

Honors Project Proposal  
ENGL 202 (Fall 2025)

Student: Kian Agheli

**Original Proposal & Follow-Up**

I believe there is a link between emotional tone and choices in syntax in English-language storytelling. I intend to explore and argue for this link by analyzing a short story, such as Edgar Allan Poe's [The Man That Was Used Up](#). I am currently reading a textbook on Syntax, and have begun researching what has already been said about this link. This is my closest match so far: [The syntactic marking of emotional intensity: Psycholinguistic evidence from French](#)

**Professor K's Notes**

Poe and linguistics—I'm sold. From a literary perspective, it's expected that syntax and wording shape storytelling; but, this project opens up avenues for you to home in on the parts and pieces of the syntax and connotation.

We're going to cover syntax in Unit 2, so I'd imagine that would line up well for your project. In the meantime, the initial article you shared is a good starting point—I recommend looking into the references at the end as well.

I have some notes/questions to help further refine the proposal. Please address each question below—you can type your response directly in this document and include relevant links.

**Questions to Address**

- 1) How will you share your final project? (Essay, podcast-type recording, infographic with a write-up, etc.)  
I'd like to submit an infographic with a write-up.
- 2) What is the syntax textbook you're currently reading? Are there any concepts/annotation systems from it that could be used in your project?

I'm studying from *Syntax: Theory and Problems*, by Donna Jo Napoli. I've read and completed the exercises for Chapter 1 on "Reflexives, Features of Nouns, Reference"; and for Chapter 2 on "Subject". I am committed to completing Chapters 3 (Grammatical Functions, Complete Functional Complex, Theta Theory, and Licensing), 4 (X-Bar Theory), and 5 (Case, Government, and C-Command) over the next month.

When I have completed sufficient reading from the textbook I have chosen, and mixed it with relevant research (I am thankful you pointed me to the references section of the paper I linked to), I am confident that I will succinctly express the attention to syntax in “The Man That Was Used Up”, breaking down its changes in emotion in a scientific manner.

### **Initial Research & Activity Development (by Friday, October 25th)**

**Note:** Some of the concepts you’ve identified above (like X-Bar Theory / Theta Theory) will likely build off of some of our Unit 2 concepts (particularly syntax trees). I’d recommend using Unit 2 concepts whenever applicable and then supplementing them with whatever is needed from *Syntax: Theory and Problems* (rather than using an outside source as the primary driver).

Please complete the following steps by the listed due date:

- **Literature Review & Linguistic System:** Identify 3-5 credible sources on your topic. (You already have one with *Syntax: Theory and Problems*.) This can also include informative videos and podcasts (provided the creators are experts in the field).  
From these sources, provide a one-page single-spaced summary of key points from the sources and how they will shape your own research. Specifically, identify any systems, annotations, templates, etc. that can be applied to your analysis of “The Man That Was Used Up.”
- **Partial Translation:** Select 3-4 lines from “The Man That Was Used Up” and analyze it with the system you’ve established or adopted from the literature review.

## Literature Review

The Unit 2 concepts which will be focused on are the semantics of sentence types. The text I have chosen switches contexts between these sentence types in an unusual way, leading me to target an analysis of *The Man That Was Used Up* which requires coding sections of monologue with each of the four sentence types. Building on the knowledge from Unit 2, determining in detail the semantic value of these sentence types requires new knowledge. The text is littered with exclamatives and questions, which both have particular implications about the knowledge of the speaker (Exclamatives Have a Question Semantics!). These are both woven together in a way which provides a particular discourse context (*Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics* p. 165), justifying particular emotional reactions from the recipient of the discourse in a way that is abstracted from emotion words; the emotional value of the scene is encoded indirectly through syntactic choices. “Exclamative Clauses at the Syntax-Semantics Interface” builds on the idea of sentential force introduced in *Meaning and Grammar*, applying to the very sentence type the article is named after. These ideas will provide a system of measuring the force of clauses within dialogue. *Syntax: Theory and Problems* provides a basis for determining the subject of a sentence (via cleft tests) and some of the potential theta-roles of verb arguments. Though I may not need to apply these ideas directly, they did serve as basic training to read the above mentioned articles.

