

COMPLETE Short NOVEL by R. H. W atkins

DETECTIVE

FICTION

WEEKLY



My
15 Years
in the
Underworld

By
'Frisco Jimmy Harrington

The
Griffin's
Gambit

by J. Allan Dunn





SORE THROAT

SEE HOW QUICKLY LISTERINE RELIEVES IT

Don't put up with the pain of ordinary sore throat. It is so unnecessary. At the first symptom of trouble, gargle with Listerine just as it comes from the bottle. You'll be delighted by the result.

Often one gargle is enough to relieve that tight, raw, burning feeling. If relief is not immediate, repeat the gargle at 2 hour intervals. Usually two or three applications of Listerine are sufficient.

Listerine gets results because it is first of all a powerful, though safe, antiseptic which attacks millions of germs on mouth and

throat surfaces. Tests have shown that when used as a gargle, Listerine reaches far beyond the soft palate into the posterior pharynx where sore throat frequently starts.

Keep Listerine handy in home and office and use it full strength at the first symptom of a cold or sore throat. Lambert Pharmacal Co., St. Louis, Missouri.

METROPOLITAN GRAND OPERA
Every Saturday . . . 82 NBC Stations

PLEASANT TO TASTE • SAFE TO USE

Law!

LEARN AT HOME

Are you adult, alert, ambitious, willing to study? Investigate LAW! We guide you step by step—furnish all texts, including 14-volume Law Library. Training prepared by leading law professors and given by members of bar. Degree of LL. B. conferred. Low cost, easy terms. Send NOW for Free, 64-page "Law Training for Leadership." LaSalle Extension University, Dept. 358-L, Chicago

BE A RAILWAY TRAFFIC INSPECTOR

Railway and Bus Lines Demand Men with this SPECIAL TRAINING ACTIVE MEN—19 to 36—trained by our short, home-study course as Railway and Bus Passenger Traffic Inspectors and advance quickly in this fascinating, beautiful work. Travel or stay near home. Complete our training and we will place you at up to \$40 per month, plus expenses, to start, or beyond instant. Experienced men earn more. Costs little, terms. Free booklet gives 1977 record, standard BUSINESS TRAINING INSTITUTE, Inc., 5063, Buffalo, N. Y.

BE TALL

Your Height increased in 14 days or money back! The amazing Stebbing System soon brings 3-5 inches increase, new "pop" and energy. A valuable Health Course and "Success and Popularity" Course included FREE with System, sent complete for \$2.49. Send for convincing Free Book with testimonials and Guarantee in plain sealed envelope. WRITE NOW TO—

STEBBING SYSTEM
Dept. M. S. 1, FOREST HILLS, NEW YORK



GIVEN Sweet Toned VIOLIN

Handsome finish, highly polished. Set of strings and bow included. SEND NO MONEY. Just name and address. WE TRUST YOU with 27 cokes of Garden Seeds to sell at 10¢ a packet. When sold send \$2.70 collected and at 10¢ a packet. No more money to pay... EXTRA—\$100 in BIG PRIZES. You may win a new car today. A First Cord will be awarded to the winner. Write for details. LANCASTER COUNTY SEED CO., Station 310, PARADISE, PA.

Operator No. 38

FOLLOW THIS MAN

Follow Service Operator No. 38 is on the job! Running down dangerous Counterfeit Gang. Tell tale finger prints in murdered girl's room.

Free The Confidential Report Operator No. 38 made to his chief. Write for it.

Earn a Regular Monthly Salary YOU can become a Finger Print Expert at home, in your spare time, at small cost. Write for confidential Full report and details. Literature will NOT be sent to boys under 17 years of age.

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE
1920 Sunnyvale Ave.
Dept. 11-43 Chicago, Ill.



DO YOU WANT TO STOP TOBACCO?

Banish the craving for tobacco as thousands have. Make yourself free and happy with Tobacco Reducers. Not a substitute, not habit forming. Write for free booklet telling of injurious effect of tobacco and dependable, easy way to relieve the craving many men have.

FREE BOOK
NewellPharmaco Co., Dept. 316, St. Louis, Mo.

Now a first-class reporter



"Some months before I completed the N.I.A. course I secured regular employment as a reporter on the staff of L'Eveement, a French morning newspaper in Quebec. Later, there was an opening for a first-class reporter on the Montreal Gazette, one of Canada's foremost newspapers. I applied for the job and landed it. I am glad to give N.I.A. credit for my success. I would never have held a desk in the editorial room of The Gazette had it not been for your splendid training."

Paul Barette,
1441 Drummond St.,
Montreal, P. Q., Canada.

How do you know you can't WRITE?

Have you ever tried?

Have you ever attempted even the least bit of training, under competent guidance? Or have you been sitting back, as it is so easy to do, waiting for the day to come some time when you will awaken, all of a sudden, to the discovery, "I am a writer?"

If the latter course is the one of your choosing, you probably never will write. Lawyers must be law clerks. Doctors must be internes. Engineers must be draftsmen. We all know that, in our times, the egg comes before the chicken.

It is seldom that any one becomes a writer until he (or she) has been writing for some time. That is why so many authors and writers spring up out of the newspaper business. The day-to-day necessity of writing of gathering material about which to write—develops their talent, their background and their confidence as nothing else could.

That is why the Newspaper Institute of America bases its writing instruction on journalism—continuous writing—the training that has produced so many successful authors.

Learn to write by writing

NEWSPAPER Institute training is based on the New York Copy-Desk Method. It starts and keeps you writing in your own home, on your own time. Week by week you receive actual assignments. Just as if you were right at work on a great metropolitan daily. Your writing is individually corrected and constructively criticized. A group of men, whose combined newspaper experience totals more than 200 years, are responsible for this instruction. Under such sympathetic guidance, you will find that (instead of vainly trying to copy some one else's writing tricks) you are rapidly developing your own distinctive, self-flavored style—undergoing an experience that has a thrill to it and which at the same time develops in you the power to make your feelings articulate.

Many people who should be writing become awe-struck by fabulous stories about millionaire authors and, therefore, give little thought to the \$25, \$50 and \$100 or more that can often be earned for material that takes little time to write—stories, articles on business, fads, travels, sports, recipes, etc.—things that can easily be turned out in leisure hours, and often on the impulse of the moment.

A chance to test yourself

We have prepared a unique Writing Aptitude Test. This tells you whether you possess the fundamental qualities necessary to successful writing—acute observation, dramatic instinct, creative imagination, etc. You'll enjoy taking this test. The coupon will bring it, without obligation. Newspaper Institute of America, 1776 Broadway, New York.

Newspaper Institute of America
1776 Broadway, New York

Send me, without cost or obligation, your Writing Aptitude Test and further information about writing for profit.

