A man is likely to when he paints with his heart as well as his brain and hand. When it was done I made a little frame for it and lettered on the frame this line:

"And her eyes dreamed against a distant goal."

It was the next day that she read the line. I saw the color die from her face and flood back again.

"Why did you set that line there?" she breathed, her eyes fixed on me with a strange expression. (Comment by C. K.: Rossetti again. The dead woman of the beach quoted "The House of Life" also.)

"Why not?" I asked. "It seems to express something in you which I have tried to embody in the picture. Don't you like it?"

"Already? Do you know it's 10 o'clock? How early. It's a good story."

"Thank you."

"As a story. As information, it leaves out most of the important points."

"Thank you again."

"You're welcome. Color, size and trappings of the horse?"

"I didn't notice particularly. Black, I think; yes, certainly black. Rather a large horse. That's all I can tell you."

"Humph! Color, size and trappings of the rider?"

"Reddish brown hair with a gloss like a butterfly's wing," said the artist, with enthusiasm; "deep hazel eyes, clear sun browned skin, tall—I should say quite tall—but so so feminine that you wouldn't realize her tallness. She was dressed in a light brown riding costume, with a toque hat, very simple, tan gaiters and tan boots—that is, the first time I saw her. The next time—"

"Hold on; a dressmaker's catalogue is no good to me! I couldn't remember

that necklace but none other than the woman with the handle of my half concealed, when she came here.

"Today—it is yesterday really, since I am finishing this at 3 a. m.—the messenger boy brought me a telegram. It was from my love. It had been sent from Boston and it read:

Destroy the picture for my sake. It tells too much of both of us.

The message was unsigned. I have destroyed the picture. Help me! F. S.

CHAPTER V.  
An Inquiry.

AM I ruminating a Strangers' Rest here?" Francis Sedgwick asked of himself when he emerged upon his porch the morning after Kent's visit.

The occasion of this query was a man stretched flat on the lawn, with his feet propped up comfortably against the stone wall. His white serge suit was freshly pressed. A soft white hat covered his eyes against the sun glare.

To put a point to this forlornness, a narrow silver ribbon, also pure white, depending from his lapel buttonhole, suggested an eye-needle in his pocket.

It was a remarkable face, both in contour and in coloring. From chin to cheek, the skin was white, with a tint of blue showing beneath, but the central parts of the face were bronzed. The jaw was long, lean and bony. The cheek bones were high, the mouth was large, fine cut and firm, the nose solid, set like a rock.

At the sound of a footstep the man pushed his hat downward, revealing a knobby forehead and half closed eyes in which there was a touch of somberness, of brooding.

"Good morning," said the artist, and then all but recoiled from the voice

of it all. Was she in rifling clothes on any of her latest visits?

"No."

"Any scars or marks?"

"Certainly not!"

"That's a pity, although you seem to think otherwise. Age?"

"Well, twenty perhaps."

"Add five. Say twenty-five."

"What for?" demanded Sedgwick indignantly.

"I'm allowing for the discount of romance. Did you notice her boots?"

"Not particularly, except that she was always spick and span from head to foot."

"Humph! Was it pretty warm the last week she called on you?"

"Piping!"

"Did she show it?"

"Never a bit. Always looked fresh as a power."

And, although she came far, she didn't walk far to get here. There's a road back of the hill yonder and a little copse in an open field where a motor car has stood. I should say that she had driven herself there and come across the hill to you."

"Could you track the car?" asked Sedgwick eagerly.

"No farther than the main road. What is the latest she ever left here when she arrived foot?"

"Once she stayed till half past 6. I begged her to stay and dine, but she grew into herself at the mere suggestion."

"Half past 6. Allowing for a half past 7 dinner and time to dress for it, she would have perhaps twelve to fifteen miles to go in the car. The name she gave is obviously not her own, not even I judge, her maiden name."

Sedgwick turned very white. "Do you mean that she is a married woman?" he demanded.

