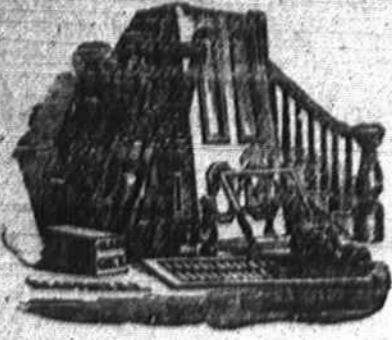


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SHERLOCK'S ELOPEMENT

By JAMES HAWKINS

Sherlock watched the dapper figure
 clamber over the side. He had seen
 him several times over at the hotel.
 Some one had said he was a South
 American revolutionist awaiting a fa-
 vorable opportunity to dash across the
 Gulf. At any rate he was decidedly
 too attentive to Leigh Granger to suit
 Bert Sherlock.

Apparently the little man was not
 accustomed to yachts for he stum-
 bled on the ladder and would have fallen
 back into the boat had not one of the
 sailors boosted him aboard with an
 oar, a timely aid but one accountable
 for a decidedly undignified sprawl up-
 on the deck.

Sherlock sprang to his assistance
 and with a powerful grip upon his collar
 dragged the visitor to his feet.

"The senior skipper" demanded the
 intruder as he arranged his disordered
 dress.

"The same," admitted Sherlock, with
 a bow. "How can I serve you?"

"Much—very much," gesticulated
 the other. "I am Jesus Maria Juan
 Santiago Alvaro."

"All of that?" murmured Sherlock in
 mock amazement. The other searched
 the grave face for possible mockery
 but finding none there continued: "I
 see you know not who that is."

"The name is imposing—but unfa-
 miliar," apologized Sherlock. "You
 see I am recently arrived. I am not
 yet familiar with the notabilities."
 "Very true," assented Alvaro gra-
 ciously. "You are not to be blamed.
 But over there," he added with a ma-
 jestic sweep toward the southern hori-
 zon, "they know and fear the name.
 It brings terror to the bravest hearts."

"I can imagine," agreed Sherlock
 politely.

"Yes," beamed Alvaro. "I have come
 to see you upon business. Your own-
 er—he is here?"

"My owner?" echoed Sherlock.

"There is a flag they fly when the
 owner is present. I have watch
 three day. He is not here?"

Sherlock smiled. It was bad enough
 to have the Enid anchored opposite
 the hotel without flying the owner's
 pennant. He wanted Frederick Granger
 to believe that the yacht was sim-
 ply waiting his coming.

"The owner's flag is not flying," he
 assented.

"He will be here soon, yes?" asked
 Alvaro.

"Perhaps. I cannot say."
 "Three day: a week—two weeks?"
 "What is it you want?" demanded
 Sherlock.

"I would charter your beautiful
 boat," explained Alvaro. "I would
 elope."

"Elope? You mean escape?" sug-
 gested Sherlock—"from your enemies."

"I have said 'elope' declared Al-
 varo, kissing his finger tips. "I would
 elope with a goddess."

"And you want to hire the boat?"
 "Yes," he exclaimed. "I must have
 a boat. You will take us to Bunoven-
 ta. I shall make a revolution."

"I guess I can fix it," declared Sher-
 lock. It would be at least a week be-
 fore Frederick Granger would be gone
 and he could make his presence known
 to Leigh.

"Tomorrow you shall be at the
 point," exclaimed Alvaro. "I shall ride
 to the point. Two of my men shall
 be there to help you; we shall seize
 her. Once aboard, ho for Bunoven-
 ta! She shall marry me then and I shall
 be dictator."

"Perhaps her parents will object,"
 suggested Sherlock. "It might get me
 into trouble on my return."

"No," was the eager answer. "She
 only objects."

"What's the lady's name?" deman-
 ded Sherlock.

"Granger," announced Alvaro proud-
 ly. "You must know him. Yes?"

"I know him," admitted Sherlock.
 "He is with you?"

"Mos' hearty. His the idea is. She
 like a young man of the north. Gran-
 ger say you shall take her on to your
 own land. She will marry the Presi-
 dent and forget the other."

"I'm with you," declared Sherlock.
 "We'll make it an elopement to live
 in history for quickness and dispatch."

"You are my fren, my bes' fren,"
 declared Alvaro. "You shall be what
 you call admiral."

"That's a go, too," agreed Sherlock.
 "but look here: I can't have your
 men on board. I've a big crew. They
 can follow on a fruit steamer."