Mr. }
Mrs. }
Miss }
Address }

(All correspondence confidential. No salesman will call on you.) 99365

DETECTIVE

FICTION WEEKLY



TITLE REGISTERED U. S. PATENT OFFICE

"The Magazine Selected by The Crime Jury"

VOLUME XCI

Saturday, March 2, 1935

NUMBER 5

TRUE STORIES

- 15 Years in the Underworld (5 Parts—1) 'Frisco Jimmy Harrington 6
The Defiant Confession of Your Enemy, the Crook!
- Illustrated Crimes Paul Berdanier 70
The Double-Faced Raider of Montreal
- The Lady from Hell Eugene Thomas 77
The Episode of the Grave Robbers

COMPLETE SHORT NOVEL

- Murder for Millions Richard Howells Watkins 80
The Plunder Plot of the Five Masked Millionaires

NOVELETTE AND SHORT STORIES

- Broken Ivory David Crewe 72
He Watched Himself Die in a Vat of Boiling Lead
- The Griffin's Gambit (Novelette) J. Allan Dunn 90
Behind a Legless Figure of Horror The Griffin Slips Through Locked Doors
- Bluff Barent van Waldron 124
There Was Only One Way to Stop That Perfect Swindle, and So—
- Pa Howdy's Bad Man Laurence Donovan 128
An Old Range Sleuth Trails a Cornered Killer

SERIAL

- Bring Him Back Alive! (5 Parts—4) Donald Ross 104
One by One Jack's Friends Die—as the Web of Menace Tightens

FEATURES AND FACTS

- The Criminologist Says Major C. E. Russell 137
- Flashes From Readers 138
- Solving Cipher Secrets M. E. Ohaver 140
- How Faces Reveal Character William E. Benton 142

The Magazine with the Detective Shield on the Cover is on sale every Wednesday

THE RED STAR NEWS COMPANY

280 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

WILLIAM T. DEWART, President THEODORE PROEHL, Treasurer RICHARD H. TITHERINGTON, Secretary

MESSAGERIES HACHETTE

3, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4

PARIS: HACHETTE & CIE.

111 Rue Réaumur

Published weekly and copyright, 1935, by The Red Star News Company. By the year, \$4.00 in United States, its dependencies, Mexico, and Cuba; in Canada, \$7.00; \$7.00 to other Foreign Countries. Remittances should be made by check, express money order, or postal money order. Currency should not be sent unless registered. Entered as Second Class Matter September 4, 1924, at the post office at New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Title Registered in U. S. Patent Office. Copyright in Great Britain.

Manuscripts submitted to this magazine should be accompanied by sufficient postage for their return if found unavailable. The publisher can accept no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts.

Diesel Engineering

**Power Plants—Motor Trucks—Busses—Locomotives
Ships—Tractors—Dredges—Drills—Pumps—Etc.**
Training at home on all latest Diesel developments
—2- and 4-stroke cycles; solid- and air-injection fuel
systems; low- and high-speed and heavy-duty types;
Diesel-electric generating systems, etc. Includes all
test material, individual instruction, employment
service. Write today for Free Bulletin. No obligation.
American School, Dept. D-31, Drexel St 58th, Chicago

"POPULAR FOR GENERATIONS"

PLANTEN'S (TRADE MARK) C & C COR CAPSULES REMEDY FOR MEN

AT DRUGGISTS OR TRIAL BOX BY MAIL \$6.00
From Planten, 93 Henry St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
▲ BEWARE OF IMITATIONS ▲

WALDE'S WONDER SALVE

RESULTS ARE REMARKABLE!

It is more than a first aid, everyone should have it.
Sold with a money back guarantee. For—Infections,
Boils, Burns, Old Sores, Fresh Cuts, Bruises,
Sprains, Ulcers, Felons and Sore Eyes.

TRULY A WONDER PRODUCT

Order Now. 50c Prepaid

H. R. WALDE, Lake Wales, Fla., Dept. D.

No JOKE TO BE DEAF

—Every deaf person knows that—
Mr. Way made himself hear his watch tick after
being deaf for twenty-five years, with his Art-
ificial Ear Drums. He wore them day and night.
They stopped his head
noises. They are invisible
and comfortable. No wires
or batteries. Write for
TRUE STORY. Also
booklet on Deafness.



Artificial Ear Drum
THE WAY COMPANY
736 Hoffman Bldg. Detroit, Michigan



ARMY-NAVY Bargains

Haversacks .75 Cart. belt \$6.00
Machete-bolo . . \$1.60 Flint pistol . . \$6.95
Army saddle . . \$9.95 M/L shot gun . \$4.95
Springfield cal. 30/06 rifle, 24" barrel pow \$16.00
1933 catalog, with 1935 supplement, 304
pages of pistols, armor, guns, daggers, etc.,
mailed for 50 cents. New circular for 3c stamp.
Established 1905.

Francis Bannerman Son, 501 B'way, N. Y. City

NOW \$200,000 LIFE & ACCIDENT PROTECTION AT ACTUAL COST

Amazing New "\$1.00 PER MONTH" LIFE Plan Pays up to
\$200,000 for NATURAL or ACCIDENTAL DEATH. Issued by a
big RELIABLE, STATE-CHARTERED COMPANY. Benefit does
NOT decrease as you grow older. Age limits 11 to 80. NO
MEDICAL EXAMINATION. Certificate sent on FREE APPROVAL.
without cost or obligation. Just send your name, address, age and
Beneficiary's name. PAY NOTHING.
WRITE INTERSTATE AID ASS'N, Dept. M-2, 75 E. Wacker, Chicago.

LIQ. OR HABIT

Send for FREE TRIAL of Noxalco, a guaranteed harmless
home treatment. Can be given secretly in food or drink to
anyone who drinks or craves Whiskey, Beer, Gin, Home Brew,
Wine, Moonshine, etc. Your request for Free Trial brings
trial supply by return mail and full \$2.00 treatment which
you may try under a 30 day refund guarantee. Try Noxalco
at our risk. ARLEE CO. Dept. 204 BALTIMORE, MD.

GUARANTEED TIRES

GOODYEAR
FIRESTONE
GOODRICH
and all other
STANDARD
BRANDS

Save
60%
to
70%

**GOLDEN RULE
GUARANTEE**
Each Tire Guaranteed
12 months or
replaced at half-
price.

I GOT MORE THAN
I EXPECTED FOR
MY MONEY!



DEALERS
WANTED

Satisfied car owners use ECONOMY
RECONSTRUCTED TIRES and
Save Money. Our exclusive scientific
methods bring more wearing
miles per dollar value. Guaranteed
32 months or replaced at half price.
Quality far above what you expect
at the price—will bring you back for
more. Compare with any competi-
tion. You'll be amazed at value. Be
wise! Economize! You can't beat
our prices. Order Today and Save!

