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E. L. C. WARD, Editor and Proprietor.

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BABY MINE.

I've a letter from thy sire,
Baby mine,
I could read and never tire,
Baby mine;
He is sailing o'er the sea,
He is coming back to me,
He is coming back to thee,
Baby mine!

Oh, I long to see his face,
Baby mine,
In his old accustomed place,
Baby mine;
Like the rose of May in bloom,
Like a star amid the gloom,
Like the sunshine in the room,
Baby mine!

I'm so glad I cannot sleep,
Baby mine,
I'm so happy I could weep,
Baby mine;
He is sailing o'er the sea,
He is coming back to me,
He is coming back to thee,
Baby mine!"

The Amber Ring

It was a cold winter night. I sat by the fire at a German inn. Not far from me was Carl Von Arnheim. We were both members of the German University. The fire blazed fitfully, wreathing itself in glowing spirals around the huge logs that were slowly being consumed. I was about going off in a doze, when, suddenly, Carl recalled me to my senses by asking:

"Do you know that the Baron Von — and his lovely daughter are in town?"

I replied in the affirmative. As I gazed on his face as it slowly settled to its dark, weird aspect, I was forced to give credence to those stories bruited around among the students of some strange, super-natural gifts with which Carl Von Arnheim was endowed. I had often met him; and from the first acquaintance he had somehow attached himself to me.

On being asked why, by some one, he replied that his and my own destinies were united; that I would be necessary to him some time in the future. The persons he alluded to in his question to me were known to both of us. Baron Von — was a frank, free-hearted German nobleman. His daughter, Rena, as she was called, was the most beautiful creature I ever saw. Not only that her beauty attracted me—for we were secretly engaged; but it had evidently touched the heart of the sombre, pale-faced German student, Carl Von Arnheim. I do not know whether the thought of my being attached to Rena ever troubled him. He seemed confident, and feared no rival.

But, as I watched him that night, he had a strange look of fierce determination on his face. Presently he turned toward me, and fixed his eyes on mine. It was impossible to avoid his glance; a lurid light seemed playing in the very depths of his eyes. I could not move nor speak. Another moment and his hands were moving before me, and I knew that Carl was a mesmerist, and that I was under his control. Soon I lost all consciousness, and when I awoke to that appeared a new state of existence, I saw Carl still looking at what was myself; but from which, in some manner, I was separated.

I had often read of the duality of our existence; but never comprehended its meaning so clearly before. Here I was looking on a living and breathing body, from which the soul, the Ego of metaphysicians, was absent.

Carl still continued to gaze fixedly at my body, then, though he spoke not, I knew he was addressing me. There was no word uttered; but still the horrible purport of his meaning was conveyed to me, the more distinctly as we were conversing spirit with spirit. Knowing by his diabolical arts that I had won the love of the Lady Rena, he was conjuring my soul from its body, which his own soul was to enter, while I was to dwell the inhabitant of his body. I could not struggle; I could only submit.

In this way he was to win the Lady Rena and I was to lose her forever. Again I lost consciousness; and when I came to myself I found the transformation complete, and Carl had departed. I was sitting alone by the fire of the German inn in the body of Carl Von Arnheim!

I arose to leave. The little inn-keeper stepped up briskly, and handed him his bill.

"The gentleman, your friend, said that you would settle this little account, Herr Von Arnheim," said he, handing him a slip of paper.

"Yes; henceforth I was to be Carl Von Arnheim, and he was to be myself. I paid the bill and then I departed.

And now, as I came out in the cold, frosty air, the terrible truth dawned upon my mind for the first time in its awful reality. What was I to do? Where was I to go? Would it not be worse than madness to try and retain the love of Rena in my present guise! Should I attempt that, Carl Von Arnheim, in his new personality, would forestall me by declaring me a madman;

and Rena would believe him, I staggered under the weight of my misery. All night I roamed the streets, caring not whether I went. In the morning some of the students passed by.

"Their goes that queer, unfathomable genius, Carl Von Arnheim," I heard them say.

"What in the world has he been doing?"

"Reading the stars perhaps, all night."

No one took any notice of my haggard aspect. It was like Carl to look pale and haggard. I turned a corner, and there a sight met my eyes before which I recoiled in horror. I saw Carl, as myself, glide swiftly past in the sleigh of Baron Von —. The latter was driving, and Carl was sitting beside the lovely Rena, talking earnestly. When he saw me he threw a malicious, triumphant glance. The sleigh and all rushed past; and I staggered and fell—and then knew no more.

When I recovered my senses I found myself in Carl's room. I recognized it, for I had been there once or twice before at his invitation. A physician and one or two students were standing beside the bed where I lay. I opened my eyes and thanked them for their kindness.