"Just so," agreed Alvaro. "Be then
 at the point at 2. I will pay \$500 in
 gold. Also shall you be admiral."

He tumbled into the waiting boat
 and Sherlock watched him across to
 the dock. Then, with a short laugh he
 turned on his heel and went into the
 cabin.

This, then, was the reason his own
 suit had been received with no favor.
 Granger was fitting out a filibustering
 expedition. His daughter should marry
 the successful leader of the revolu-
 tion and the Granger line of fruit
 steamers would escape the heavy har-
 bor dues.

Late that evening the Enid left her
 anchorage and drew off toward the
 point, a promontory some three
 miles to the south of the hotel heavily
 wooded with cocoanuts and palms. He
 anchored on the further side, and at
 noon he and his mate went ashore and
 concealed themselves in the bushes.

It was a long wait until the senior
 and Leigh Granger made their appear-
 ance on horseback, followed by the
 senior's body servant. At the sight of

the boat Alvaro's eyes lighted up. He
 reined in his horse and turned to his
 companion.

"It was today," he began, "that you
 was tell me that you marry me. Say,
 is it not yes?"

"Never," was the firm answer. "I
 have told you repeatedly that I shall
 never marry you."

"An' I tell you that you shall," he
 shouted as he forced his horse against
 hers. The shock half unseated her
 and as she reeled in the saddle two
 men with masks over their faces
 sprang toward her.

For a moment she fought them off,
 but she was no match for two muscu-
 lar men, and before Alvaro could dis-
 mount and come to their assistance
 they were carrying her to the boat.

They placed her, fainting, in the
 stern. Alvaro leaped into the bow and
 with strong strokes they pulled toward
 the yacht. It was the work of a mo-
 ment to pass Leigh over the side and
 boost Alvaro after her. In another mo-
 ment the tender was slung and the
 screw began to churn the blue water.

Alvaro pranced up and down the
 deck in jubilation of spirits. Already,
 in imagination, he could see himself,
 the victor of the army, ruling in the
 executive mansion at Marino.

Already two of the Granger fruiter-
 had started from New Orleans with
 small arms and field pieces. For a
 year his agents had been working to
 perfect an organization. It needed only
 arms and the men. Both were on the
 way. He peered toward the south
 while yet the Florida coast was in
 sight, vainly seeking a glimpse of the
 promised land.

Suddenly eight bells rang and the
 new watch came on deck. The skip-
 per came out of the chart house and
 stood looking down. At a signal two
 of the men sprang upon the little man
 and bore him to the deck.

In spite of his diminutive size he
 was no coward, and he fought fiercel-
 y to draw his guns, but it was no use.
 Presently he lay panting on the deck,
 bound hand and foot.

Sherlock came and stood over him.
 "The elopement is getting along fa-
 vorably," he smiled cheerfully.

"This is treason," stormed the lit-
 tle man. "I am mos' surprise that you
 should act thus."

"I don't think I care to be admiral,
 thank you," was the retort. "I think
 I would rather marry that young
 woman in the cabin."

"But she is mine," stormed Alvaro.
 "You shall be a thief to take her."

"Seems to me we helped you to do
 a little stealing a short time ago,"
 suggested Sherlock. "If the shoe gets
 on the other foot it ought to fit as
 easy."

"But she is mine," pleaded Alvaro.
 "Her father have gave her to me. He
 will be annoyed."

"I can quite understand that,"
 laughed Sherlock. "He will certainly
 be annoyed with you."

"Non, with you," insisted Alvaro.
 "He is a mos' big man. He is a mil-
 lionaire."

This last was in a hushed whisper
 that brought the smile to Sherlock's
 lips. "I'm a millionaire, too," he ex-
 plained pleasantly.

"You are Sherlock?" gasped Al
 varo.

"At your service," agreed Sherlock.
 "But your flag said it was not you,"
 gasped the senior. "You should have
 had your flag if you were on board."

"There were purely personal rea-
 sons why I did not want to fly the
 pennant," explained Sherlock.

The senior resorted to Spanish to re-
 lieve his feelings. Sherlock, who
 spoke the tongue, smiled. "I don't
 blame you," he laughed. "It's turn-
 ing the tables. Now, look here.
 You've been useful to me. I tell you
 what I'll do. You show me the part
 of the coast where you can get the
 boats that are waiting for you, and I'll
 put you off. That will make it a nice
 little honeymoon trip for us."

"Who will marry you?" exulted Al-
 varo. "You forget."

"Why, Miss Granger," explained
 Sherlock.