BALLOON TIRES				CORD TIRES			
Size	Qty	Time	Price	Size	Qty	Time	Price
10x4-40-21	1	15	\$2.50	10x4-40-21	1	15	\$2.50
10x4-50-21	1	15	\$3.00	10x4-50-21	1	15	\$3.00
10x4-50-21	2	25	\$4.00	10x4-50-21	2	25	\$4.00
10x4-50-21	3	35	\$5.00	10x4-50-21	3	35	\$5.00
10x4-50-21	4	45	\$6.00	10x4-50-21	4	45	\$6.00
10x4-50-21	5	55	\$7.00	10x4-50-21	5	55	\$7.00
10x4-50-21	6	65	\$8.00	10x4-50-21	6	65	\$8.00
10x4-50-21	7	75	\$9.00	10x4-50-21	7	75	\$9.00
10x4-50-21	8	85	\$10.00	10x4-50-21	8	85	\$10.00
10x4-50-21	9	95	\$11.00	10x4-50-21	9	95	\$11.00
10x4-50-21	10	105	\$12.00	10x4-50-21	10	105	\$12.00
10x4-50-21	11	115	\$13.00	10x4-50-21	11	115	\$13.00
10x4-50-21	12	125	\$14.00	10x4-50-21	12	125	\$14.00
10x4-50-21	13	135	\$15.00	10x4-50-21	13	135	\$15.00
10x4-50-21	14	145	\$16.00	10x4-50-21	14	145	\$16.00
10x4-50-21	15	155	\$17.00	10x4-50-21	15	155	\$17.00
10x4-50-21	16	165	\$18.00	10x4-50-21	16	165	\$18.00
10x4-50-21	17	175	\$19.00	10x4-50-21	17	175	\$19.00
10x4-50-21	18	185	\$20.00	10x4-50-21	18	185	\$20.00
10x4-50-21	19	195	\$21.00	10x4-50-21	19	195	\$21.00
10x4-50-21	20	205	\$22.00	10x4-50-21	20	205	\$22.00
10x4-50-21	21	215	\$23.00	10x4-50-21	21	215	\$23.00
10x4-50-21	22	225	\$24.00	10x4-50-21	22	225	\$24.00
10x4-50-21	23	235	\$25.00	10x4-50-21	23	235	\$25.00
10x4-50-21	24	245	\$26.00	10x4-50-21	24	245	\$26.00
10x4-50-21	25	255	\$27.00	10x4-50-21	25	255	\$27.00
10x4-50-21	26	265	\$28.00	10x4-50-21	26	265	\$28.00
10x4-50-21	27	275	\$29.00	10x4-50-21	27	275	\$29.00
10x4-50-21	28	285	\$30.00	10x4-50-21	28	285	\$30.00
10x4-50-21	29	295	\$31.00	10x4-50-21	29	295	\$31.00
10x4-50-21	30	305	\$32.00	10x4-50-21	30	305	\$32.00
10x4-50-21	31	315	\$33.00	10x4-50-21	31	315	\$33.00
10x4-50-21	32	325	\$34.00	10x4-50-21	32	325	\$34.00
10x4-50-21	33	335	\$35.00	10x4-50-21	33	335	\$35.00
10x4-50-21	34	345	\$36.00	10x4-50-21	34	345	\$36.00
10x4-50-21	35	355	\$37.00	10x4-50-21	35	355	\$37.00
10x4-50-21	36	365	\$38.00	10x4-50-21	36	365	\$38.00
10x4-50-21	37	375	\$39.00	10x4-50-21	37	375	\$39.00
10x4-50-21	38	385	\$40.00	10x4-50-21	38	385	\$40.00
10x4-50-21	39	395	\$41.00	10x4-50-21	39	395	\$41.00
10x4-50-21	40	405	\$42.00	10x4-50-21	40	405	\$42.00
10x4-50-21	41	415	\$43.00	10x4-50-21	41	415	\$43.00
10x4-50-21	42	425	\$44.00	10x4-50-21	42	425	\$44.00
10x4-50-21	43	435	\$45.00	10x4-50-21	43	435	\$45.00
10x4-50-21	44	445	\$46.00	10x4-50-21	44	445	\$46.00
10x4-50-21	45	455	\$47.00	10x4-50-21	45	455	\$47.00
10x4-50-21	46	465	\$48.00	10x4-50-21	46	465	\$48.00
10x4-50-21	47	475	\$49.00	10x4-50-21	47	475	\$49.00
10x4-50-21	48	485	\$50.00	10x4-50-21	48	485	\$50.00
10x4-50-21	49	495	\$51.00	10x4-50-21	49	495	\$51.00
10x4-50-21	50	505	\$52.00	10x4-50-21	50	505	\$52.00
10x4-50-21	51	515	\$53.00	10x4-50-21	51	515	\$53.00
10x4-50-21	52	525	\$54.00	10x4-50-21	52	525	\$54.00
10x4-50-21	53	535	\$55.00	10x4-50-21	53	535	\$55.00
10x4-50-21	54	545	\$56.00	10x4-50-21	54	545	\$56.00
10x4-50-21	55	555	\$57.00	10x4-50-21	55	555	\$57.00
10x4-50-21	56	565	\$58.00	10x4-50-21	56	565	\$58.00
10x4-50-21	57	575	\$59.00	10x4-50-21	57	575	\$59.00
10x4-50-21	58	585	\$60.00	10x4-50-21	58	585	\$60.00
10x4-50-21	59	595	\$61.00	10x4-50-21	59	595	\$61.00
10x4-50-21	60	605	\$62.00	10x4-50-21	60	605	\$62.00
10x4-50-21	61	615	\$63.00	10x4-50-21	61	615	\$63.00
10x4-50-21	62	625	\$64.00	10x4-50-21	62	625	\$64.00
10x4-50-21	63	635	\$65.00	10x4-50-21	63	635	\$65.00
10x4-50-21	64	645	\$66.00	10x4-50-21	64	645	\$66.00
10x4-50-21	65	655	\$67.00	10x4-50-21	65	655	\$67.00
10x4-50-21	66	665	\$68.00	10x4-50-21	66	665	\$68.00
10x4-50-21	67	675	\$69.00	10x4-50-21	67	675	\$69.00
10x4-50-21	68	685	\$70.00	10x4-50-21	68	685	\$70.00
10x4-50-21	69	695	\$71.00	10x4-50-21	69	695	\$71.00
10x4-50-21	70	705	\$72.00	10x4-50-21	70	705	\$72.00
10x4-50-21	71	715	\$73.00	10x4-50-21	71	715	\$73.00
10x4-50-21	72	725	\$74.00	10x4-50-21	72	725	\$74.00
10x4-50-21	73	735	\$75.00	10x4-50-21	73	735	\$75.00
10x4-50-21	74	745	\$76.00	10x4-50-21	74	745	\$76.00
10x4-50-21	75	755	\$77.00	10x4-50-21	75	755	\$77.00
10x4-50-21	76	765	\$78.00	10x4-50-21	76	765	\$78.00
10x4-50-21	77	775	\$79.00	10x4-50-21	77	775	\$79.00
10x4-50-21	78	785	\$80.00	10x4-50-21	78	785	\$80.00
10x4-50-21	79	795	\$81.00	10x4-50-21	79	795	\$81.00
10x4-50-21	80	805	\$82.00	10x4-50-21	80	805	\$82.00
10x4-50-21	81	815	\$83.00	10x4-50-21	81	815	\$83.00
10x4-50-21	82	825	\$84.00	10x4-50-21	82	825	\$84.00
10x4-50-21	83	835	\$85.00	10x4-50-21	83	835	\$85.00
10x4-50-21	84	845	\$86.00	10x4-50-21	84	845	\$86.00
10x4-50-21	85	855	\$87.00	10x4-50-21	85	855	\$87.00
10x4-50-21	86	865	\$88.00	10x4-50-21	86	865	\$88.00
10x4-50-21	87	875	\$89.00	10x4-50-21	87	875	\$89.00
10x4-50-21	88	885	\$90.00	10x4-50-21	88	885	\$90.00
10x4-50-21	89	895	\$91.00	10x4-50-21	89	895	\$91.00
10x4-50-21	90	905	\$92.00	10x4-50-21	90	905	\$92.00
10x4-50-21	91	915	\$93.00	10x4-50-21	91	915	\$93.00
10x4-50-21	92	925	\$94.00	10x4-50-21	92	925	\$94.00
10x4-50-21	93	935	\$95.00	10x4-50-21	93	935	\$95.00
10x4-50-21	94	945	\$96.00	10x4-50-21	94	945	\$96.00
10x4-50-21	95	955	\$97.00	10x4-50-21	95	955	\$97.00
10x4-50-21	96	965	\$98.00	10x4-50-21	96	965	\$98.00
10x4-50-21	97	975	\$99.00	10x4-50-21	97	975	\$99.00
10x4-50-21	98	985	\$100.00	10x4-50-21	98	985	\$100.00
10x4-50-21	99	995	\$101.00	10x4-50-21	99	995	\$101.00
10x4-50-21	100	1005	\$102.00	10x4-50-21	100	1005	\$102.00

Send \$1.00 Deposit with each tire ordered (\$3.00 on each truck tire).
Balance C. O. D. 5% Discount if you send cash in full with order.
12 months guarantee. ALL TUBES GUARANTEED BRAND NEW.
ECONOMY TIRE & RUBBER CO.
Dept. 900 404 East 18th Street Kansas City, Mo.