Again the horrid reality of my condition burst upon me, and I nearly fainted again. Rallying my strength, I told them to leave me, as I wished to be alone. The physician gave them a sign, and all went out. I lay for some moments longer, trying to reflect upon my situation. At length I rose up and paced the room.

A desire for vengeance had seized upon me. A thousand schemes suggested themselves to me by which I could obtain satisfaction; but none of them seemed to content my morbid imagination. I looked about the room. In one corner I espied a large, iron-bound chest, which Carl was always particular never to open in my presence. A thought struck me. Why might not this chest contain secrets which it would be of importance for me to know! But how to get into it! I hesitated a moment. Carl must have carried the key which unlocked it in his pocket. I felt for the key. Sure enough there was a large one there. I took it out and tried the lock. It yielded, and I opened the chest.

There was nothing in it—except some chemicals, several old, wrinkled, and yellow parchments, and in a small box by itself, an amber ring. I had a presentiment that with these means I was to work my deliverance. I examined the manuscripts; large rolls they were, filled with diagrams, and words in the Latin language. Being familiar with the latter, I was at no loss to understand their meaning.

What! Had the day of magic returned? Here were directions for calling the powers of darkness to the act of humanity; the hidden mysteries of nature revealed and explained; and dissertations of a metaphysical character on the mind of man, and its unknown affinities with the world of spirits. All was apparently written long ago—it might be centuries. I sat all day studying the mysterious writings. Night came and, after obtaining a little nourishment for the body that was mine for the time being, I lit a lamp, and, locking the door, still continued to pore over those wonderful manuscripts that were revealing to me with every line I read strange secrets, which would make my power over mankind irresistible.

All that was demanded for the possessor of this secret was a peculiar organization. With the body of Carl Von Arnheim I, of course had obtained his temperament, and facility to use these powers. I determined to make myself master of them, and then—let the villain look to himself. He had forfeited all his power by taking upon him my organization, so great had been his love for the beautiful Lady Rena.

Little did he think that I would get with my inheritance as I intended. My heart beat with hope. Already I seemed to grasp revenge. With that Amber Ring, and the knowledge of its wonderful properties made known to me by these old manuscripts, I would bring him down—down to the very lowest pit of misery.

Over the way the mansion of the Baron the father of Rena. It was lit up with a thousand brilliant lights. I heard the sound of music and dancing. As I looked from the window I saw passing by the opposite window, and inside the gorgeous drawing-room, Rena and Carl, arm in arm. I did not stagger that time. I smiled with secret exultation. Going to my table I unrolled a manuscript and read:

"The odic fluid is generated by wearing the Amber Ring on the third finger of the left hand, and by the odic fluid matter and mind are united. When odic is withdrawn from the body the mind is free, and can be commanded."

The following farther directions ending with:

knoweth its proper use, is to a certain extent, all powerful."

Days passed. By the aid of the ring I kept myself, informed of the movements of Carl. He was to be married in three days, which would be the day before Christmas. The ceremony was to take place in the evening.

My time was short, yet long enough for what I had to do. Day and night I studied and worked. My experiments were, with a few exceptions, successful. By the day before Christmas I was prepared. I had perfected myself in my art. I had no more need of the manuscripts—no more need of the Amber Ring. I therefore, for reasons of my own, burnt the whole, the manuscripts first, and then threw the Amber Ring into the blazing fire. A pale light started up; the whole room shook and gleamed as if of phosphorescent material. Then all was silent. I went to the window again and looked over the way. Could I have been mistaken? It seemed to me that I saw, in the uncertain light of the moon, Carl Von Arnheim raising his hands to heaven, with a look betokening the greatest fear. It was but for a moment, and then he was gone.

My vengeance should be a retribution. One hour before the time appointed for the marriage I was at the inn of which I spoke at the beginning of the story. I began the incantation which I knew would bring Carl, whether he wished or not, to my presence. Soon he came. There was a wild look in his eyes, and he seemed overcome with terror. I made him sit where he had sat three weeks before. Then, using the same mesmeric means he had used, reduced him to a state of insensibility. Then, I taking from my pocket a vial containing a virulent poison which I knew would take deadly effect in the space of half an hour, swallowed its contents—and commanding the spirit of Carl to resume its original body, I re-entered my own. Then springing up, I shouted triumphantly for my vengeance was complete; the soul of Carl Von Arnheim had gone into its former body, whence it was soon to be driven forever by the deadly poison I had infused into his system.

As I sprang from my seat the surroundings, somehow, seemed to be changed. I was still in the same room of the inn, and there before me sat Carl, fast asleep. The little keeper of the inn was bustling about as usual, and before me seemed lying the veritable box I had seen burning a month before. I shook Carl.

"What do you want?" said he, looking up.

"What do I want?" said I, half reflectively, "I believe I've been asleep, and had a queer sort of dream—all about magic and mesmerism. This isn't Christmas eve, is it?"