"You have no minister," was the
 triumphant retort.

"I shipped one last night," laughed
 Sherlock. "Would you like to come
 down and witness the ceremony?"

Alvaro glanced at his bonds. At a
 sign from Sherlock a sailor stepped
 forward and undid the lashings, at the
 same time feeling for any concealed
 weapons. Together the two men made
 for the cabin, where Leigh, still pale
 from the excitement, sat in a corner
 chatting with a man in clerical garb.

For a moment Alvaro hung in the
 doorway, then he went forward and
 bowed low over the girl's hand.

"I had hoped," he said, "that it
 would be our nuptials we would cele-
 brate. I felicitate you, though my
 heart—it breaks."

With a smile the girl thanked him
 and turned toward Bert. Alvaro
 sprang forward. "At least," he said
 gallantly, "it should be mine to give
 away the bride. Your father he has
 give you to me. Now I give you to
 Senor Sherlock."

He drew from his pocket a hand-
 some ring. "It was all provided," he
 explained. "To the victor belongs the
 spoils." The girl looked at Sherlock,
 who nodded, and with the ring intend-
 ed for so different a groom, the wed-
 ding was celebrated.

Alvaro insisted upon champagne at
 the dinner that followed. He was of
 too mercurial a temperament to grieve
 over disappointed hopes. At last he
 sprang to his feet.

"I offer a toast," he cried: "To
 yourselves and myself; to the run-
 aways and the revolutionist. May I
 have plenty of fights and may you
 have none."

And the old clergyman, sitting
 apart, whispered gently, "Amen."

Starting The Fire

"They brought the coal this after-
 noon, Harry," Mrs. Newsom an-
 nounced as her husband sat down at
 the dinner table and she placed the
 steak before him.

"Good!" ejaculated Newsom. "I'll
 build a furnace fire tonight, Kitty.
 We're starting it earlier this year
 than we did last."

"Later," Mrs. Newsom said, as she
 seated herself opposite him. "Last
 year we built our first furnace fire on
 Oct. 18. I remember the date per-
 fectly; it was the day I entertained
 the card club and Mrs. Warren
 couldn't come. Her sister was ill and
 Mrs. Warren remained at home to
 take care of the children, much to my
 relief; she is a very fussy woman and
 you know how a furnace fire makes
 such an odor when it's started?"

Newsom nodded his head as he cut
 into the steak. "I don't remember all
 that, of course, but I do remember
 that we started the furnace later,
 about the 28th, I think."

"How ridiculous of you to insist
 upon that, Harry, when I've just told
 you when we did start it!" Mrs. New-
 som rejoined, her cheeks flushing. "I
 say we started the furnace on Oct.
 18."

"I've not the slightest objection to
 your saying that, my dear, because
 you evidently believe it, provided you
 grant me the privilege of saying that
 we started the fire on Oct. 28."

"You're exasperating, Harry," Mrs.
 Newsom exclaimed, rising to her feet.
 "I'll get my diary and settle the mat-
 ter once for all." She rushed out of
 the room.

Newsom called after her: "I'll get
 the coal bill; that will settle it."

At the end of several minutes Mrs.
 Newsom appeared in the library,
 where her husband was searching
 through a letter file.

"Harry, you've hidden my diary so
 I can't convince you of your mistake,"
 she accused him. "What have you
 done with it?"

"I haven't seen your diary. What
 have you done with the coal bills?"

"They're somewhere in the file. You
 can look for them while I'm eating my
 dinner; I don't propose to dine on
 cold steak and potatoes after I had
 the trouble of making them hot, sim-
 ply because you're obstinate."

Mrs. Newsom swept out of the
 room, only to return the next instant,
 declaring with visible elation: "Now,
 I'm certain we did start the fire on
 the 18th, because the day after that
 the man put up the storm windows
 and he swept the coal dust off the
 walk."

"Wonderful memory you have,"
 Newsom declared, shutting the file in
 disgust. "How do you happen to re-
 member that Oct. 19 was the day the
 man put up the storm windows and
 swept off the coal dust?"

"Because that was the day after
 we started the furnace fire on the
 18th," Mrs. Newsom answered, tri-
 umphantly. "Now, are you convinced?
 And, speaking of memories, you de-
 stroyed last year's receipted coal bills
 when we cleaned house, so it's hardly
 worth your while looking further for
 them."

"I'm not convinced," Newsom
 shouted, springing to his feet. He
 dropped the file in his flurry and scat-
 tered the contents, which did not add
 to his amiability. "But there must be
 some way of convincing you. Yes,
 come to think of it, I made a note on
 the direction card that hangs beside
 the furnace. Now, I'll show you."