MAGIC CASE

I TOUCH
A MAGIC
BUTTON!
A NEW
WAY TO
SMOKE
Look! I pull
out this
beautiful en-
amelled case!
I touch this
magic button!
There is a spark
— a flame —
A LIGHTED
Cigarette
appears! I puff it
my lips. The cigar-
ette slides easily from
the case without a touch
of my fingers — comfort-
ably between my lips. I SMOKE!

8 INCHES OFF WAISTLINE

"Director Belt reduced my waistline from 42 to 34 inches. I feel 10 years younger. Constipation gone—no tired, bloated feeling after meals." —G. NEWTON, Troy, N. Y.

Director Belt instantly improves your appearance, puts snap in your step, relieves "shortness of breath," restores **YOUR VIGOR as fat vanishes.**

Loose, fallen abdominal muscles go back where they belong. Gentle massage-like action increases elimination and regularity in a normal way without use of harsh, irritating cathartics. You look and feel years younger.

SENT ON TRIAL

Let us prove our claim. No obligation. Write to day for trial offer.



NEW EASY WAY NO DRUGS NO DIET

LANDON & WARNER 360 N. Michigan Ave. Dept. 5-76, Chicago, Ill.

Turn JUNK TIRES Into Cash!

Brand New Business

Responsible men dropping everything to make sensational new Floor Mat.

Simple hand machine slices old tire into strips. New patented process weaves them into thick, springy, long-wearing FABRIX Mats—Big demand from factories, schools, stores, houses. 16c. in raw material makes \$2.80 mat. Think of the profit.

COSTS NOTHING to get complete information showing how one man in each town can establish local factory and make money from the start. Investment reasonable. Write today. All information is FREE.



FABRIX, Inc., Dept. 223
325 W. Huron Street, Chicago

*BALD MEN! WAKE UP YOUR DORMANT HAIR ROOTS!

If your hair roots are not dead but merely dormant, give your scalp a chance by stimulating the hair roots with Japanese Oil, the anti-septic counter-irritant. Thousands have reported astonishing results. Many who had given up in despair turned to Japanese Oil as a last resort, and have been rewarded with hair growth. You owe it to yourself to try this highly successful preparation. You'll be amazed at the way it removes loose dandruff, stops scalp itch and helps promote new, strong, healthy growth. 66c a bottle at any drugist in America (Economy size, \$1.).

FREE: Valuable book, "The Truth About the Hair," Write National Remedy Co., 56 W. 45th St., Dept. 53A, New York

JAPANESE OIL

*This advertisement was reviewed and approved by a registered physician.

AGENTS GET RESULTS

ALL RESIDUES WITH WATER HOUSH CLEANING TO CLEAN ROUGH SURFACES

WATER FEELS THREE FEET TO WINDOW PANEL



REMARKABLE RUBBER POLISHES GIVES CLEAN, POLISHED WITH ONE STROKE

WIND PROOF FOOL PROOF LASTS FOREVER

REMOVES CAR AND MOTOR ROOM HANDLES FOR NEW BRUSHES

\$380 monthly selling 10 improved patented Carter Window Washers d-l-v. Cleans, dries, polishes. Eliminates all muds. Good Housekeeping approval. Restricted territory. Write today. **CARTER PRODUCTS CORPORATION, 978 Fruit Ave., CLEVELAND, OHIO**

Classified Advertising

The Purpose of this Department is to put the reader in touch immediately with the newest needs for the HOME, OFFICE, FARM, or PERSON; to offer, or seek, an unusual BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, or to suggest a service that may be performed satisfactorily through correspondence. It will pay a housewife or business man equally well to read these advertisements carefully.

Classified Forms Close Two Months in Advance.

AGENTS AND SALESMEN WANTED

IF YOU WANT TO GET YOUR GROCERIES AND HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES AT WHOLESALE, and a wonderful chance to make \$9.50 a day besides, send me your name immediately. No capital or experience necessary. Complete outfit furnished on trial. Albert Mills, 9004 Monmouth, Cincinnati, Ohio.

AMERICA'S GREATEST FOOD BARGAINS! MIRACULOUS PREMIUM DEALS! VALUES THAT BEAT CHAIN STORES. BIG PROFITS. MAIL POST-CARD TODAY. M. C. KENNEDY CO., KOKOMO, INDIANA.

75c. PROFIT ON A \$1.00 SALE. IMP. RINGS REDUCE COST OF COOKING BY GAS 25 TO 50%. MONEY BACK GUARANTEE. MORE THAN TWO MILLION SOLD. MARTIN WRITES "HAVE SUPPORTED MY FAMILY FOR THE PAST YEAR SELLING IMP. RINGS." SOME TERRITORY OPEN. ECONOMY APPLIANCES, DEPT. MC, 19 1/2 SOUTH CANAL STREET, CHICAGO.

SELL PROCESS ENGRAVED PRINTING \$3.95 Thousand, with FREE CUT SERVICE. Worth \$7.00. Nothing like it! Commission \$1.00. Experience unnecessary. Outfit furnished free. UNITED ENGRAVERS, R-8, So. Dearborn, Chicago.

MEN—1000 Bargains. Razor Blades, Novelties, Drug Sundries, Latest Specialties. Free Illustrated Catalog. Reliable Hygienic Products, Dept. 139, 504 S. Crawford, Chicago, Ill.

MANUFACTURERS MIRACLE GAS WANT TERRITORY DISTRIBUTORS. USERS REPORT 33 1/3% AND MORE INCREASED MILEAGE. AUTO CLUB APPROVED. 500% PROFIT. ILLINOIS LABS, P-1244 NORTH DEARBORN, CHICAGO.

SALESMEN—Acquainted with auto dealers, garages, filling stations, industrial concerns, truck concerns, Big Profits. Leads furnished. Territory now available. Attractive set-up for salesmen and district managers. Write Colgra, 2651 N. Third St., Milwaukee, Wis.

WANTED: County Salesman with car, to demonstrate and service for large Ohio manufacturer. First-Class job. 244 Fry-Pfyer Co., Dayton, O.

MAGNETIC CLEANER—Entirely new. More effective than a vacuum cleaner. Sells for \$1.75. Make from \$5.00 to \$12.00 a day. F. S. Beveridge, Pres., Stanley Home Products, Inc., Box 435-M, Westfield, Mass.

MALE HELP WANTED

LOCAL AGENTS WANTED TO WEAR and demonstrate Free Suits to friends. No canvassing. Up to \$12 a day easy. Experience unnecessary. Valuable demonstrating equipment, actual samples Free. H. J. Graves, President, 1581 Harrison, Dept. Q-749, Chicago.

OLD COINS WANTED

SELL US YOUR OLD COINS: Up to \$53 Paid for Indian head pennies. To \$2 for Lincoln pennies. Certain nickels \$1.00. Other coins to \$25.00. Send 10c for complete buying catalog. Coin Collectors Club, CP-700 E. 63rd, Chicago.

COWBOY POEMS

LIMITED OFFER—25 COWBOY POEMS 25c—Neat booklet form. Home on the Range, Zebra Dun, Get Along Little Dogies, and other popular old numbers. Remit coin or stamps. Satisfaction guaranteed. Tom Davidson, Box 121, Galveston, Texas.

DETECTIVES

QUALIFY FOR DETECTIVE WORK. Make Secret Investigations. Earn Big Money. Easy and Fascinating work. Experience unnecessary. Open to all nationalities. Write, FREE particulars. United Detective System, 1623-M, W. Grand Ave., Chicago, Ill.

WANTED: Men and women to study detective profession, secret service, military and naval intelligence. Write Joseph Kavanagh, Former Agent United States Secret Service, MC-35, Hoboken, N. J.