"How could you have failed to see it?" returned the other gently. "A young girl of breeding and social experience would hardly have come to your studio. A married woman might who respected herself with full confidence and knew with the same confidence that you would respect her. And, my dear boy," added Kent, with his quiet winning smile, "you are a man to inspire confidence. Otherwise I myself might have suspected you of having a hand in the death of the woman on the beach."

"Never mind the woman on the beach. This other matter is more than life or death. Is that flimsy supposition all you have to go on?"

"No. Her travel. Her wide acquaintance with men and events. Her obvious poise. And, reverting to tangible fact, as clinching evidence, there are her gloves, which she always wears."

"What about her gloves?"

"You never saw her left hand, did you?"

"Oh, yes. You mean the wedding ring. Well, I suppose," continued Sedgwick, with a tinge of contempt in his voice, "she could have taken off her ring as easily as her gloves."

There was no answering contempt in Chester Kent's voice as he replied: "But a ring, constantly worn and then removed, leaves an unmistakable mark. What the connection between her and the corpse on the beach may be is the problem. My immediate business is to discover who the dead woman is."

"And mine," said Sedgwick hoarsely, "is to discover the living."

"We'll at least start together," replied Kent. "Come!"

"Twenty minutes of curving and dodging along the rocky roads in Kent's runabout brought them to the turnpike in sight of the town of Annalska, and Kent said:

"The inquest is set for 11 o'clock, said Kent."

"All right," said Sedgwick with equal tactfulness.

They turned a corner and ran into the fringe of a crowd hovering about the town hall. Halting his machine in a bit of shade, Kent surveyed the gathering. At one point it thickened about a man who was talking eagerly, the vocal center of a small circle of silence.

"Elder Dennett," said Kent, "back from Cadypown. You'll have to face the music now. One word of warning: Don't lose your head or your temper if the suspicion raised against you by Dennett is strengthened by me. My concern is to get to the bottom of this matter. There is something the sheriff knows that I don't know. Probably it is the identity of the body. To force him into the open it may be necessary for me to augment the case against you."

"Humph! I to be ready for arrest?"

"Highly probable at present. No, go on the stand when you're called and tell the truth and nothing but the truth."

"But not the whole truth?"

"Nothing of the neckless. You won't be questioned about that. By the way, you have never kept among your artistic properties anything in the way of handkerchiefs have you?"

"No."

"I didn't suppose you had. Those

manacles are a bother. I don't—I absolutely do not like those manacles. And on one wrist only! Perhaps that is the very fact, though. Well, we shall know more when we're older; two hours older, say. Whether we shall know all that Mr. Sheriff Len Schlegel knows is another question. I don't like Mr. Schlegel, either, for that matter."

"Dennett has seen me," said Sedgwick in a low voice.

Indeed, the narrator's voice had abruptly ceased and he stood with the dropped jaw of stupefaction. One after another of his auditors turned and stared at the two men in the motor-car.

"Stay where you are," said Kent and stepped out to mingle with the crowd. No one recognized at first the immaculate flannel clad man as the bearded scientist whose strange actions had amused the crowd on the beach. A heavy, solemn man addressed him:

"Friend of his?" he asked, nodding toward the artist.

"Yes."

"He'll need 'em. Going to give evidence?"

"To hear it, rather," replied Kent pleasantly. "Where's the body?"

"Inside. Just brought it over from Dr. Breed's. He's the medical officer, and the sheriff are running the show. Your friend wants a lawyer, maybe?"

"The thought struck Kent that, while a lawyer might be premature, a friend in the town might be very useful.

"Yes," he said; "from tomorrow on."

"Meaning that you're in charge today," murmured the big man shrewdly. Kent smiled. "I dare say we shall get on very well together. Mr.—His voice went out intermediately.

"Bain, Adam Bain, attorney and counselor at law for thirty years in the town of Annalska."

