

David Franklin Powell

*The Wolf-Men:
A Tale of Amazing
Adventure
in the Under-World*

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THE WOLF-MEN. PROLOGUE.

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“YOU’LL come, then?”

Professor James Mervyn’s voice quivered with eagerness as he put this question to his companion, Sir William Seymour, in a private room of a large London hotel. The baronet, a man in the prime of life, over six feet in height, and broad in proportion, his bearded face tanned by many a year of travel under a tropical sun, rose, and paced the chamber for some moments ere answering.

“Yes, I’ll come,” he said at length. “I had made all arrangements to leave England to-morrow for a spell in India; but that must slide. I can’t miss this chance of a trip to the Pole. But now tell me something more of this wonderful idea of yours.”

The professor’s spare form seemed to dilate with scientific zeal, and his eyes flashed as he commenced to speak.

“To begin at the beginning,” he said. “I have had the idea in my mind for some years, but until the last six months I saw no chance of putting it into execution. Although my theory has been ridiculed and laughed to scorn by most, if not all, of my colleagues, yet I am still convinced that it is not only feasible, but that it is the only way in which the

secret of the Pole, so jealously guarded by Dame Nature, may be wrested from her grasp.

“This was my line of reasoning: that it would be possible for a properly equipped submarine vessel to dive beneath the great ice barrier, and so reach the open sea which we know exists beyond. But the submarines of the day were in no way suitable for the attempt. Mere toys in size, and in some instances proving veritable death-traps to their unfortunate crews, of what use were these to cope with the perils of the Arctic seas? So my theory remained dormant until, some weeks ago, I received a letter from Garth Hilton. You remember what a fellow Garth always was for making model boats?”

Seymour nodded affirmatively.

“Well,” Mervyn continued, “it seems that he has had his old school chum, Tom Wilson, the engineer, staying with him at Hilton Manor for several months, and between them they have managed to construct a submarine, which, if it but answer their expectations, will prove the very thing I have been waiting for all these years. This is Garth’s description of his craft,” and, extracting a letter from the depths of a bulky note-book, Mervyn read as follows:

“Total length, three hundred and fifty feet; beam, fifty feet; torpedo-shaped, with turret or wheelhouse, from which the vessel is governed, in centre of deck. Tanks for submerging or raising; air reservoirs for supply whilst beneath the surface; liquid air engines, a patent of Wilson’s, maximum speed of which is forty-five knots per hour upon the surface, and thirty submerged.”

“Whew!” The professor’s companion whistled in his astonishment at this last statement.

“Liquid air engines!” he said. “Why, I always thought that liquid air was a powerful explosive agent?”

“True,” returned Mervyn; “but you must also remember that steam becomes an explosive when compressed, as witness the recent boiler explosion, so that is no argument against the use of liquid air as a propelling power.”

“But I don’t quite see——” the baronet began in a puzzled tone.

“Let me try to make it clear to you,” interrupted Mervyn. “Though but eighteen, young Tom Wilson is already recognised as an authority on the subject of liquid air and its capabilities as a propelling agent. As you will recollect, his father was a famous engineer, and the family talent appears to have descended to the lad.

“Ever since he left school Tom has been working on his engines, lack of funds alone preventing him from perfecting them before now. With financial aid from Garth, however, he has at last been enabled to complete them, and I give you my word they are the finest set of engines I have ever been privileged to examine.

“The huge boiler is somewhat similar in shape to that of an ordinary marine engine, but is much larger, and contains a number of immense tubes, in which is stored the liquefied air. From these the stuff works direct upon the powerful cylinders. Heat, of course, is entirely unnecessary; in fact, it would shatter the whole affair to atoms, liquid air being many degrees colder than ice.

“The first two gallons of the stuff cost Garth six hundred pounds to make; but there the expense ends, the engines drawing their own supplies from the air as they work.”

“Wonderful!” Seymour cried; “and the vessel does forty-five knots to the hour, you say? What will the world think of it when the news becomes public?”

“The news will never become public,” retorted the scientist, “if we can avoid it. Garth has taken the greatest care to prevent the facts leaking out. All his workers are picked men, and have been sworn to secrecy with regard to the nature of the vessel upon which they are engaged.”