MANUSCRIPTS WANTED

THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS being paid for stories, poems, plays, songs. Free Copyright in your own name. Free submission to publishers. Submit Mas. to Mark Twain Writers', Dept. A, Springfield, Ill.

(Classified continued on page 5)

BECOME AN EXPERT ACCOUNTANT

Executive Accountants and C. P. A.'s earn \$3,000 to \$15,000 a year. Thousands more are needed. We train you thoroughly at home in spare time for C. P. A. examinations of executive accounting positions. Previous bookkeeping knowledge or experience unnecessary. Training given by C. P. A.'s. Write for free book, "Accountancy, the Profession That Pays," and learn about opportunities in this growing, profitable field.

LaSalle Extension University, Dept. 376-N, Chicago
The School That Has Trained Over 1,200 C. P. A.'s

PILES DON'T BE CUT

Until You Try This
Wonderful Treatment

for pile suffering. If you have piles in any form write for a FREE sample of Page's Pile Tablets and you will bless the day that you read this. Write today. E. R. Page Co., 2281-V Page Bldg., Marshall, Mich.

(Classified continued from page 4)

OLD GOLD AND DIAMONDS

WANTED—OLD GOLD, DIAMONDS

MAIL us your old gold teeth—old or broken jewelry—antiques—scratches—diamonds—silver. Cash by return mail. Goods returned in 10 days if you're not satisfied. OHIO SMELTING CO. (Est. 1905.) 815-A Hippodrome Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

USED CORRESPONDENCE COURSES and books sold or rented. Inexpensive. Money back agreement. Write for free catalog 4,000 bargains. (Courses bought.) Lee Mountain, Dept. M-14, Pisgah, Ala.

GOVERNMENT JOBS

GET U. S. GOVERNMENT JOB, start \$105-\$175 month. Men-women, age 18-53. Are you eligible for examination? Get our Free Questionnaire—Send out. No obligations whatever. Write Instruction Bureau, 685, St. Louis, Mo.

PATENTS AND INVENTIONS

INVENTIONS COMMERCIALIZED. Patented or unpatented. Send sketch and description or model, or write for information. In business 39 years. Complete facilities. Adam Fisher Company, 249 Enright, St. Louis, Mo.

Railroad Stories Magazine

A great big magazine. Devoted to a great big subject. It has as many departments as an engine has bolts, but its backbone is fiction—good, live stories of the road, that will set your imagination tingling as it has not for many a day. Look over a copy at your newsstand.

15c On All Newsstands

OR FROM

THE FRANK A. MUNSEY COMPANY

280 Broadway, New York City

Kidneys Cause Much Trouble Says Doctor

Successful Prescription Helps Remove Acids—
Works in 15 Minutes.

Dr. T. J. Rastelli, famous English scientist, Doctor of Medicine and Surgeon, says: "You can't feel well if your Kidneys do not function right, because your Kidneys affect your entire body."

Your blood circulates 4 times a minute through 9 million tiny, delicate tubes in your Kidneys which are endangered by drastic, irritating drugs, modern foods and drinks, worry, and exposure. Beware of Kidney dysfunction if you suffer from Night Rising, Leg Pains, Nervousness, Dizziness, Circles Under Eyes, Acidity, or Loss of Pep.

Dr. Walter R. George, for many years Health Director of Indianapolis, says: "Insufficient Kidney excretions are the cause of much needless suffering with Aching Back, Frequent Night Rising, Itching, Smarting, Burning, Painful Joints, Rheumatic Pains, Headaches, and a generally run-down body. I am of the opinion that the prescription Cystex corrects such functional conditions. It aids in flushing poisons from the urinary tract, and in freeing the blood of retained toxins. Cystex deserves the indorsement of all doctors." If you suffer from Kidney and Bladder dysfunction, delay endangers your vitality, and you should not lose a single minute in starting to take the doctor's special prescription called Cystex (pronounced Siss-tex) which helps Kidney functions in a few hours. It starts work in 15 minutes. Gently tones, soothes, and cleanses raw, sore membranes. Brings new energy and vitality in 48 hours. It is helping millions of sufferers and is guaranteed to fix you up and make you feel like new in 8 days, or money back on return of empty package. Get guaranteed Cystex from your druggist today.



Dr. W. R. George

A Short Cut to BIG PAY in RADIO

New
Offer

MAKES
SUCCESS
EASY!

SEND
NOW
FOR
FACTS

10 Weeks Training in the Great Coyne Shops will qualify you for a better job with more pay and a real future in Radio—Broadcasting, Television, Talking Pictures, Aviation Radio. Learn by actual work on real equipment—not by books or useless theory.

ILL FINANCE YOUR TRAINING

My amazing "Pay-After-Graduation" plan enables you to get your training NOW, then pay me AFTER regular training period, in small monthly payments extended over a year. Free Employment Service to graduates.

... many cars while learning. Mail coupon today!
—H. C. LEWIS, PRES., COYNE RADIO SCHOOL—
500 S. Paulina St., Dept. 35-1A, Chicago, Ill.
Send your Big Free Book on Radio and Coyne Shop Training and full details of your "Pay-After-Graduation" Offer.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____

Start
\$1260 to \$2100 YEAR

Many Winter and Spring
Examinations.

Mail coupon
NOW.

NEW DEAL
GOVERNMENT JOBS

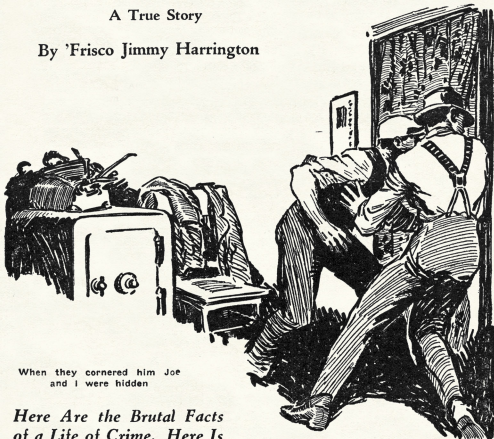
FRANKLIN
INSTITUTE
Dep't M-271
Rochester, N. Y.
Rush to me FREE list of
Government Jobs for Men
—women, 18 to 30, and pointers
telling how to get them.

Name _____
Address _____

15 YEARS in the UNDERWORLD

A True Story

By 'Frisco Jimmy Harrington



When they cornered him Joe
and I were hidden

*Here Are the Brutal Facts
of a Life of Crime. Here Is
the Defiant Confession of
Your Enemy, the Crook!*

CHAPTER I

A Born Crook

TWO of the greatest detectives that the world has ever known, Billy Burns and Billy Pinkerton, once said that I was the most versatile criminal that ever lived. I don't know.

Perhaps I was. In any event here is what you find on the back of my mug in any of the rogues galleries of the big cities of this country and Europe:

"James Harrington, alias 'Frisco Jimmy, alias Sir James Ballington, alias Jimmy the Dude, alias The Seldom-Seen and Seldom-Caught Kid. Confidence man and burglar and Transatlantic card sharp. Height five feet eleven inches. Weight one hun-

dred and eighty pounds. Smooth shaven. Black hair tinged with gray around temples. Natty dresser. Frequent only the best hotels. Wears monocle on occasion. Talks French and Italian fluently."

namous souls! I liked those two coppers despite the fact that we were mortal enemies for many, many years. Sounds strange, does it not, to hear a notorious criminal speak in such a manner of detectives? Crooks are supposed to hate "coppers". I myself have met many of the flat-footed brethren of the law whom I learned to hate.