*The Man That Was Used Up* is a story by Edgar Allan Poe, driven by monologues with unusual semantics. Between the beginning and end of the story are several such monologues. They are chains of clauses delimited by em dashes. These clauses alternate between each of the four sentence types: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory (Unit 2). Their use together perform a complicated role with the semantics of emotion. The story frames these monologues as uninformative, however deeply angering. The sentential force of the sentences is indirectly driven by the syntactic choices of the author (Exclamative Clauses at the Syntax-Semantics Interface). These monologues serve to build sentential force which leads to the climax of the story.

Some of the constructions serve to *hide* information, to imply that information is known. Consider this sentence: “Dreadful business that of the Bugaboos, wasn’t it?” The first clause assumes that the recipient shares knowledge with the speaker by using a very low-information word in subject position, “business” (*Syntax: Theory and Problems*). The second clause interrogates the recipient on that very information. The choice of an interrogative clause provides a sense of sentential force, shaping the discourse context of the information provided by the first clause (*Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics* p. 165). The following set of clauses, “dreadful creatures, those Indians!”, answer the question in a way which repeats the same information already provided in the form of an exclamatory clause, expressing that whatever the “business” was, the speaker knows the exhaustive truth of it, and that truth violates the speaker’s expectations (Exclamatives have a question semantics! p. 8). These choices in clause type serve to provide minimal actual information to the recipient while setting a discourse context which fuels the story.

## Partial Translation

“Smith!” said Mrs. P., as we twirled about together in a *pas de zephyr*,  
“Smith!—why, not General John A. B. C.? Dreadful business that of the  
Bugaboos, wasn’t it?—dreadful creatures, those Indians!—do turn out  
your toes! I really am ashamed of you—man of great courage, poor  
fellow!—but this is a wonderful age for invention—O dear me, I’m out of  
breath—quite a desperado—prodigies of valor—never heard!—can’t  
believe it—I shall have to sit down and enlighten you—Smith! why, he’s  
the man—”

**Professor K’s Feedback:** This all looks great—I’m impressed with the attention to the sentence types (and the color-coding). Given that you’re working toward an infographic, will you be doing any diagramming for this? Not necessarily sentence diagrams, but some sort of visual representation of the sentences? As-is, though, you’re good to move on to the next step. Let’s do another check-in by Tuesday, December 2nd so I can see a draft of your project—ideally, either a full infographic or a partial infographic and partial write-up.

Chernilovskaya, Anna. (2010). Exclamatives have a question semantics! Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS, Utrecht University. <https://cognition.lu.lv/symp/6-call-materials/slides/Chernilovskaya-slides.pdf>

Unit 2 Concepts: NP, VP, Exclamatory, interrogative

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236822317\\_Exclamative\\_Clauses\\_At\\_the\\_Syntax-Semantics\\_Interface](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236822317_Exclamative_Clauses_At_the_Syntax-Semantics_Interface)

*Syntax: Theory and Problems*

Rett, Jessica. (2011). Exclamatives, degrees and speech acts. *Linguistics and Philosophy*. 34.

10.1007/s10988-011-9103-8.

Bardenstein, R. (2022). The case of question-based exclamatives: From pragmatic rhetorical function to semantic meaning. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 19(2), 209-232. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ip-2022-2003>

Chierchia, Gennaro & McConnell-Ginet, Sally. (1990) *Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition.

## Abstract

The structure that syntax imparts on meaning has meaning itself. Every sentence conveys a force which is best explained by its sentence classification. This force is responsible for narrative tension throughout Edgar Allan Poe's *The Man That Was Used Up*, a set of structural choices which almost single-handedly determine the semantics of integral scenes.