“It will leak out,” asserted Seymour, “despite his precautions. A thing of that sort cannot remain a secret long. The very secrecy will attract the attention of the curiously inclined.”

“Exactly,” returned Mervyn, “that is what we are afraid of. Already, it seems, some hint of the matter has reached the Continent, in spite of Garth’s care. Two days ago I ran down to the Manor to look over the boat ere the final details were completed, and while there, Garth called my attention to a couple of suspicious-looking characters—foreigners, evidently—who, he said, had been hanging round the village for some days. Still, I think there is little to fear. The dock where the submarine floats is guarded night and day.”

The scientist refolded the inventor’s letter, and replaced it, ere resuming the conversation.

“Of course, what I have read to you is a very bald statement of the facts. When I went down I confess I was surprised at the singular beauty of the craft. She is built of

steel throughout, and furnished in a most luxurious manner; in fact, she must have cost Garth a fortune.”

“When do you start?” questioned Seymour.

“Within three days,” was the answer, “if the trial trip proves satisfactory. You will come down for that, I suppose? Then there is the affair of the christening to be gone through—we have not yet decided on a name for the vessel.”

“There will be room for a weapon or two, I suppose? I should feel lost without my guns.”

“Bring a whole armoury if you like,” replied Mervyn, smiling, “though I doubt if you will find much scope for your sporting instincts in the icy realms of the north. There is a special chamber fitted up as an armoury aboard the vessel, and there are racks in the turret in which a few weapons will be kept in case of emergency. Oh, I forgot to tell you—Silas is coming.”

“What!” cried Seymour, “Silas Haverly? That’s good. He’s always ready for any adventure that may turn up. Is he down at Hilton now?”

“No,” returned the scientist; “he goes down to-morrow.”

He pulled out his watch as he spoke.

“By Jove!” he cried, “I’ve only twenty minutes to catch the express. Are you coming down with me?”

“Yes,” returned the other. “I’ll just leave word for my traps to be sent on, and then I’m with you.”

Three minutes later the two men passed out of the hotel entrance, and, entering a cab, were driven rapidly away into the night.

CHAPTER I.

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AT THE MERCY OF CONSPIRATORS.

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SILAS K. HAVERLY, millionaire and explorer, settled himself comfortably back in the corner of a first-class smoker. He had ten minutes to wait ere the express—which was to bear him sixty miles across country to Stanwich, the nearest station to Garth Hilton's place—was timed to start.

To look at him no one would ever have imagined that he was the owner of a colossal fortune—one of the railway kings of America. Yet such he was. Starting at the very foot of Fortune's ladder, he had worked his way upward, until he owned the greater part of the vast network of rails upon which he had worked as a boy.

A wiry figure of a man he was, with endurance written all over him. He had a cool, determined face, and the firm set of his chin revealed the dogged resolution which had enabled him to amass one of the largest fortunes in the world. Altogether, he was not a man with whom one would care to trifle.

"H'm!" he muttered, blowing a cloud of smoke from a fragrant cigar, "I guess I'm having it all to myself this trip."

Indeed, it did seem as though he was to travel alone, for the time of departure arrived, and all the passengers appeared to have taken their places. There was a whistle from the guard, a warning shriek from the engine, then the

iron monster began to glide out of the station. As it did so, two men rushed across the platform, flung open the door of Haverly's compartment, and, despite the cries of the officials to "Stand back," precipitated themselves into the carriage.

"Only just in time," one of them said with an oath, as he slammed to the door behind him; "it would have been all up with the scheme if we had missed this train, for——"

He broke off short as he became aware of the presence of Haverly, and took his seat, scowling darkly at the American, who appeared to be blissfully unconscious of the existence of his fellow-travellers.

Yet already the Yankee had "sized up" the twain as a pair of rascally adventurers who would stick at nothing to secure the success of their plans. That they were engaged in some nefarious scheme seemed plain from the few words that one had let slip as he entered, and the millionaire wondered what could be the nature of their enterprise.

In low tones the two conversed as the train sped over the gleaming rails, rapidly leaving the brick and mortar tentacles of the London octopus behind. Through the smiling countryside the express flew, belching forth a blighting, poisonous cloud of smoke, which hung for a time almost motionless, ere dissolving into the atmosphere, so still was the evening air.