"Thank you. My name is Kent. You already know my friend's name. What kind of man is this medical officer?"

"Breed? Not much. More of a politician than a doctor and more of a horse trader than either. Fidgety as a sandpaper undershirt."

"Did he perform the autopsy at his own house?"

"Him and the sheriff last evening. Didn't even have an undertaker to help lay out."

The lobe of Kent's ear began to suffer from repeated handling. "The body hasn't been identified, I suppose?"

"Nobody's had so much as a wink at it but those two and Ira Dennett. He viewed the corpse last night. That's why I guess your friend needs his friend and maybe a lawyer."

"Exactly. Mr. Dennett doesn't seem to be precisely a deaf mute."

Lawyer Bain emitted the bubbling chuckle of the fat throated. "It's quite some time since Iry won any prizes for silent thought," he stated. "You are known hereabouts?" he added in a pause.

"Very little."

"Ganett Jim, yonder, looks as if he kinder cherished the honor of your acquaintance."

Over his shoulder Kent caught the half breed's glance fixed upon him with stolid intensity. A touch on his arm made him turn to the other side, where Bain smiled at him.

"Didn't hardly know you with your beard off," piped the old man. "Howdy, professor? You're slicked up like your own wedding."

"Good morning," said the scientist. "Are you going inside? Sit with me, won't you? Mr. Sedgwick is with me."

The ex-sarator started. "Him?" he exclaimed. "Here? There's been quite a lot of talk—"

"Suspicion, you mean."

"Well, yes."

"People are inclined to connect Mr. Sedgwick with the death of the woman."

"What else can you expect?" returned the old man deprecatingly. "Iry Dennett's been telling his story. He's certain the woman he seen talking to Mr. Sedgwick is the dead woman-willies to swear to it anywheres."

"What about Ganett Jim? Has he contributed anything to the discussion?"

"No. Jim's as close tongued as Iry is clatter mouthed."

"And probably with reason," muttered Kent. "Well, I'll look for you inside."

He returned to join Sedgwick. Together they entered the building, while behind them a rising hum testified to the interest felt in them by the villagers.

Within a tall, wizened Nann with dead, fishy eyes stalked nervously to and fro on a platform, beside which a hastily constructed coffin with a sash-covered top stood on three sawhorses. On a chair near by slouched the sheriff, his face red and streaming. A few perspiring men and women were scattered on the benches. Outside a clock struck 11. There was a quick inflow of the populace, and the man on the platform lifted up a chattering voice.

"Feller citizens," he said, "as medical officer I declare these proceedings

opened. Showing no disrespect to the deceased, we want to get through as spry as possible. First we will hear witnesses. Anybody who thinks he can throw any light on this business can have a hearing. Then those as wants may view the remains. The burial will take place right afterward in the town burying ground, our fellow citizen and sheriff, Mr. Len Schlegel, having volunteered the expenses."

CHAPTER VI.  
"Dah de murderer!"

THE first witness, a sheep herder, rose in his place and, without the formality of an oath, told of sighting the body at the edge of the surf at 7 o'clock in the morning.

Others, following, testified to the position on the beach, the lashing of the body to the grating, the wounds and the circumstances. Mr. Breed announced briefly that the deceased had come to her death by drowning and that the skull had been crushed in, presumably, when the waves hammered the body upon the reefs.

"Then the corpse must have come from a good ways out," said Sheriff Smith, "for the reefs wouldn't catch it at that tide."

"Nobody knows how the dead came to Lonesome Cove," said the sheriff in his deep voice.

Elder Ira Dennett was the next and last witness called. Somewhere beneath the eider's dress, a shuffling lurked the instinct of the drama, waiting to be plucked, he told his story with skill and fervor. He made a telling point of the newly finished picture he had seen in Sedgwick's studio, depicting the moonlit charge of the wave mounted corpse. He sketched out the encounter between the artist and the dead woman vividly.

Then Sedgwick rose. He was white, but his voice was under perfect control as he