### *Syntax, Semantics, Narrative*

Syntax and Semantics have an interesting relationship. In low-information sentences, syntactic choices provide a majority of information. This relationship is very clear in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Man That Was Used Up*, where choices in syntax are used to form a force which propels the narrative. Following a discussion of existing perspectives on the meaning of sentence choices, Poe's text will be broken down into pieces that are analyzable by those perspectives, then broader conclusions will be drawn from that analysis.

We first need to establish some terms. We're all basically aware of the tension created by a question or a command, and of the release of tension exerted by an exclamation. That's "sentential force"; "the form conventionally associated with a sentence's form" (Syntax-Semantics Interface). Crucially, sentential force is not always aligned with the intent of the language user. So, separately, we'll call intended forcefulness "illocutionary force" (Syntax-Semantics Interface). Finally, we'll need to address the meaning that patterns of sentences weave: we'll call the information between the lines "discourse context" (*Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics* p. 165). Additionally, the information from this introductory linguistics course on the four sentence types (exclamative, interrogative, imperative, declarative) is foundational; for those who have not yet read this material, the text will still be legible, but less accessible. We've established the terms we need to use to break down Poe's text in-depth.

Next, to discuss how this understanding may be used to model what's happening in *The Man That Was Used Up*, we need to perform an overview of what the story is. In a single sentence, it's a narrative about discovering an ugly truth, in the form of a satire about stereotypical war heroes. Our first-person narrator, a nameless man, is introduced to a popular war hero, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. The man develops a curiosity about Smith. He travels to meet people who know Smith, asking each one about his career. The man is unable to get a straight answer from anybody. These low-information interactions fuel the man's frustration, culminating in an encounter with Smith himself. Smith is revealed to be more prosthetic than man, made mostly of wood. Hence, the story is titled, *The Man That Was Used Up*.

The dialogue that drives the story's main events does so by hiding information. The sentences uttered by those who interact with the narrator are very particular. The characters tend to provide strings of exclamative sentences. Very few declarative statements are made by characters other than the narrator. Characters do so much as scream their exclamations without revealing the information that they are surprised by. The characters answer the narrator's questions with indirections.

Let's take an extended look at the role that exclamative sentences in particular have in this story. We'll work with the definition that exclamative sentences have two features: they express knowledge of some information; they express *surprise* about that information (Syntax-Semantics Interface). Throughout the story, exclamative sentences are used excessively. Yet they have very different effects at the middle of the story and at the end of the story. We'll discuss both contexts in detail.

In the middle of the story, exclamative sentences serve the purpose of hinting at hidden knowledge. Most speakers make exclamations about "**Smith!**", paired with declarations that they "**know all about**" him. The information that each speaker expresses knowing is hidden from the narrator. The reason for their surprise at that information is also hidden. The illocutionary force of their exclamations is incredibly vague, leaving the narrator with a sense that something is being kept from him that everybody else knows. During the middle of the story, these exclamations are woven into most dialogues. They're an essential tool used to drive the story forward.

At the end of *The Man That Was Used Up*, exclamations lead to the narrative's resolution. Smith reveals himself, and makes several imperative statements which reveal the information every other speaker has hidden. Smith demands his valet to assemble his prosthetics, like so: "**Now, you dog, slip on my shoulders and bosom!**" The narrator reacts with an exclamation that acknowledges and processes that information: "**Bosom!**" said I.' The tension of the discourse context, which had been rising since the beginning of the narrator's journey, becomes resolved by this series of exclamations. The narrative ends with the mystery revealed and processed, with exclamative sentences having been crucial to the processing of that mystery.

The conflict works because of the consistent use of these syntax choices. We may take a sentence such as "**You should not be late for the ball.**" and recognize it as a declaration, yet simultaneously sense something more: intent. The illocutionary force of this sentence is an imperative statement. That link between expression and intent is vague, and open to interpretation based on discourse context. So, the consistent use of these sentence structures by various characters builds a discourse context in the narrator's mind, one that is not visible to the people he speaks with. Because of this, the room for mis-interpretation is strong enough that the reader is left in the uncanny valley between almost understanding and confusion. It's not individual sentences that have this strong effect, but the pattern that they build throughout the narrative, that drive the story.