The first stop was at Granley, and here Haverly's companions alighted.

"I wonder what their dodge is?" the millionaire muttered, as they passed down the platform; then an exclamation escaped him.

Just beneath the seat where the two men had been sitting lay a crumpled sheet of paper. Promptly Haverly secured this.

It was a letter. He opened it out quickly, and the first word to catch his eye was "*submarine*"!

Instantly his alert brain grasped the significance of the discovery. He connected it immediately with a message he had received from Hilton some days previously, referring to the suspicious characters hanging about the vicinity of the Manor, and to the fear that an attempt might be made to steal the boat. At the time he had dismissed the idea as absurd, but now—! Without further scruple, he proceeded to make himself master of the contents of the letter.

It was brief, but very much to the point, running thus:

"DEAR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE,—It is imperative that the affair be carried out without delay, as we are advised that the expedition starts within two days. Once the vessel leaves the dock, not all the plotting in the world could ever give us possession of her. Therefore it remains for you, my friend, to carry out your part of the programme with all speed. You must gain possession of the submarine to-night. Let nothing hinder you. We hear that Hilton Manor is a lonely house, and four determined men, well armed, should be able to overcome all resistance offered by the inventor and his friends. What matter a few lives more or less, so that our plan succeeds and we attain our object? The *Night Hawk* will await you at the appointed spot, outside the bay. *We remind you of the penalty of failure!*"

That was all, but it was enough to startle even the cool-blooded Yankee for a moment.

The missive was practically the death-warrant of his friends down at Hilton, who were even now preparing for departure on their North Polar trip. Hastily he placed the incriminating sheet in his breast pocket, wondering the while why the conspirators had left the train, instead of going straight through to Stanwich.

Hardly had the thought crossed his mind ere the twain reappeared, and climbed into the carriage. Haverly noted with secret satisfaction that they seemed strangely uneasy, glancing about as though searching for something.

“Lost anything?” he inquired casually, as the train moved off again.

“No,” one of them snarled, but the look with which he favoured the American made that gentleman glad that he carried a six-shooter in his pocket. Ere long the express was once more racing over the country at sixty miles an hour.

The millionaire’s scoundrelly companions seemed by this time to have given up their search, for they settled themselves back against the cushions, muttering together in low tones, which the roar of the train completely drowned. Haverly, whilst apparently studying the flying landscape, contrived to keep his eye upon the pair, who had evidently made up their minds that their fellow-traveller had picked up their lost letter.

At length one of them addressed the American.

“Could you oblige me with a match?” he asked. He produced a cigar-case as he spoke, and extracted one of the three cigars within.

“Pleasure,” muttered the Yankee briefly, offering his match-box with his left hand, while his right closed

menacingly about the haft of the weapon in his pocket.

“Thanks,” returned the stranger, “can I offer you a cigar?” and he passed over his case, from which Haverly selected a weed.

Some thought of drugged cigars flashed over the Yankee’s mind, but he dismissed the idea, arguing to himself that the adventurers could not have foreseen the loss of their letter, so could not have prepared for it. Yet this good-fellowship did not deceive the millionaire for a moment. That there was some purpose in the conspirators’ action he did not doubt; but it would never do to let the fellows think he feared them. Therefore, keeping a wary eye upon the movements of the twain, he withdrew his hand from his pocket and proceeded to light up.

He was holding a match to the end of the cigar when the stranger’s hand shot out suddenly.

Match and cigar were dashed from Haverly’s lips, and a rag, soaked with some sickly-smelling chemical, was pressed over his mouth and nose. Holding his breath, he struggled to remove the suffocating thing, mad that he should have been caught napping when he imagined himself on the alert for an attack. With all his might he strove, but the second conspirator came to the aid of his friend, pinioning Haverly’s arms, and soon the chloroform did its work. Helpless and unconscious, the Yankee sank back on to the cushions; and while the express still rattled on at full speed, the two ruffians went through their victim’s pockets.

Everything they replaced save the letter they had taken so much trouble to secure, despising the American’s cash as

game too much beneath them. With repeated applications of the chloroform rag, they kept Haverly unconscious until the train reached Stanwich. Almost ere it came to a standstill, they alighted, and, supporting their victim between them, led him to a train waiting alongside the opposite platform.

