

Chapter 8 Passepartout Drinks Too Much

The *Carnatic* was expected to leave the next morning at five o'clock. So Mr Fogg had sixteen hours ahead of him during

which time he could do his business – that is to say, take Aouda to her uncle and leave her there.

Mr Fogg, the lady, and Passepartout landed and took rooms at the Club Hotel. Leaving Aouda in her room, Fogg went to find the Indian uncle in whose care he would leave her. At the same time he ordered Passepartout to stay at the hotel so that the lady would not be alone.

Mr Fogg paid a visit to one of the chief business houses of the town, where he was certain that the Honourable Mr Jejeeh, Aouda's uncle, would be known. But here he received the information that this rich Indian trader had given up his business two years before. He had made his fortune and had gone to live in Europe – in Holland, it was thought.

Phileas Fogg returned to the Club Hotel. He asked to see Aouda, and told her that her uncle was no longer in Hong Kong and that he had probably gone to live in Holland.

Aouda did not answer immediately. She thought for a few moments and then asked: 'What shall I do, Mr Fogg?'

'It is quite simple. Come to Europe.'

'But I can't give you so much trouble.'

'It is no trouble at all. Passepartout!'

'Yes, sir,' answered his servant.

'Go to the *Carnatic* and ask for three cabins.'

Passepartout went off to do so, very pleased to think that they would not lose the company of the young Indian lady.

At the port he saw Fix walking up and down near the *Carnatic* with a look of disappointment on his face.

'Good!' thought Passepartout to himself. 'Things are not going well for the gentlemen of the Reform Club.'

There was good reason for Fix to be disappointed; the warrant for the arrest of Mr Fogg had not reached Hong Kong. It was certainly on its way, but it would come too late. From Hong Kong onwards Fogg would be outside the reach of English law,

and so could not be arrested. If Fix could not keep him in Hong Kong for a few days, he would escape.

Passepartout went up to Fix with a pleasant smile.

'Well, Mr Fix, have you decided to come with us as far as America?'

'Yes,' answered Fix between his teeth.

Passepartout burst out laughing.

'I knew it!' he cried. 'I was certain that you could not bear to separate yourself from us. Come and book a cabin.'

They went into the office of the shipping company and booked cabins for four people. The man at the office pointed out that as the repairs to the *Carnatic* had already been finished, the ship would leave that evening at eight o'clock, and not the next morning, as had been arranged.

'That will suit my master. I will go and warn him,' said Passepartout.

At that moment Fix came to a decision. He would tell Passepartout everything. It was the only way to keep Phileas Fogg in Hong Kong.

On leaving the office, Fix said: 'You have plenty of time. Let's go and have something to drink.'

'Very well,' answered Passepartout, 'but we mustn't stay long.'

They went into a large hall that seemed to be a sort of bar. At one end of the room there was a big bed on which several people were lying asleep. Another thirty or more people were sitting at tables and drinking.

Fix and Passepartout sat down, and Fix ordered two bottles of wine. The Frenchman, finding it to his taste, drank a glass – then two glasses, three, and more. Fix drank little, and watched his companion closely. They discussed a range of subjects, particularly Fix's good idea of joining them on the *Carnatic*. Talking of this steamer made Passepartout remember that he must go and tell his master about the change in the hour of sailing. He got up.

‘Wait a moment,’ said Fix.

‘Well, what is it, Mr Fix?’

‘I wish to talk to you about a serious matter.’

‘A serious matter!’ cried Passepartout, drinking the last of the wine. ‘Well, we will talk about it tomorrow. I haven’t time today.’

‘Wait,’ said Fix. ‘It’s about your master.’

Passepartout looked at Fix and, seeing the strange look on his face, sat down again.

‘What have you got to tell me?’ asked Passepartout.

Fix laid his hand on his companion’s arm and, lowering his voice, said: ‘You have guessed who I am?’

‘Of course I have!’ answered Passepartout, smiling.

‘Then I will tell you everything—’

‘Now that I know everything! Very good! Go on. But let me first tell you that these gentlemen are spending their money needlessly.’

‘Needlessly!’ said Fix. ‘It is easy to see that you do not know how much money—’

‘Yes, I do. Twenty thousand pounds.’

‘No, fifty-five thousand pounds,’ answered Fix.

‘What!’ cried Passepartout. ‘Well, that is all the more reason why I should not lose a moment,’ he added, as he got up again.

‘Yes, fifty-five thousand pounds!’ answered Fix, forcing Passepartout to sit down by ordering another bottle – this time, though, of a drink much stronger than wine.

‘And if I succeed, I shall get a reward of two thousand pounds. And listen to me: if you help me, I will give you half of that. Will you accept a thousand pounds for helping me?’

‘Helping you?’ cried Passepartout with his eyes very wide open.