Sentential force is the source of this narrative's meaning. Having established that every event in the story depends on the syntactic choices of its characters, an interesting interplay between syntax and semantics is in evidence. The information that causes the narrator to do as much as give a character named Climax "such a thrashing" comes from the usually subtle information in the sentential force of the dialogues given. After a long build-up of tension, Climax is reached (violently). The narrative needs syntax to work. To that effect, without an understanding of the conventional meaning of the sentences written, the story doesn't make sense.

*The Man That Was Used Up* reveals the strength of syntactic convection on semantics. Poe made very particular use of sentence classes in this story's dialogues. Simultaneously, he explored a way to make a narrative about people who say nothing in particular. The story comes off as atypically intriguing because of this unique choice. What an interesting read!

With this information in hand, you're ready to enjoy the story. Below is a copy of the full text of the story, with each sentence coded as one of the four types by color. Separately, there is an infographic which graphs the pattern of exclamative sentences followed by progress in the story. The infographic makes the patterns which are less than obvious in the story clear by turning syntactic information into visual information on a wide scale. As a trigger warning, the story does contain use of racist slurs: Smith is intended to be a caricature of a stereotypical war hero of Poe's time, who is famous for being mostly dead and is obscenely racist. The use of slurs is in a discourse context that paints the users of them very negatively.



I cannot just now remember when or where I first made the acquaintance of that truly fine-looking fellow, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. Some one *did* introduce me to the gentleman, I am sure—at some public meeting, I know very well—held about something of great importance, no doubt—at some place or other, I feel convinced,—whose name I have unaccountably forgotten. The truth is—that the introduction was attended, upon my part, with a degree of anxious embarrassment which operated to prevent any definite impressions of either time or place. I am constitutionally nervous—this, with me, is a family failing, and I can't help it. In especial, the slightest appearance of mystery—of any point I cannot exactly comprehend—puts me at once into a pitiable state of agitation.

There was something, as it were, remarkable—yes, *remarkable*, although this is but a feeble term to express my full meaning—about the entire individuality of the personage in question. He was, perhaps, six feet in height, and of a presence singularly commanding. There was an *air distingué* pervading the whole man, which spoke of high breeding, and hinted at high birth. Upon this topic—the topic of Smith's personal appearance—I have a kind of melancholy satisfaction in being minute. His head of hair would have done honor to a Brutus; nothing could be more richly flowing, or possess a brighter gloss. It was of a jetty black;—which was also the color, or more properly the no color of his unimaginable whiskers. You perceive I cannot speak of these latter without enthusiasm; it is not too much to say that they were the handsomest pair of whiskers under the sun. At all events, they encircled, and at times partially overshadowed, a mouth utterly unequalled. Here were the most entirely even, and the most brilliantly white of all conceivable teeth. From between them, upon every proper occasion, issued a voice of surpassing clearness, melody, and strength. In the matter of eyes, also, my acquaintance was pre-eminently endowed. Either one of such a pair was worth a couple of the ordinary ocular organs. They were of a deep hazel, exceedingly large and lustrous; and there was perceptible about them, ever and anon, just that amount of interesting obliquity which gives pregnancy to expression.

The bust of the General was unquestionably the finest bust I ever saw. For your life you could not have found a fault with its wonderful proportion. This rare peculiarity set off to great advantage a pair of shoulders which would have called up a blush of conscious inferiority into the countenance of the marble Apollo. I have a passion for fine shoulders, and may say that I never beheld them in perfection before. The arms altogether were admirably modelled. Nor were the lower limbs less superb. These were, indeed, the *ne plus ultra* of good legs. Every connoisseur in such matters admitted the legs to be good. There was neither too much flesh, nor too little,—neither rudeness nor fragility. I could not imagine a more graceful curve than that of the *os femoris*, and there was just that due gentle prominence in the rear of the *fibula* which goes to the conformation of a properly proportioned calf. I wish to God my young and talented friend Chiponchipino, the sculptor, had but seen the legs of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith.