Into one of the carriages of this they hustled him. Then, while one remained in the carriage, the other moved off to the booking-office, returning presently with a ticket, which he fixed prominently in the American's hat-band. Very few people were upon the platform, and doubtless those that observed the movements of the conspirators thought that their unconscious companion was drunk.

A final application of the rag, and the scoundrels left the carriage, closing the door upon the sleeping figure of the millionaire.

Within a few moments the latter was whirling northward, leaving further and further behind him each instant the men who were commissioned to rob his friend of the fruits of his genius, and perhaps of his life.

With every mile the train advanced the Yankee's chances of warning Garth lessened.

An hour passed ere he recovered from the stupefying effects of the drug, and by that time he was forty odd miles from Stanwich.

At first his numbed brain refused to grasp the situation, but, as his faculties recovered their normal condition, the recollection of all that had transpired swept upon him. Inwardly cursing himself for his folly, he moved to the window and gazed out.

But the landscape, over which night was fast settling, presented no familiar features. He pulled out his watch, and by the lateness of the hour, he knew that he must be far from his destination.

Suddenly the reflection in the window of his hat and its pasteboard ornament caught his eye.

He pulled out the ticket. It was for Carnmoor, a place he had never before heard of.

“They meant to get me far enough out of the way,” he growled savagely. “If it hadn’t been for this the officials would have turned me out at the first place they took tickets,” and he crumpled the offending card in his hand. The slowing down of the train caused him to glance once more through the glass. Soon they swept into a station. The glimmering gas-jets, shining feebly through the gathering dusk, revealed the name of the place.

The conspirators had timed his recovery to a nicety. It was Carnmoor! Hardly waiting for the motion of the carriages to cease, Haverly leapt out, and made straight for the telegraph office.

If he could not warn his friends in person, he could wire them.

Rushing into the office, the American startled the sleepy operator by bawling for a form.

“Tick that off,” he cried, after he had scribbled a message, “and lively,” and over the wires there flashed this warning:

“Danger! For God’s sake, beware. Plan to capture the submarine to-night. Will explain when I come.—Haverly.”

Somewhat easier in his mind, the millionaire strolled forth to inquire about the next train to Stanwich.

“There ain’t none,” was the brusque reply of the porter he questioned, who appeared to be the only specimen of that genus upon the station.

“Then I guess I must have a special,” returned Haverly. “Where’s your boss?”

“Here he comes,” was the response, as the station-master approached. “This gent wants a special, Mister Burnside.”

“Special, eh?” remarked the official; “it’ll cost you sixty pound.”

“If it cost six hundred I should have to have one,” returned the millionaire. “I haven’t the dollars with me, but I can give you a cheque.”

“Cheque!” exclaimed the station-master scornfully. “I ain’t taking no risks. How do I know as the bank would honour it? Nice sight I’d look with a cheque as wasn’t worth the paper it’s wrote on, and the comp’ny coming down on me for sixty quid. What say, William?”

The porter agreed heartily with this verdict of his chief.

“Say,” put in Haverly, somewhat irritably, “here’s my card. I reckon you’ve heard of me even in these God-forsaken parts. I’m Silas K. Haverly, the millionaire.”

The station-master took the proffered card, but without troubling to read it, he placed a finger beside his nose and gently closed one eye, which piece of dumb show greatly pleased the worthy William.

“Well?” asked Haverly sharply.

“You must think we’re green to swallow a yarn like that,” retorted the official. “Do you think a bloomin’ millionaire would go about without a few quid in his pocket?”

At that moment the *phut! phut!* of a motor sounded from without the station gates, and a car pulled up at the entrance.

“Hullo! Doctor Oswyn,” cried the station-master, as a tall, good-looking young fellow loomed through the gloom; “here’s a fellow as professes to be Haverly, the American millionaire.”

“And so he is, you thundering blockhead!” cried the newcomer, as he gripped the Yankee’s hand.

“Frank!” exclaimed the latter, returning the pressure; “this is great!”

“Whatever brings you to this hole, Silas?” Oswyn asked.

