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NANIAS!

"Ye-as, huh?"

"What time is it?"

"G y a h d-

moun'tin' done

gone, huh."

"The devil it

has! What do

you mean, sir,

by allowing me

to sleep on this

unconvenient

manner, when an

indulgent

government is

suffering for my

services? What

sort of a day is

it, sir?"

"Beautiful day, Mr. Waring."

"Then go at once to Mr. Larkin

and tell him he

can't wear his

new silk hat

this morning—I

want it, and you

fetch it. Don't

allow him to

ring in the

old one on you.

Tell him I mean

the new 'spring

style' he just

brought from

New York. Tell

Mr. Larkin I want

that new hat

of his, and you

get Mr. Pierce's

silk umbrella; then

come back here

and get my bath

and my coffee. Stop

there, Ananias! Give

my pious regards

to the commanding

officer, sir, and

tell him there's

no drill for

'X' battery this

morning, as I'm

to breakfast at

Moreau's at

eleven o'clock

and go to the

matinee afterwards."

"Beg pardon, huh, but de cunnle's

done ordered review

fo' de whole

command, huh,

right at nine

o'clock."

"So much the better. Then Capt.

Cram must stay,

and won't need

his well team.

Go right down

to the stable and

tell Jeffers I'll

drive at nine-

thirty."

"But—"

"No huts, you incorrigible rascal! I

don't pay you a

princely salary

to raise

obstacles. I

don't pay you

at all, sir, except

at rare intervals

and in moments

of mental

decrepitude. Go

at once! Allez!

Chassez! Skoot!"

"But, Lieutenant," says Ananias, his

black face shining,

his even white

teeth all agleam,

"Capt. Cram

stopped in on

de way back

from stables to

say Glencoe

sprained his

foot and you

was to ride de

bay colt. Please

get up, huh. Boots

and saddles'll

soun' in ten

minutes."

"It won't, but if it does I'll brain

the bugler. Tell

him so. Tell

Capt. Cram

he's entirely

mistaken; I

won't ride

de bay colt—nor

Glencoe. I'm

going

disarray of the bachelor sitting-room

then whirled on Ananias.

"Mr. Waring dressed?"

"No, huh; jus' woke up, huh; ain't

out o' bed yet."

"The lazy vagabond! Just let me get

at him a minute," said the big man,

tramping over to the doorway as though

bent on invading the chamber beyond.

But Ananias had halted short at sight

of the intruder, and stood there resolutely

barring the way.

"Beg pardon, Lieutenant, but Mr.

Waring ain't had no bath yet. Can I

mix de lieutenant a cocktail, huh?"

"Can you? You black imp of Satan,

why isn't it ready now, sir? Sure you

could have seen I was as dry as a

limekiln from the time I came through

the gate! Hware's the demijohn, you

villain!"

"Bein' refilled, huh, down to de sto',

but da's a little on de sideboard, huh,"

answered Ananias, edging over thither,

now that he had lured the intruder

away from the guarded doorway.

"Take it straight, huh, o' wid bitters—

o' today!"

"Faith, I'll answer ye as Pat did de

parson: I'll take it straight now, and

then be drinking de toddy while your

honor is mixin' de punch. Give me

hold of it, you smudge, and tell your

master he's review—full-dress—and

it's time for him to be up. Has he

his two cocktills yet?"

"The lieutenant doesn't care fo' any

dis maw'nin', huh. I'll fetch him his

coffee in a minute. Did you see de

cunnle's oadely, huh? He was lookin'

fo' you a moment ago."

The big red man was gulping down

a big drink of the fiery liquor at the

instant. He set the glass back on the

sideboard with unsteady hand and

glared at Ananias suspiciously.

"Is it troot' you're tellin', nigger?

Hwat did he say was wanted?"

"Didn't say, huh, but de cunnle's in

his office. Yahdah comes de oadely,

too, huh; guess he must have hyund

was over hyund."

The result of this announcement was

not unexpected. The big man made a

leap for the chamber door, only to find it

slammed in his face from the other side.

"Hwat de devil's de matter with

your master this morning, Ananias?"

Waring, I say. Let me in.

The K. Q.'s orderly is after me, and

"I tell you, Ananias, I'm going to

town, sir; not to any ridiculous

review. Go and get what I ordered you.

See that I'm properly dressed, sir, or

I'll discharge you. Confound you, sir,

there isn't a drop of Florida water in

this bath, and none on any bureau! Go

and rob Mr. Pierce—or anybody."