But although men so absolutely fine-looking are neither as plenty as reasons or blackberries, still I could not bring myself to believe that *the remarkable* something to which I alluded just now,—that the odd air of *je ne sais quoi* which hung about my new acquaintance,—lay altogether, or indeed at all, in the

supreme excellence of his bodily endowments. Perhaps it might be traced to the *manner*;—yet here again I could not pretend to be positive. There was a primness, not to say stiffness, in his carriage—a degree of measured, and, if I may so express it, of rectangular precision, attending his every movement, which, observed in a more diminutive figure, would have had the least little savor in the world, of affectation, pomposity or constraint, but which noticed in a gentleman of his undoubted dimensions, was readily placed to the account of reserve, *hauteur*—of a commendable sense, in short, of what is due to the dignity of colossal proportion.

The kind friend who presented me to General Smith whispered in my ear some few words of comment upon the man. He was a *remarkable* man—a *very* remarkable man—indeed one of the *most* remarkable men of the age. He was an especial favorite, too, with the ladies—chiefly on account of his high reputation for courage.

“In *that* point he is unrivalled—indeed he is a perfect desperado—a down-right fire-eater, and no mistake,” said my friend, here dropping his voice excessively low, and thrilling me with the mystery of his tone.

“A downright fire-eater, and *no* mistake. Showed *that*, I should say, to some purpose, in the late tremendous swamp-fight away down South, with the Bugaboo and Kickapoo Indians.” [Here my friend opened his eyes to some extent.] “Bless my soul!—blood and thunder, and all that!—*prodigies of valor!*—*heard of him of course?*—you know he’s the man—”

“Man alive, how *do* you do? why, how *are* ye? *very* glad to see ye, indeed!” here interrupted the General himself, seizing my companion by the hand as he drew near, and bowing stiffly, but profoundly, as I was presented. I then thought, (and I think so still,) that I never heard a clearer nor a stronger voice, nor beheld a finer set of teeth: but I *must* say that I was sorry for the interruption just at that moment, as, owing to the whispers and insinuations aforesaid, my interest had been greatly excited in the hero of the Bugaboo and Kickapoo campaign.

However, the delightfully luminous conversation of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith soon completely dissipated this chagrin. My friend leaving us immediately, we had quite a long *tête-à-tête*, and I was not only pleased but *really*—instructed. I never heard a more fluent talker, or a man of greater general information. With becoming modesty, he forebore, nevertheless, to touch upon the theme I had just then most at heart—I mean the mysterious circumstances attending the Bugaboo war—and, on my own part, what I conceive to be a proper sense of delicacy forbade me to broach the subject; although, in truth, I was exceedingly tempted to do so. I perceived, too, that the gallant soldier preferred topics of philosophical interest, and that he delighted, especially, in commenting upon the rapid march of mechanical invention. Indeed, lead him where I would, this was a point to which he invariably came back.

“There is nothing at all like it,” he would say; “we are a wonderful people, and live in a wonderful age. Parachutes and rail-roads—*man-traps and spring-guns!* Our steam-boats are upon every sea, and the

Nassau balloon packet is about to run regular trips (fare either way only twenty pounds sterling) between London and Timbuctoo. And who shall calculate the immense influence upon social life—upon arts—upon commerce—upon literature—which will be the immediate result of the great principles of electro-magnetics! Nor, is this all, let me assure you! There is really no end to the march of invention. The most wonderful—the most ingenious—and let me add, Mr.—Mr.—Thompson, I believe, is your name—let me add, I say, the most *useful*—the most truly *useful*—mechanical contrivances, are daily springing up like mushrooms, if I may so express myself, or, more figuratively, like—ah—grasshoppers—like grasshoppers, Mr. Thompson—about us and ah—ah—ah—around us!”