Withdrawing beyond earshot of the astounded porter and his equally astonished chief, Haverly gave his friend a brief outline of his adventures in the express.

“I can go one better than a special,” averred Oswyn; “my car’s outside, ready for a run; come along; we’ll be at Hilton in about an hour.”

“That’s the style!” cried Haverly. “I’ll be a heap in your debt for this, Frank.”

CHAPTER II.

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HOW HAVERLY FOILED THE BOAT-STEALERS.

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WITHIN a few seconds the two men were flying between the hedges of a country road, with the powerful engines of Oswyn's "Panhard" throbbing beneath them.

"Say," the Yankee asked, after a few moments' travelling, "how far do you reckon it?"

"About forty-five miles to Hilton Manor," was the response.

"What speed have you got on?" was Haverly's next question.

"Forty," returned Oswyn.

"I guess she'll do better than that. Chuck the lever over."

"It's risky in the dark," warned Oswyn, yet he obeyed his companion's order notwithstanding. Beneath the added power the car leapt forward like a thing of life, her monstrous headlights glaring through the gloom like the eyes of some huge animal. Her every bolt and rivet quivered and sang with the throbbing of the mighty cylinders.

She was a veritable projectile, yet the doctor's hand was as steady as a rock as he gripped the wheel. Presently Haverly consulted his watch.

"Is she doing all she knows?" he asked.

“Every inch,” was the reply. “Great Scott! You surely don’t want her to do any more? We’re going over fifty now. What would happen if we struck an obstruction?”

The American smiled grimly.

“I guess we’re going to strike nothing this side of Hilton,” he remarked. “We’ll do the striking when we arrive.”

Round sharp corners they whirled on two wheels, the other pair high in the air. A hundred times the car seemed like to overturn, yet somehow the catastrophe which appeared inevitable never happened. Always, at the last moment, Oswyn’s consummate skill and his knowledge of the road saved the situation.

The dark stretch of road trailed swiftly away behind them as the moments flew by, and once again Haverly drew forth his watch.

“How much further?” he questioned.

“Nearly there,” his friend replied. He shut off the power as he spoke, and the car, rounding a curve by its own momentum, came to a standstill before a massive pair of iron gates, flanked by a lodge.

Leaping out, the millionaire pulled the great bell-handle which hung down from the pillar.

Ere the clanging of the bell had ceased, the door of the lodge opened, and the keeper stepped out, carrying a lantern.

“What do you want?” he asked suspiciously, throwing the light upon the two men and the motionless car.

“Open the gates,” Haverly demanded. “I must see your master at once. I’m Haverly.”

“You might be, but then again you mightn’t,” was the dubious reply. “Anyway, I’ve got strict orders to keep a sharp look-out for anybody suspicious-looking.”

“You darned fool!” cried the Yankee, “do you size me up as a suspicious party?”

“Orders is orders,” retorted the man sullenly, without budging an inch.

“Say, Frank,” Haverly said, “give us a leg up, will you? This fool means to keep us out here all night.”

With the aid of his friend, Silas swarmed over the barrier, and dropped lightly down on the other side. Quickly he flung open the gates, and the next moment the car was spinning up the drive, leaving the lodge-keeper staring blankly after it.

“It’s agin orders,” he muttered at length, and, shaking his head sagely, he closed the gates, and withdrew to his room.

Up the broad, gravelled track Oswyn drove the automobile, at a speed that made the shrubs which bordered the drive dance past in one dark line.

Soon the lights of the Manor gleamed before them, and from afar the sound of the sea came to their ears.

Bringing the car to a standstill before the porch, the doctor sprang out, followed by his friend.

“I guess we’re in time,” Haverly said. “You’ll see this through, Frank?”

“Rather!” replied the young doctor enthusiastically. “We’d better take a look round before we make an entrance.”

Leaving the car where it stood, the two men crept round to the rear of the building.

The light, streaming through the open French windows of the dining-room, attracted their attention, and Oswyn with difficulty stifled an exclamation of rage as, crossing the lawn, they peered in.

Within sat Seymour, the inventor, and Mervyn, before a table which still held the remnants of a meal; but each was bound securely to his chair and gagged.