The killers began to swing their hatchets

All of the above is correct with the exception of the allegation that I am an accomplished linguist, for I do not speak French and Italian very fluently. I buzz the lingo of the Frog and the Wop only fair to mid, as it were. I can make them understand me and that's about all.

Both Billy Burns and Billy Pinkerton are now dead. God rest their mag-

But Billy Burns and Billy Pinkerton were of a different breed. Not only were they great coppers, but they also were great human beings. If I had taken their advice when I first went to the mat with them I am sure that I would have had an entirely different story to tell.

I laughed at them when they said I was fitted for better things than crooking; therefore, this is the autobiography of a dishonest and highly

unsuccessful life. What a sucker I have been! There is an epitaph, brother, that you can plaster over the grave of any crook that ever lived. They're all suckers.

I, unlike most criminals, cannot blame poverty, environment, or the demoralizing influence of reformatory and prison life for my fall from grace. No, sir, that's not my alibi for turning cheater. And what's more I have never been able to go for that old stuff about poverty, environment and prisons making guys crooks. I think it's the bunk. I think crooks are born, not made.

There are, I hasten to add, criminals and criminals. There is, for example, the fellow who comes from cock-eyed parents, parents who themselves are a little short on brains. Ever see the parents of some of our notorious criminals? Well, you ought to see some of them. You'd understand, then, why their children became criminals.

Now, I came from a swell family. My parents were clean and healthy. Today, as a result of prolonged introspection, I know that I was a criminal of adventure. There were no streaks of abnormality in my parents nor in any of my aunts and uncles and grandfathers and grandmothers. They all, without one exception, were clean mentally and morally, and sound physically. I am the only member of the clan of Harrington who, as the poet Swinburne says, ditched the lilies and languors of virtue for the raptures and roses of vice. How come? you may ask. Well, I'll give you the facts:

THERE were six children, four girls and two boys, in the family. I was the eldest. My father was a disciplinarian from away back. I think Pop was something of a nut on

discipline. We had our meals at certain hours, and when I say certain hours I mean certain hours. You couldn't eat in our house at any hour of the day or night. No, sir. We all put on the feed bag at the same time, because Pop always said grace before and after meals and if we weren't in on grace we couldn't eat. On Sunday mornings we all had to attend church before having breakfast. And there was Sunday school before dinner. And what was more Pop always escorted us to church and Sunday school. "I'll know that you've been there when I take you myself," he said.

These were hard and fast rules that were never violated. In those early days of my adolescence I was, I imagine, what the world calls a model youth. I was naive, too. I believed everything that my parents and the brothers and sisters of the parochial school taught me. Brother Terry and Sister Gertrude said I was a most precocious boy. I guess I was, too, for I didn't read the kind of books that most boys delighted to read. I read Dickens and Shakespeare and similar authors. I was a nut on poetry, and Tennyson was my favorite poet.

Blood-and-thunder yarns never appealed to me. I am aware of the fact that crook writers frequently have said that they first got the yen for crookdom from reading about Jesse James and Black Bart and other criminals. I don't believe that. I don't believe that anybody can be ruined by a book, anymore than I believe that poverty makes criminals. Criminals, I repeat, are born—not made.

Came then the death of my father. Immediately my life changed. Or perhaps I should say that my point of view about life changed. In any event there was a change after Pop passed

away. I had always toed the mark while he lived, but when he died it seemed to me that a fourteen-year-old young man should have a few liberties.

I was tired of all that discipline. I was tired of that old stuff, "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." I saw all the rest of the kids in the neighborhood rambling the streets until midnight, and I saw no reason why I shouldn't have as much liberty.

But Mom, God love her, thought otherwise. Only bad boys prowled the streets after nine o'clock, she said. That was why Pop insisted upon all of us kids being in bed at nine. I couldn't see her point of view, and since I didn't fear her as I had feared Pop, why I just made up my mind that I was going to have a little of my own way.

Very soon I became a member of the gang that congregated in the corner poolrooms, bowling alleys and cigar stores. In those days those poolrooms, bowling alleys and cigar stores were managed by fellows with underworld connections. Tom Barker, who ran the Star Poolroom, was an ex-convict; and I now recall how I loved to sit and listen to him talk about the old gangs of New York and the old gang leaders, celebrities like Spanish Lewey, Monk Eastman, and "Nigger Mike" Salter. Tom himself had a record as a gangster as long as your right arm. He was a burglar, a dip and a prowler. He also was the Oliver Twist of those days.

Tom taught me and Joe Tularey and many other youngsters how to "cop a poke," pick a pocket. He talked about robbing banks and blowing safes; but I know now that he couldn't have blown open a bread box, let alone a safe or a bank.

When Mom learned that I was associating with the "blackguards" of the neighborhood, she pleaded with me to give them a wide berth. Failing to get any response she called in my



'FRISCO JIMMY HARRINGTON

HE makes a straightforward confession of everything that happened during the fifteen years that he was a crook. He has made \$60,000 in a night. He has served six and a half years for crimes that did not net him a dime.

Under the alias of 'Frisco Jimmy Harrington this man writes his confession just as he told it when he sat in the office of DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY. He doesn't make excuses for himself, and he doesn't soften the facts.

Do you want to know what a criminal's life is like?

This is what it's like.

Uncle Hughey, a reformed drunkard, who in years gone by had won a reputation as a cop-fighter. Hughey was plenty tough. He would rather fight than eat. But I wasn't afraid of Uncle Hughey. I paid no more attention to his spiels about being a good

boy than I had paid to Mom's spiels.

Next Mom called in Father McGonnigle. The good Father talked to me like a Dutch Uncle. I'd wind up on the gallows or in the electric chair if I didn't cut out my evil ways and do as my mother wished. No boy who turned away from the church could ever possibly have any luck, he said. The Father couldn't do any more with me than Mom and Uncle Hughey had done.

I was determined to have my own way, and that was that.

It may be argued that I might never have become a crook if I hadn't frequented the hangouts of the neighborhood gangs. That, I think, is a specious argument. As I look back over my life I am of the opinion that I was an adventurer at heart. I think I would have turned to crooking even though my father had lived. I was a wild, hard-headed, irresponsible kid, and I think that I inherited some of these traits from Pop. Pop was a guy who would not tolerate any monkey business from any of us. He ruled us with an iron hand, and he ruled my mother with an iron hand. He was a nut on bossing people, and if we crossed him he'd knock us dead with the first instrument upon which he could lay his big Irish mitts.

CHAPTER II

The Tong Killers

SO I began my career of crime as a "dip" in the subway and the shopping district. All "dips," Tom Barker had told us, began as "mollbuzzers," so Joe Tularey and I began as "mollbuzzers," picking the bags of women. I loved the racket more than I am able to tell, and in time I became so proficient at "moll-

buzzing" that I switched to picking the pockets of men.

There was more money in the pockets of men, strange to relate. Men, moreover, were easier to rob than women. If a man caught you with your hand in his pocket he didn't always call a copper. Frequently he'd give you a sock on the nose and call it a day. But a woman! Ye gods, a woman invariably yelled her head off. And she kept on yelling until the cops arrived. I had several narrow escapes during the months that I was frisking pokes in the shopping district.

I soon tired of dipping. My adventurous heart yearned for bigger stuff. I wanted thrills. I wanted to carry a gat. I wanted to wear a black mask like Jesse James and some of those rough-riding maniacs of the plains and the deserts.

Forthwith I purchased a gat, and then I stole one of Mom's black stockings and made myself a mask. I thought I was a great guy when I got that gat and mask, and I would stand before the mirror and admire myself with the mask over my mug and the gat in my hand. Some day, I told myself, I'd make Jesse James and the rest of those early Western road agents look like pikers and also-rans. If I could have seen what was waiting for me at the end of the trail what a different story it would have been!