Thompson, to be sure, is not my name; but it is needless to say that I left General Smith with a heightened interest in the man, with an exalted opinion of his conversational powers, and a deep sense of the valuable privileges we enjoy in living in this age of mechanical invention. My curiosity, however, had not been altogether satisfied, and I resolved to prosecute immediate inquiry among my acquaintances touching the Brevet Brigadier General himself, and particularly respecting the tremendous events *quorum pars magna fuit*, during the Bugaboo and Kickapoo campaign.

The first opportunity which presented itself, and which (*horresco referens*) I did not in the least scruple to seize, occurred at the Church of the Reverend Doctor Drummummupp, where I found myself established, one Sunday, just at sermon time, not only in the pew, but by the side, of that worthy and communicative little friend of mine, Miss Tabitha T. Thus seated, I congratulated myself, and with much reason, upon the very flattering state of affairs. If any person knew anything about Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith, that person, it was clear to me, was Miss Tabitha T. We telegraphed a few signals, and then commenced, *sotto voce*, a brisk *tête-à-tête*.

“Smith!” said she, in reply to my very earnest inquiry; “Smith!—why, not General John A. B. C.? Bless me, I thought you *knew* all about *him*! This is a wonderfully inventive age! Horrid affair that!—a bloody set of wretches, those Kickapoos!—fought like a hero—prodigies of valor—immortal renown. Smith!—Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C.! why, you know he’s the man—”

“Man,” here broke in Doctor Drummummupp, at the top of his voice, and with a thump that came near knocking the pulpit about our ears—“man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live; he cometh up and is cut down like a flower!” I started to the extremity of the pew, and perceived by the animated looks of the divine, that the wrath which had nearly proved fatal to the pulpit had been excited by the whispers of the lady and myself. There was no help for it; so I submitted with a good grace, and listened, in all the martyrdom of dignified silence, to the balance of that very capital discourse.

Next evening found me a somewhat late visitor at the Rantipole Theatre, where I felt sure of satisfying my curiosity at once, by merely stepping into the box of those exquisite specimens of affability and omniscience, the Misses Arabella and Miranda Cognoscenti. That fine tragedian, Climax, was doing Iago to a very crowded house, and I experienced some little difficulty in making my wishes understood; especially, as our box was next the slips, and completely overlooked the stage.

“Smith!” said Miss Arabella, as she at length comprehended the purport of my query; “Smith!—why, not General John A. B. C.?”

“Smith!” inquired Miranda, musingly. “God bless me, did you ever behold a finer figure?”

“Never, madam, but *do* tell me—”

“Or so inimitable grace?”

“Never, upon my word!—But pray inform me—”

“Or so just an appreciation of stage effect?”

“Madam!”

“Or a more delicate sense of the true beauties of Shakespeare? Be so good as to look at that leg!”

“The devil!” and I turned again to her sister.

“Smith!” said she, “why, not General John A. B. C.? Horrid affair that, wasn’t it?—great wretches, those Bugaboos—savage and so on—but we live in a wonderfully inventive age!—Smith!—O yes! great man!—perfect desperado!—immortal renown!—prodigies of valor! *Never heard!*” [This was given in a scream.] “Bless my soul! why, he’s the man—”

“—mandragora

Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world

Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep

Which thou owd’st yesterday!”

here roared our Climax just in my ear, and shaking his fist in my face all the time, in a way that I *couldn’t* stand, and I *wouldn’t*. I left the Misses Cognoscenti immediately, went behind the scenes forthwith, and gave the beggarly scoundrel such a thrashing as I trust he will remember to the day of his death.

At the *soirée* of the lovely widow, Mrs. Kathleen O’Trump, I was confident that I should meet with no similar disappointment. Accordingly, I was no sooner seated at the card-table, with my pretty hostess for a *vis-à-vis*, than I propounded those questions the solution of which had become a matter so essential to my peace.