In one corner of the room stood Haverly's two companions of the express, and with them two others, one in the dress of a footman. They were conversing in low tones, and at intervals a gleam of metal beneath the electric light showed that all were armed.

"Well, gentlemen," one of them said at length, addressing the helpless trio, "I think we may venture to leave you. You will be perfectly safe for the night, but I am afraid your proposed Polar expedition will have to be indefinitely postponed."

The scoundrel's words floated distinctly to the ears of the watchers, and Oswyn was seized with a mad desire to rush in upon the plotters. Haverly restrained him, however.

"Got a gun?" he questioned hoarsely.

"No," was the reply, "worse luck."

"Wal, I guess we can't tackle the hull crowd with only one shooter. See here: I'm going to skid down to the dock, an' if I don't get the drop on 'em before long, my name ain't Si. K. Haverly!"

"But where do I come in?" asked the doctor.

"You stay right here," replied Haverly, "until them greasers come out, then you can nip in an' unfix our pards."

"Couldn't we rush 'em?" suggested Oswyn eagerly.

“If you want a couple of funerals knockin’ around,” returned the millionaire grimly. “No, my son, you take it from me, it’s best to play a waiting game.”

“Very well,” assented Oswyn, “get off down to the dock; I’ll wait here.”

At that the Yankee turned, and vanished into the darkness of the surrounding shrubbery.

For ten minutes Oswyn waited outside the window, then the four scoundrels filed out, the footman switching off the light ere he left.

“Good-night, gentlemen,” he called mockingly, as he closed the window behind him, and it was all Oswyn could do to restrain the hot rage which rose within him, prompting him to knock the rascal down as he passed. But he controlled himself by a strong effort, and the four plotters, striding over the lawn, passed down the drive towards the dock gates. These the footman opened with one of a bunch of keys, and the quartette passed through into the yard.

Around them, wrapped in darkness, lay the great workshops, wherein the various sections of the marvellous submarine had taken shape.

Past these deserted buildings—which but lately had rung with stroke upon stroke of the workmen’s hammers—they went, under the guidance of the footman, until they stood beside the great dock, wherein lay floating the craft they had dared so much to obtain.

Producing an electric lantern, the footman cast its beams over the gleaming hull of the vessel.

“Wonderful!” the conspirators cried, as their eyes drank in the singular beauty of the boat. For a few moments they

stood lost in admiration. On the quay alongside stood the piles of stores, awaiting shipment on the morrow, should the trial trip prove satisfactory, and the sight of them reminded the leader that that vessel was not yet theirs.

“Aboard with you,” he cried, and led the way over the gangway.

His two colleagues followed, leaving the footman on the quay.

A moment later a blaze of light came from the turret of the submarine.

The boat-stealers had switched on the great searchlight which topped the turret of the vessel, and its beams illumined the whole dockyard.

“Sharp there, Benson!” the leader called, and at the words the footman moved to a great winch, which stood beside the dock.

Putting forth his whole strength, he commenced to turn the handle, thus opening the gates of the dock, and making a free passage for the submarine to the North Sea.

The plotters had chosen their time well, for the tide was at its flood. Casting off the mooring ropes, the footman leapt aboard, and passed down the steps to the engine-room.

Three minutes later the submarine crept out into the bay upon which the dock gave. The object of the conspirators’ plotting had been attained; the scheme was a gigantic success.

The three scoundrels were not a little pleased with themselves as the boat glided swiftly across the bay under the guidance of the leader.

They jested and laughed, flavouring their conversation with many an oath, as they pictured to their own delight the mortification of the inventor, whose craft they had stolen.

Their mirth would perhaps have been less hilarious had they noted the grim figure creeping along the corridor below, towards the foot of the steps.

“Jesting apart,” said the leader at length, “it’s a marvellous vessel. With this craft, armed in an up-to-date manner, we shall have the shipping of the entire world at our mercy. Not a warship on the seas will be able to resist us.”

“For which we have to thank our estimable friend, the inventor,” returned one of his companions with a grin.

At that moment there came a flash, twice repeated, from the darkness far ahead.

“The *Night Hawk!*” cried the leader; “it is——”

“Checkmate, gentlemen,” drawled a quiet voice behind them.