"Christmas eve!" he echoed. "Why, Christmas won't be here for a month."

"Let us go," said I.

Astonishing Jugglery.

In Delhi, India, we saw the celebrated basket "trick," which is sometimes poorly imitated by professional jugglers in this country. A native produced a basket and a blanket, and after permitting us to see that they contained nothing, inverted the basket on the ground and covered it with the blanket. We paid no attention to his incantations, but kept our eyes fixed on the basket and the space around it, resolved that no boy should be smuggled into it or out of it without seeing him. What made the trick still more wonderful was the fact that the performer stood in a clear space, and we could look down upon him as he proceeded. He went through the customary act of thrusting a sword through the interstices of the basket, when the cries of a boy were heard as if in mortal pain issuing from the basket. Turning it over, there was a boy apparently unharmed and seemingly enjoying the fun. Restoring the basket, with the blanket over it, to its former position, with the boy under it, the juggler went through the same incantations, and then running his sword under the blanket, tossed it away from him. Turning over the basket, no boy was to be seen. So far as anything could be observed there was no possible place in which the little fellow could be concealed. Another feat quite astonishing we saw performed in the streets of Constantinople. An itinerant magician showed us a cane which had the appearance of being of wood and very knotty. This he tossed in the air as high as he could, and when it touched the ground it took the form of a live serpent, with blazing eyes and rapid movements. It looked like a dangerous specimen, and one which no man would like to approach. Catching up this monster the fellow coiled it round his neck and fondled it, while it writhed and exhibited the most venomous qualities. Throwing it high up in the air it fell to the ground the same cane which we had handled at our ease.

Many are willing enough to wound us as yet afraid to strike.

Driving Off the Fog.

On a late passage of the steamer *Dreco* on the Hudson she was detained below Albany by a heavy fog. Captain Roe was standing near the pilot house on the lookout, when he was approached by a venerable gentleman of rural appearance. The boat was pushing forward with half speed and great caution. "Captain," said the stranger, "why don't you drive off the fog?"

"Just the thing I should like to have you tell me how to do."

"I'll tell you now an old German friend of mine years ago did it," and the passenger commenced by saying:

"In the rich valley of the Mohawk there is a quiet little village called Spraker's Basin. Many years ago, before there was such a thing as a railroad in the State of New York, the veritable Mr. Spraker, the patriarch and founder of Spraker's Basin, was keeping a tavern a mile or so from the village, upon the thoroughfare known as Johnstown Road. Spraker's as it is generally called, was in early times the great rendezvous for the Mohawk farmers, while journeying to Albany with their wheat, and of the Jefferson and Lewis County drovers. Now and then a New York merchant on his trip to the Northern settlements was to be seen before the great wood fire in Spraker's tavern. This class of travelers were held in much respect by old Spraker and the honest Dutch farmers on the river. One of this class accosted the old man on the porch one foggy morning, with:

Mr. Spraker, do you have much of this sort of weather, down here in this valley?"

"Oh, yes, put we tont mind it, Mr. Stewart, I has a way of trying it off ish no matter at all, tish fog."

"How's that, Mr. Spraker, I should like to know the process of driving off a fog?"

"Well, I will tell you; I take a tram, and goes out and feeds te pigs, and if te fog don't go off pretty soon, I take another tram, and den I goes out and foders be cattle, and if te fog ain't gone by dis time, I takes another dram, and den I goes out and chops wood like thunder, and if te fog don't go py dis time, I takes another dram, and so on. Mr. Stewart, I keep a doin' till the fog all goes away."

"Well, upon my word, Mr. Spraker, this is a novel mode of getting clear of a fog. How many drams did you ever take of a morning before you succeeded in driving off the fog?"

"Let me see; about two years ago, I think I had to take about twenty trans, but it was a tam foggy morning."

The Bijah Elixir.

A woman and boy slowly approached the station.

They were mother and son. The boy looked serious and the mother was doing a great deal of talking. She said she'd heard that they had opened a museum at the station, and she asked John Henry if he'd like to go in and see the animals.

"Spose they've got any snakes?" he asked.

"Lots of 'em."

"And baboons?"

"More'n a dozen."

"And stuffed bridegrooms?"

"Yes, heaps of 'em."

The boy had his suspicions, but curiosity overcame them, and he finally consented to go in. As he entered the parlor the mother winked at Bijah over his head, whispered the one word "Elixir," and she was gone before John Henry could realize the situation.

"I am glad to see you, my boy," remarked Bijah, by way of breaking the ice.

"Where's them baboons?" demanded the boy, as he looked around.

"My son, the way of the transgressor is hard, no matter whether the spelling book says so or not."

"Where's that stuffed bridegroom?" shouted the boy.