"You never mentioned before that
 you made a note on the card when
 we started the furnace," Mrs. New-
 some said, suspiciously.

In the dining room they encoun-
 tered Mrs. Newsom's young sister,
 who exclaimed: "What's the matter?
 Why aren't you eating your dinner?
 I ran over to borrow the evening pa-
 per for mother; dad forgot to bring
 one."

"Rhoda," Mrs. Newsom cried, desper-
 ately, "do you remember what day
 we started our furnace last year?
 Wasn't it the day I entertained the
 card club and you helped me serve?"

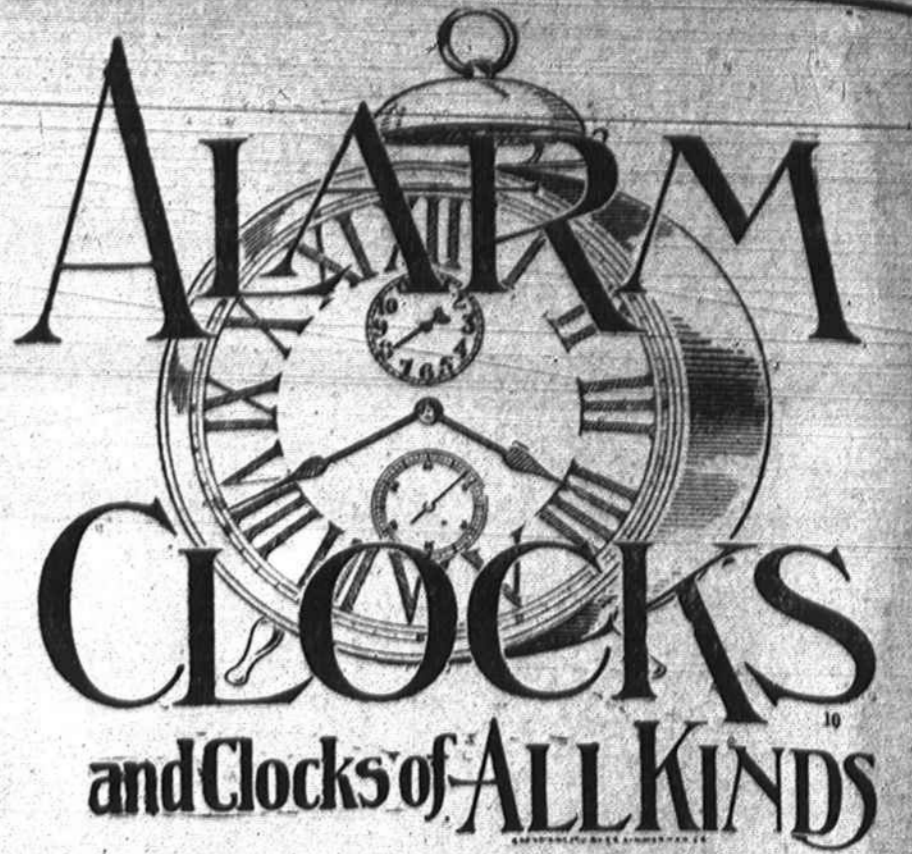
"No, indeed," said her sister. "The
 women nearly froze that day sitting
 around in their thin dresses," was the
 unexpected answer. "It was the next
 day. I remember perfectly, because
 you had to keep an appointment at
 the tailor's and you were afraid to
 leave a fresh fire unwatched."

"I—I—well—" Mrs. Newsom stopped
 and a reminiscent look crept into her
 eyes. "But that was the day the man
 put on the storm windows, and I can't
 recall that I went to the tailor's.
 Still—wait a minute. I'll telephone
 mother. She always remembers ev-
 erything."

Mrs. Newsom rushed to the tele-
 phone and Newsom made his escape
 downstairs. The next moment Mrs.
 Newsom exclaimed, the receiver to
 her ear: "The 10th? You're sure?
 The day you brought Betty's baby
 over and the flat was so lovely and
 warm? You're quite positive?"

Mrs. Newsom flew downstairs and
 breathlessly confronted her husband
 as he lighted the gas in the base-
 ment. "We are both wrong," she said.
 "It was Oct. 10. Mother remembers."

In silence Newsom consulted the
 card. "We started the furnace fire
 last year on Oct. 20—exactly one year
 ago today," he announced. "Come on,
 Kitty, I'm ravenous."



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