“Smith!” said my partner, “why, not General John A. B. C.? Horrid affair that, wasn’t it?—diamonds, did you say?—terrible wretches those Kickapoos!—we are playing *whist*, if you please, Mr. Tattle—however, this is the age of invention, most certainly *the* age, one may say—*the* age *par excellence*—speak French?—oh, quite a hero—perfect desperado!—*no hearts*, Mr. Tattle? I don’t believe it.—immortal renown and all that!—prodigies of valor! *Never heard!!*—why, bless me, he’s the man—”

“Mann!—*Captain Mann?*” here screamed some little feminine interloper from the farthest corner of the room. “Are you talking about Captain Mann and the duel?—oh, I *must* hear—do tell—go on, Mrs. O’Trump!—do now go on!” And go on Mrs. O’Trump did—all about a certain Captain Mann, who was either shot or hung, or should have been both shot and hung. Yes! Mrs. O’Trump, she went on, and I—I

went off. There was no chance of hearing anything farther that evening in regard to Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith.

Still I consoled myself with the reflection that the tide of ill luck would not run against me forever, and so determined to make a bold push for information at the rout of that bewitching little angel, the graceful Mrs. Pirouette.

“Smith!” said Mrs. P., as we twirled about together in a *pas de zephyr*, “Smith!—why, not General John A. B. C.? Dreadful business that of the Bugaboos, wasn’t it?—dreadful creatures, those Indians!—do turn out your toes! I really am ashamed of you—man of great courage, poor fellow!—but this is a wonderful age for invention—O dear me, I’m out of breath—quite a desperado—prodigies of valor—never heard!—can’t believe it—I shall have to sit down and enlighten you—Smith! why, he’s the man—”

“Man-Fred, I tell you!” here bawled out Miss Bas-Bleu, as I led Mrs. Pirouette to a seat. “Did ever anybody hear the like? It’s Man-Fred, I say, and not at all by any means Man-Friday.” Here Miss Bas-Bleu beckoned to me in a very peremptory manner; and I was obliged, will I nill I, to leave Mrs. P. for the purpose of deciding a dispute touching the title of a certain poetical drama of Lord Byron’s. Although I pronounced, with great promptness, that the true title was Man-Friday, and not by any means Man-Fred, yet when I returned to seek Mrs. Pirouette she was not to be discovered, and I made my retreat from the house in a very bitter spirit of animosity against the whole race of the Bas-Bleus.

Matters had now assumed a really serious aspect, and I resolved to call at once upon my particular friend, Mr. Theodore Sinivate; for I knew that here at least I should get something like definite information.

“Smith!” said he, in his well-known peculiar way of drawling out his syllables; “Smith!—why, not General John A. B. C.? Savage affair that with the Kickapo-o-o-os, wasn’t it? Say! don’t you think so?—perfect despera-a-ado—great pity, ‘pon my honor!—wonderfully inventive age!—pro-o-odigies of valor! By the by, did you ever hear about Captain Ma-a-a-a-n?”

“Captain Mann be d—d!” said I; “please to go on with your story.”

“Hem!—oh well!—quite *la même cho-o-ose*, as we say in France. Smith, eh? Brigadier-General John A.—B.—C.? I say”—[here Mr. S. thought proper to put his finger to the side of his nose]—“I say, you don’t mean to insinuate now, really and truly, and conscientiously, that you don’t know all about that affair of Smith’s, as well as I do, eh? Smith? John A—B—C.? Why, bless me, he’s the ma-a-an—”

“Mr. Sinivate,” said I, imploringly, “is he the man in the mask?”

“No-o-o!” said he, looking wise, “nor the man in the mo-o-on.”

This reply I considered a pointed and positive insult, and so left the house at once in high dudgeon, with a firm resolve to call my friend, Mr. Sinivate, to a speedy account for his ungentlemanly conduct and ill-breeding.

In the meantime, however, I had no notion of being thwarted touching the information I desired. There was one resource left me yet. I would go to the fountain-head. I would call forthwith upon the General himself, and demand, in explicit terms, a solution of this abominable piece of mystery. Here, at least, there should be no chance for equivocation. I would be plain, positive, peremptory—as short as pie-crust—as concise as Tacitus or Montesquieu.