But Ananias was already gone.

Darting out on the gallery, he took a

header through the window of the

adjoining quarters through which Mr.

Doyle had escaped, snatched a long

flask from the dressing table and was

back in the twinkling of an eye.

"What became of Mr. Doyle?" asked

Waring, as he thrust a bare arm

through a narrow aperture to receive

the spill. "Don't let him get drunk;

he's got to go to review, sir. If he

doesn't, Col. Braxton may be so in-

considerate as to inquire why both the

lieutenants of 'X' battery are missing.

Take good care of him till the review,

sir, then let him go to grass; and don't

you dare leave me without Florida

water again if you have to burglarize

the whole post. What's Mr. Doyle

doing, sir?"

"Peekin' froo de blin' in Mr. Pierce's

room, huh; lookin' fo' de oadely. I

done tole him de cunnel was after

him, but he ain't, huh," chuckled

Ananias. "I fixed it all right wid de

gahd dis maw'nin', huh. Dey won't

'bout his cuttin' up las' night. He'd

forgot de whole t'ing, huh; he allays

does; he never does know what's

happened de night befo'. He wouldn't

'a know about dis, but I tole him

Jim to tell him 'bout it after stables.

I tole Jim to sweat dat dey'd re-

ported it to de cunnel."

"Very well, Ananias; very well, sir;

you're a credit to your name. Now go

and carry out my orders. Don't forget

Capt. Cram's wagon. Tell Jeffers to

be here with it on time." And the

lieutenant returned to his bath without

waiting for reply.

"Ye-as, huh," was the subordinate

answer, as Ananias promptly turned,

and, whistling cheerily, went banging

out upon the gallery and clattering

down the open stairway to the brick-

paved court below. Here he as promptly

turned, and, noiseless as a cat, shot up

the stairway, tiptoed back into the

sitting-room, kicked off his low-heeled

slippers, and rapidly, but with hardly

an audible sound, resumed the work on

which he had been engaged—the ar-

rangement of his master's kit.

Already, faultlessly brushed, folded

and hanging over the back of a chair

close by the chamber door were the

bright blue, scarlet-velveted battery

trousers then in vogue, very snug at

the knee, very springy over the foot.

Underneath them, spread over the

square back of the chair, a dark-blue,

single-breasted frock-coat, hanging

nearly to the floor, its shoulders decked

with huge epaulettes, to the right one

of which were attached the braid and

loops of a heavy gilt aiguillette whose

glistening pendants were hung tempo-

rary on the upper button. On the

seat of the chair was folded a broad

soft sash of red silk net, its tassels

carefully spread. Beside it lay a pair

of long buff gauntlets, new and spot-

less. At the door, brilliantly polished,

stood a pair of buttoned gaiter boots,

the heels decorated with small glisten-

ing brass spurs. In the corner, close

at hand, leaned a long, curved saber,

its steel scabbard and plated

bands and rings, as well as the swivels

and buckle of the black sword-belt,

showing the perfection of finish in

manufacture and care in keeping. From

a round leather box Ananias now

extracted a new gold-wire fourragere,

which he softly wiped with a silk hand-

kerchief, dangled lovingly an instant

the glistening tassels, coiled it care-

fully upon the sash, then producing

from the same box a long scarlet

honor's plume he first brushed it

into shimmering freedom from the

faintest knot or kink, then set it

firmly through its socket into the front

of a gold-braded shako whose black

front was decked with the embroid-

ered cross cannon of the regiment, sur-

mounted by the arms of the United

States. This he noiselessly placed

upon the edge of the mantle, stepped

back to complacently view his work,

flicked off possible speck of dust on

the sleeve of the coat, touched with a

chamois-skin the gold crescent of the

nearest epaulette, then softly, noise-

lessly as before, vanished through the

doorway, tiptoed to the adjoining

window, and peeped in. Mr. Doyle

had thrown himself into Pierce's arm-

chair, and was trying to read the

morning paper.

"Wunner what Mars' Pierce will

say when he gets back from break-

fast," was Ananias' comment, as he

sped softly down the stairs, a broad

grin on his black face, a grin that al-

most instantly gave place to preter-

natural solemnity and respect as, turn-

ing sharply on the sidewalk at the

foot of the stairs, he came face to face

with the battery commander. Ananias

would have passed with a low obeis-

ance, but the captain halted him