At the words the three turned, to look into the gleaming barrel of Haverly’s revolver.

“Hands up, you scoundrels!” he cried.

“Ah! would you?”

This last to the leader, who, with a savage oath, had made a grab for his breast pocket.

A vicious spurt of flame leapt from the millionaire’s weapon, and as the report rang through the turret, the fellow fell back with a shattered wrist.

“Out west,” snapped the Yankee, “when I say put ’em up, they generally calculate to put ’em up at once! I shouldn’t advise you to play tricks; this gun’s kinder impatient, and

might go off again. Say, sonny! Just grab them spokes, and turn her round for the dock.”

The scoundrel addressed moved trembling to the wheel, and, under the watchful eye of the American, brought the submarine round.

“That’s the style,” Haverly said, “keep her there. I reckon you’re in for a warm time when Mr. Hilton gets hold of you. You should never attempt to run a picnic of this sort; it needs brains, gentlemen, and——”

What Silas would have said further will never be known, for he broke off suddenly and ducked, just in time to escape a bullet from the revolver of the footman, who, aroused by the Yankee’s shot, had crept from the engine-room.

Quick as thought Haverly’s weapon answered, and the footman, with a neat little hole in the centre of his forehead, dropped like a log.

“Any more comin’ along?” Silas asked coolly; but the scoundrels had no heart left for resistance.

“Get down to the engine-room, you there,” the millionaire continued. “Drop your barker first; that’s better. Now slope, an’ let’s have no tricks, or you’ll get hurt.”

Like a beaten hound, the fellow slunk below, never attempting to possess himself of the dead footman’s revolver, which lay beside the corpse.

The American was master of the situation.

As the sound of the plotters’ footsteps died away, Oswyn flung open the window of the dining-room and rushed in.

One moment he fumbled for the switch, the next, a dazzling flood of light poured into the room.

Before the three bound men had recovered from their surprise at his unexpected appearance, Oswyn had cut their bonds and removed the gags.

“Where have you sprung from, Frank?” cried the inventor, stamping about the room in his efforts to restore the circulation to his numbed limbs.

Briefly the doctor told him of his fortunate meeting with Haverly at Carnmoor, and the succeeding events.

As he finished speaking, Seymour left the room, returning in a moment with a brace of revolvers.

“Come,” he cried, “we may yet be in time to take a hand in the game.”

Out into the night the four men plunged, and raced down to the dockyard; but they were a few moments too late. The submarine had gone.

The shock of this discovery stunned them for a time.

They had counted on Haverly keeping the scoundrels from boarding the vessel; but it seemed clear to them that their American friend had failed in his undertaking, and had paid the penalty of his daring.

“Silas must have got wiped out,” Oswyn muttered sadly; “he would never have let them get possession of her otherwise,” in which statement, as the reader knows, Frank was mistaken.

“What’s the next move?” Seymour asked. “Your craft’s too swift to think of pursuit, I suppose?”

“It’s hopeless to think of recovering her,” returned the inventor. “What’s that?”

A brilliant light had flashed over the dark waters of the bay.

“There she is!” Mervyn cried, and an instant later the torpedo-shaped craft became visible to each of the watchers.

But her movements puzzled them; she appeared to be making for the dock entrance.

Slowly she crept forward, seeming to feel her way as she advanced, until the four standing on the quay could make out the three forms in her turret.

Then comprehension burst upon them!

“Good old Silas!” cried Seymour; “he’s got the drop on our bold conspirators this time.”

Garth laughed boisterously in his rapture at the recovery of his invention.

Through the dock gates the vessel crept to her old mooring-place. Almost ere the engines had ceased to throb, the four had leapt aboard, and were crowding into the turret.

Within a few moments the two uninjured rascals and their wounded chief were securely trussed, and locked away in one of the workshops, there to await removal to the local jail.

The body of the footman was laid upon the quay and covered with a sheet. Only when these matters were attended to would the American satisfy the curiosity of his friends as to the manner in which he had managed to turn the tables upon the boat-stealers.

“Where’s your watchman?” he asked, after dismissing the subject in half a dozen pithy sentences.

“You’ve locked him up,” Garth returned; “it was the fellow who steered you in. He must have been heavily