It was early when I called, and the General was dressing; but I pleaded urgent business, and was shown at once into his bed-room by an old negro valet, who remained in attendance during my visit. As I entered the chamber, I looked about, of course, for the occupant, but did not immediately perceive him. There was a large and exceedingly odd-looking bundle of something which lay close by my feet on the floor, and, as I was not in the best humor in the world, I gave it a kick out of the way.

“Hem! ahem! rather civil that, I should say!” said the bundle, in one of the smallest, and altogether the funniest little voices, between a squeak and a whistle, that I ever heard in all the days of my existence.

“Ahem! rather civil that, I should observe.”

I fairly shouted with terror, and made off, at a tangent, into the farthest extremity of the room.

“God bless me! my dear fellow,” here again whistled the bundle, “what—what—what—why, what is the matter? I really believe you don’t know me at all.”

What *could* I say to all this—what *could* I? I staggered into an arm-chair, and, with staring eyes and open mouth, awaited the solution of the wonder.

“Strange you shouldn’t know me though, isn’t it?” presently re-squeaked the nondescript, which I now perceived was performing, upon the floor, some inexplicable evolution, very analogous to the drawing on of a stocking. There was only a single leg, however, apparent.

“Strange you shouldn’t know me, though, isn’t it? Pompey, bring me that leg!” Here Pompey handed the bundle, a very capital cork leg, already dressed, which it screwed on in a trice; and then it stood up before my eyes.

“And a bloody action it was,” continued the thing, as if in a soliloquy; “but then one mustn’t fight with the Bugaboos and Kickapoos, and think of coming off with a mere scratch. Pompey, I’ll thank you now for that arm. Thomas” [turning to me] “is decidedly the best hand at a cork leg; but if you should ever want an arm, my dear fellow, you must really let me recommend you to Bishop.” Here Pompey screwed on an arm.

“We had rather hot work of it, that you may say. Now, you dog, slip on my shoulders and bosom! Pettitt makes the best shoulders, but for a bosom you will have to go to Ducrow.”

“Bosom!” said I.

“Pompey, will you *never* be ready with that wig? Scalping is a rough process after all; but then you can procure such a capital scratch at De L’Orme’s.”

“Scratch!”

“Now, you nigger, my teeth! For a *good* set of these you had better go to Parmly’s at once; high prices, but excellent work. I swallowed some very capital articles, though, when the big Bugaboo rammed me down with the butt end of his rifle.”

“Butt end! ram down!! my eye!!”

“O yes, by-the-by, my eye—here, Pompey, you scamp, screw it in ! Those Kickapoos are not so very slow at a gouge; but he’s a belied man, that Dr. Williams, after all; you can’t imagine how well I see with the eyes of his make.”

I now began very clearly to perceive that the object before me was nothing more nor less than my new acquaintance, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. The manipulations of Pompey had made, I must confess, a very striking difference in the appearance of the personal man. The voice, however, still puzzled me no little; but even this apparent mystery was speedily cleared up.

“Pompey, you black rascal,” squeaked the General, “I really do believe you would let me go out without my palate.”

Hereupon, the negro, grumbling out an apology, went up to his master, opened his mouth with the knowing air of a horse-jockey, and adjusted therein a somewhat singular-looking machine, in a very dexterous manner, that I could not altogether comprehend. The alteration, however, in the entire expression of the General’s countenance was instantaneous and surprising. When he again spoke, his voice had resumed all that rich melody and strength which I had noticed upon our original introduction.

“D—n the vagabonds!” said he, in so clear a tone that I positively started at the change, “D—n the vagabonds! they not only knocked in the roof of my mouth, but took the trouble to cut off at least seven-eighths of my tongue. There isn’t Bonfanti’s equal, however, in America, for really good articles of this description. I can recommend you to him with confidence,” [here the General bowed,] “and assure you that I have the greatest pleasure in so doing.”

I acknowledged his kindness in my best manner, and took leave of him at once, with a perfect understanding of the true state of affairs—with a full comprehension of the mystery which had troubled me so long. It was evident. It was a clear case. Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith was the man—was *the man that was used up*.