Now I come to my first burglary. Joe Tularey was my pal in that crime. The victim was a Chinaman, Wong Lee, who ran a laundry in Hell's Kitchen. It was rumored throughout Hell's Kitchen that Wong Lee was an immensely wealthy Chink. But he didn't get all his dough washing and ironing shirts and collars, the folks said. Wong was a peddler of opium. Chinks from all over the city came to

Wong, it was rumored, to buy their "hop." I didn't know about that. I did know, however, that many Chinks came to Wong's joint at all hours of the day and night. I got hep to that fact by watching Wong's joint from a fence in the back of the laundry.

All these visitors invariably came to see Wong at night. Joe Tularey and I tailed old Wong Lee's visitors several times, and thus ascertained that said visitors did in reality conduct hop-smoking parlors.

So far so good. Our next problem was to learn where Wong Lee kept his dough. We knew that he never banked it, for the very good reason that we never saw him go to a bank during the three or four weeks that we had been tabbing his movements. We finally got hep to his plant. He kept all his dough in a little safe which was hidden under a huge cask. I think Wong must have had that cask made for the express purpose of covering the safe.

After getting the low down on the pete—the safe—and its hiding place, and feeling reasonably certain that the burglary would be good for many thousands of dollars, I laid my plans to burglarize the joint. Joe Tularey wanted to step in on the old Chink and hit him over the head with a black-jack. He was an unimaginative fellow, this Tularey boy. He was nuts, but nobody knew it in those days. The authorities didn't learn that Joe was a bug until he had knocked off six or seven people. I'll tell you more about Joseph later on.

Wong Lee spent his Sundays at the house of the Three Cousins' Tong in Mott Street. Invariably he left his West Forty-Eighth Street residence around two in the afternoon and didn't return until around midnight. I had never tried to open a safe, but I was

confident of my ability to open that little one that Wong had. With ten hours to work on it, and no interruption, it looked like a lead-pipe cinch to me. I collected an assortment of tools for the job. I stole a sledge hammer, three or four chisels, a crow bar, and several other things. I had tools enough to dig a subway.

We tabbed Wong's place on the Sunday that we decided to knock it off. Joe and I saw him leave at two-thirty, and we followed him all the way downtown to the Three Cousins' Tong. At dusk that evening we broke into the combination laundry and residence, via an alley gate, and went to work immediately on the little harmless-looking safe. We worked and we worked, but we couldn't get the door off the safe. Joe wanted to quit after we had spent about three hours on the money box, but I refused.

"I came to get the dough," I said, "and I'm going to stay here until I get it."

And so we worked some more. But we couldn't get the door off. It was then that Joe suggested that we get some help and carry the little safe away. I liked his idea. Therefore we gathered up our tools and prepared to quit the joint to go look for three or four boys to help us carry the pete down to Starbank's Lumberyard at Forty-Eighth Street and Tenth Avenue.

Right there is where things began to happen. Just as we were about to duck out the back window we heard somebody coming down the long hallway from the front of the house. Forthwith we jumped behind the big red and black curtain which separated the combination office and bedroom from the front of the laundry. Presently a key was inserted in the lock.

Then the door swung open and two tough-looking Chinks entered the room.

I WILL not deny that I was scared speechless after they had thrown on the lights and I got a good look at their faces. I know that Joe was scared, because I could feel him trembling when he rubbed against me. I could hear my heart beating like a trip hammer and the perspiration was literally rolling down my back and down my face. Cold horror clutched suffocatingly at my throat when I caught a glimpse of the hatchets that the Chinks had hitched to their belts beneath their wide blue blouses. I was only a kid, but I had heard of the hatchetmen of the tongs, and I had heard of the wars in Chinatown.

And then I fell to wondering for what purpose these weird-looking Chinks had come to Wong Lee's home? Were they of Wong's tong, the Three Cousins, or were they members of the Hua Cha, the deadly enemies of the Three Cousins? If they were of the latter, why then I knew that murder was in the air.

"If they have come here to kill old Wong Lee," I thought, "they'll kill Joe and me if they discover us behind this curtain."

I was on the verge of passing out of the picture when the little Chinaman suddenly jumped to his feet and ran to the door and put his ear against it. Presently, the big fellow put his ear against the door. An ominous silence ensued for a few seconds. Then they began to chatter in a subdued tone, after which they dropped to their knees. Three light taps on the door brought them to their feet. But they didn't open the door. They stood there and carried on a hurried, animated

conversation with the man in the hall outside. They talked for approximately a minute.

Then all of a sudden the big fellow jumped back and reached for the light switch. Then he and the little Chinaman made for the closet and pulled the door behind them. I knew that the fireworks would begin shortly and I was shaking like a can-can dancer.

Finally I heard a step in the hall—a step that came slowly with wary caution, as if the person sensed danger. The walker paused at the door before inserting the key. When he turned it in the lock there was, it seemed to me, another interminable pause before the door opened and I saw Wong Lee on the threshold. His face was white and his eyes were staring, blank, expressionless. It was the face of a man who knew that death was imminent.

My eyes wandered over to the closet when Wong Lee turned to close the door. He was holding the key in the lock when the two hatchetmen jumped out of the closet and closed in on him. He backed away from them in a spasm of uncontrollable terror, and when they finally cornered him—directly in front of the curtain behind which Joe Tularay and I were hidden—he dropped to his knees and begged piteously and frantically for his life.

I saw the Chinks raise their hands. I turned my head, shaken with horror and nausea as the killers began to swing their hatchets. Old Wong Lee's cries faded away in a low moan of agony, and then suddenly the assassins wheeled and crept silently out of the room. When Joe and I heard the door at the end of the hall close we made our escape through the window.

Not until noon of the following day—Monday—did the police discover that the hatchetmen had murdered

Wong Lee. The early editions of the afternoon newspapers front-paged the story. The police had a clue, the papers revealed. The finger-print expert, Inspector Joseph Faurot, had found several sets of finger-prints on one of the windows, "through which," the papers stated, "the assassins had escaped."

When I read about those finger-prints I knew that they belonged to Joe Tularey and me, for the hatchetmen had not been near that window. The assassins had not escaped through that window, as the papers stated. It was Joe and I who went through that window, leaving those tell-tale prints behind. The terror that I experienced in Wong Lee's place was infinitesimal compared to what I felt when I learned that the police had found our finger-prints.

Wong Lee was murdered. Visions of the electric chair swept across my tortured mind. It was a cinch, I told myself, that Joe and I would be pegged and convicted of that murder if the coppers caught us. No jury would believe our story, either. Nor would any of those hard-headed detectives at police headquarters believe that we hadn't put old Wong Lee on the spot.

The late editions of the evening newspapers quoted the ace sleuth of the detective bureau, George McCloskey, as saying that he was "perplexed."

"Tong murders," the papers quoted "Chesty George," who was one of the cleverest dicks that ever hunted a crook, "are never committed for money. All these Chink killings are for revenge. But in this case it appears that the killers tried to open Wong Lee's safe. I'm not so sure, now, that this is a tong job, even though hatchets were used. I think those hatchets might have been used

for a stall to hide the identity of the killers. But regardless of whether or not it is a tong job, we expect to catch the men who did this thing. Those finger-prints that we found on the window and on the tools will eventually lead to the arrest of the guilty parties."