‘Yes, for helping me to keep Mr Fogg in Hong Kong for a few days.’

‘What are you saying?’ cried Passepartout. ‘What! Is it not

enough to have my master followed, to have doubts about him? And now these gentlemen want to put difficulties in his way! I am ashamed of them!’

‘What do you mean? What are you talking about?’ asked Fix, who understood nothing of what Passepartout was saying.

‘I mean this, that it is dishonesty, pure dishonesty! You might as well take money out of Mr Fogg’s pocket!’

‘That’s just what we are hoping to do!’ answered Fix.

‘But it’s a trick!’ cried Passepartout, who had been drinking glass after glass from the new bottle, not noticing in his excitement what he was doing. ‘An evil trick! “Gentlemen” they call themselves!’

Fix understood less and less.

‘Colleagues!’ cried Passepartout. ‘Members of the Reform Club! Let me tell you, Mr Fix, that my master is an honest man, and that when he bets he expects to win his bet honestly.’

‘But who do you think I am?’ asked Fix.

‘You?’ answered Passepartout. ‘Why, you are a man sent by the members of the Reform Club, to keep watch over my master – a piece of work of which they ought to be ashamed! Oh, for some time past I have known who you are, and I have taken good care not to say anything to my master about it!’

‘He knows nothing?’ asked Fix, coming out of his confusion.

‘Nothing,’ answered Passepartout, emptying his glass again.

The detective began to think hard. He said nothing for a few moments. What should he do? Passepartout’s mistake made the detective’s plan more difficult. It was clear that Passepartout was perfectly honest and open; that he had had nothing to do with the robbery.

‘Well,’ he thought, ‘as he has had nothing to do with the robbery, he will help me.’

The detective made up his mind for the second time. Besides, there was no time to be lost. He *must* arrest Fogg in Hong Kong.

'Listen,' said Fix. 'Listen to me carefully. I am not what you think; I have not been sent by the members of the Reform Club.'

'I don't believe you!' said Passepartout.

'I am a detective sent by the London police.'

'You! A London detective!'

'Yes, and I can prove it. Look at my papers.'

He took out his papers and showed them to his companion. The papers were signed by the chief of police. Passepartout looked at them and then at Fix, too surprised to say a word.

'This bet,' said Fix, 'is only a trick. By betting that he could go round the world in eighty days, he made you and the members of the Reform Club help him to escape from the police.'

'Why should he want to escape from the police? What has he done?'

'Listen,' said Fix. 'On 28th September, fifty-five thousand pounds were stolen from the Bank of England. We have a description of the man who stole the money. Here is the description. It is exactly that of your master.'

'Impossible,' cried Passepartout, striking the table. 'My master is the most honest man in the world!'

'How do you know that?' said Fix. 'You don't even know him. You became his servant on the day he left England, and he left in a great hurry, and without any luggage. The only reason he gave for leaving was this foolish bet. And he took with him a very large sum of money. Do you mean to tell me that he is an honest man?'

'Yes, yes, I do,' answered the poor man.

'As you helped him to escape, you will be arrested too.'

Passepartout was holding his head between his hands. His face was quite changed. He dared not look at the detective. What? Phileas Fogg a thief? He, the good man who had so bravely saved Aouda? But in everything else he had acted exactly as a thief would act, and appearances were against him. Passepartout tried not to believe what Fix had said. He refused to think that his

master was guilty. But he had drunk so much that it was difficult for him to think clearly.

'Well, what do you want me to do?' he asked the detective at last.

'Listen,' answered Fix. 'I have followed Mr Fogg as far as here, but I have not yet received the warrant for his arrest. So you must help me to prevent him from leaving Hong Kong.'

'Help you to keep him here?'

'Yes, and I will share with you the two thousand pounds promised by the Bank of England.'

'Never!' cried Passepartout, trying to stand up. But he fell back in his chair, feeling both his strength and his reason leaving him.

'Mr Fix,' he said, making every effort to speak. 'Even... even if what you tell me is true... even if he is the thief... the thief you are looking for... and I don't think he is a thief... I am in his service... I have never seen him to be anything but a good and brave man... What? Help you to catch him?... Never!... Not for all the gold in the world... I am not the sort of man to do that sort of thing!'

'You refuse?'

'I refuse.'

'All right. Forget that I have said anything to you,' said Fix. 'Drink this; it will do you good.'

Saying this the detective poured a full glass out of the bottle and made the Frenchman drink it.

This was all that was needed to finish Passepartout completely. He fell heavily from his chair and lay on the ground without moving.

'Good,' thought Fix. 'Mr Fogg will not be warned of the changed hour of the sailing of the *Carnatic*, and if he does leave, he will at least leave without the company of this Frenchman!'

Then he paid for the drinks and went out.