"He has gone out for a walk in the mellow sunlight, Johnny, but come up stairs and I'll show you the Elixir."

"You can't fool me!"

"There is do fooling about this. On the contrary, this is a very solemn occasion. Come on."

The boy suspected the worst, and making a dive to get under the table he upset it and came near getting out doors. He was finally secured and elevated to the second story, the door locked, and as he was placed in the big chair labelled "Meditation" he had made up his mind to die in the last ditch.

"Your mother didn't have time to explain your conduct, or detail your history," remarked Bijah in a fatherly tone, "but I think she wants the Elixir applied on general principles."

"Murder!" shouted the boy as he tried to get out of the chair.

"I should like to sit here and study your disposition, mused Bijah, "but time flies, and I am lectle a bit anxious to try this new spunker."

"Don't you dare!" shouted the boy, having a dim idea of what was coming.

"You observe, my son, that I fasten

this sheet-iron pad around my left leg as a protection. If you feel like biting, bite away. Then I place the Elixir handy, bring you out of the chair, so bend you over in this shape, and now we are ready for business. Let me remark at this stage of the proceedings that my heart aches for you."

"Maw! Maw!" screamed John Henry.

"Your dear maw is far, far away, my son, and I am now ready for business. Here I go."

He went. The sound of a shingle striking a boy was heard in the land. It was also felt in the land, but from the first stroke the boy shut his teeth together hard and refused to utter a sound. He had been there before, and he didn't believe it was going to be much of a shower.

"I hate to do it, but—!" remarked Bijah, as he worked his elbow with more zeal, and the silence was broken only by the deep-toned whacks of the shingle. It was shingle vs. boy, and the boy had bet ten to one that he would come in ahead. After two minutes' steady motion Bijah let up and kindly inquired:

"My son, do you now feel as if you owned this town?"

"I feel as if I'm a mind to!" was the brief reply.

"What! haven't I got down to your feelings yet! Jist wait a moment!"

The lad was adjusted and the Elixir again applied. The arm rose higher and came down faster, and at the fifth stroke a new stratum of soil was reached. At the tenth the boy wasn't sure which would beat. At the fifteenth he concluded that he was a goner, but just then Bijah halted and asked:

"My son, do you think you run the house?"

"I kin run half of it," replied the lad, suddenly taking courage.

"Am I growing weak in my old age?" sighed the janitor, as he reached for a new spunker, "or is this an unusual case?"

It was simply an unusual case. The new spunker started off like a dose of buckshot and had only got the regular motion when the boy gave in. Before the shingle let go he was ready to promise anything. He took the most solemn vow to stay in nights, go to Sunday-school, quit fighting and earn money for his mother and as a proof of his desire to reform, he took a tablespoonful of castor oil without a wince.

"Don't you shudder when you realize what a narrer escape you've had from the gallus?" queried Bijah, as he wiped off the spoon on his elbow.

"I do, and I shall always love you."

"One day longer and you might have turned out a pirate. I tell you, boy, a shingle of the right size, laid on the right spot, will put new and better thoughts into a boy's mind as sure's your born. You can't mention a single great man in this country, from Peter Cooper to Brother Gardner, who didn't get his regular dose of the Elixir when a boy. You can now sit with me down stairs and learn a lesson in history while I larn my socks."

"When the mother came softly in, a look of maternal anxiety on her countenance, Bijah was pushing a darning needle threaded with pink twine through an 8x10 hole in the heel of a sky-blue woolen sock, and the boy was reading aloud:

"Is the hen on her nest? Yes, the hen is on her nest. Is the sun up? Yes, the sun is up, and no good boy will laugh at a man who is blind?"

The Elixir is a success. All orders by mail promptly attended to.

A Good-Hearted Man.

A stranger who boarded a car recently did not mind the fare box until a woman came aboard and dropped in her nickel. She was talking with another woman about the fever sufferers as she did so, and the man picked up his ears and also put in a nickel. A fourth, fifth and sixth passenger got aboard and paid their fares, and every time a nickel went into the box the stranger "saw" it. By and by, after he had deposited ten fares, to the great amusement of other passengers, an old woman with a basket took her seat and sent her fare along, and at the same time happened to look across at the good-hearted man.

"Bluff, is it!" he called out, as he rose up and went down for big change.

"Well, if a crowd like this 'ere can bluff me on yellow fever nickel subscriptions tnen I'll bet my shirt. Here I, you well-eyed crowd, climb over this two-dollar bill and I'll drop in a five!"

He pushed the money into the box, and the driver opened the door and inquired:

"Do you want change?"

"Change? Not a red! I'm waiting for this caboodle to call my hand if they dare!"

Solomon truly sayeth: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones."

If one strives to treat others as he would be treated by them, he will not fail to come near the perfect life.