After I had digested what Inspector McCloskey had to say I decided that it was time to move out of New York City, and so I went home and told my mother that I was going to take a trip up to Albany to see my Uncle Frank. Mom knew there was something wrong in the air. She could read it in my face. Had I been up to anything? Had I done anything that I shouldn't have done? I tried to laugh away her suspicions, but it was no use, and so I decided that I had better give up the idea of talking her out of money for the trip to Albany and beat my way out of the city on a boat or a freight train. I would go that night after supper, and perhaps I could sneak a few dollars out of her trunk before I went. That would be the better plan, I concluded. She would cry and carry on if I tried to get out of the house with a suitcase. Yes, it would be better to sneak out and say nothing.

Joe Tularey was impatient to beat it out of the city, too. He had some money laid away, he told me, and we could ride the Pullmans up to Boston that night at eleven-thirty. He would get the tickets and we would meet at the Grand Central Station at eleven.

CHAPTER III

The Snow Bird

AND so we met at the Grand Central at eleven o'clock that night.

But we didn't ride any Pullmans up to Boston. Inspector McCloskey and Detective Billy Fogarty nailed us

as we passed through the entrance to the train-shed.

"Well, well, boys," said the inspector, "what's the idea of the rattler to Boston? Going up there to knock off another Chink?"

"So you're a couple of hatchetmen, eh?" Billy Fogarty grunted. "I never thought I'd live to see the day that a couple o' Irish brats like you two punks would be going around with hatchets in your kicks slaughtering Chinamen."

"We didn't kill any Chinamen," I said.

"Pay no attention to them, Jimmy," Joe snarled. "Don't you know that all coppers are bugs?"

"So you never heard of Wong Lee, I guess?" Fogarty smiled.

"No, I ain't," Joe snarled.

"Well, how did your finger-prints get on that window and on those tools that were found in the room where Wong Lee was killed?" Inspector McCloskey smiled.

I saw no use of stalling with the detectives. Consequently I decided to make a confession when we arrived at police headquarters and were ushered into the presence of the police commissioner. I told the story as it happened. I admitted that we had stolen the tools and gone to Wong Lee's place to burglarize his safe, but denied that we killed the old Chink. The commissioner and his sleuths looked at each other and smiled knowingly.

Then they put their heads together and did a lot of buzzing. Could we describe those Chinamen that killed Wong Lee? Would we know them if we ever saw them again? Joe and I assured them that we could never forget those Chinks with the hatchets. The sleuths did some more smiling and then they went into a huddle and did some more buzzing.

Funny fellows, these New York coppers, I thought. My confession didn't seem to be going over very big with the manhunters of the law. I think, however, that if I hadn't been arrested with Joe Tularey everything would have been jake. The bulls didn't like Joe. He was only nineteen, but still he had a record. It was his finger-prints which caused our arrest, for I had never been implicated in any sort of crime before the Wong Lee affair.

From the commissioner's office we went to the chief detective's office to look over the rogues' gallery in which the pictures of all Japanese and Chinese criminals were kept. Joe and I rapped to the mugs of the two hatchetmen, Quong Ming and Moy Tung, immediately.

"You're dead sure that these are the Chinks who killed Wong Lee?" the chief asked.

Joe and I said we were "dead sure." More smiles and more buzzing by the sleuths, and then Joe and I went over the Bridge of Sighs into the Tombs. The coppers, we felt certain, took our confessions and identification of Quong Ming and Moy Tung with the proverbial grain of salt.

Life in the Tombs turned out to be an endless nightmare for me. I could think of nothing but that electric chair up the river at Sing Sing. Day and night, asleep or awake, visions of dying in the hot-seat for a crime of which I was innocent dogged me with implacable, ominous persistency. I just couldn't understand why those unimaginative, thick-headed coppers didn't believe our story.

I now recall having read somewhere what a noted criminologist said on the subject of imprisoning youthful criminals. I think it was Dean Kirchway, of Columbia College, who served a few

years as warden of Sing Sing, who uttered the opinion about which I now write. In any event, the gentleman said that one day and one night in prison was enough to make any juvenile see the error of his ways.

I believe that if I had been released from the Tombs after the first twenty-four hours I would have gone back to the straight and narrow for the rest of my life. I regretted my first transgression with all my heart and soul, and I swore that if I got out of that jam that I would go home and do everything within my power to atone for the heartaches that I had given Mom and my sisters and brothers.

Joe Tularey, however, had no regrets. He laughed at me when I paced the cell day and night and talked about what a sucker I had been. "Little Benny" Schwartz, a prowler with whom Joe and I celled, laughed at me, too. How did I figure that I was a sucker? Wasn't my picture on the front pages of all the newspapers? Not many guys made the front page. I should be proud of that front page publicity. Only big-shots made the front page. Somehow or other I couldn't get Little Benny's angle on that publicity stuff.

On the third day of my imprisonment I was a nervous wreck. I hadn't slept a wink. Visions of that chair up the river kept me awake. And as for food? Well, I didn't eat enough during those three days to satisfy the appetite of a canary. It was then that Little Benny Schwartz introduced me to the "white stuff," morphine.

"Would y' like to ferget all y'r troubles, Jimmy?" he asked.

Naturally I wanted to forget all my troubles. But, I told Benny, I didn't see how that could be done. How could anybody who was up on a first-degree

murder rap forget that chair up the river at Ossining? Benny smiled and lifted the mattress and pulled out a spoon, a syringe and a bottle of the "white stuff."

"Roll up that shirt sleeve," Benny said, "and I'll send y' on a trip up to heaven, Jimmy."

I rolled up the sleeve of my right arm and stood watching him heat the spoon of morphine over a match.

"Fix me one, too, Ben," Joe Tularey cut in, "I ain't had a shot today."

"Oh, you use it, too, Joe?" I asked.

"Sure," Joe smiled, "I have been using it for three years."

Joe, by the way, was only nineteen. He had been using dope since he was sixteen.

THE effect of that first shot of the white stuff that Little Benny Schwartz gave me in my right arm was magic. Worry, nervousness, weariness, remorse slipped from me like a discarded coat. An indescribable exhilaration swept over me. I was not in prison at all. I didn't see any bars. Confinement meant nothing to me. I was at peace with the world. Little Benny watched me with dancing eyes from the bunk. He had sent me to heaven, all right. I hadn't been able to get his point of view on that front page publicity stuff before I took the morphine, but after I took it I saw what he meant. It was big-time stuff to get your mug on the front pages of all the newspapers. I wasn't a sucker. Huh! I was a wise guy, a grifter, a son of Subterranea!

And that chair up the river at the Ossining big house was just another chair. I could take it with a smile. I could walk right into that execution chamber and take the hot juice of the chair with a grin on my mug. The

white stuff gave me courage to meet my mother and the rest of the family with a smile when they visited me. They noted the change in me. Mom noticed it first. Formerly, she would bring the tears to my eyes when she visited me, but the white stuff put an end to that baby business.

I kidded Mom when she talked about what might have been. I kidded my sisters and brothers when they talked about what might have been. I was all right, I told them. I had guts, and there was nothing that the law and its agents could do to me that would hurt me.

Four weeks I was in the Tombs. So far as I was concerned everything was jake. I didn't have a care or a worry. The dope never ran out, for Little Benny had an ace in the hole. Money talked in the Tombs those days, just as it talked in the joints along the Great White Way. If one had plenty of dough one got what one wanted—women, dope, good food, liquor. The crooked and hungry keepers would do anything for money—except help the moneyed inmates escape. That was about the only thing that they wouldn't do. Incredible? Well, what about that recent exposé at Blackwell's Island? Need I go into that? Hardly!

Came then the cleanup on the Wong Lee murder. Inspector George McCloskey and his sleuths finally collared those slant-eyed hatchetmen, Quong Ming and Moy Tung. The inspector came to the Tombs to give me and Joe Tularey the "good news." I couldn't see anything "good" in the information that he had caught the murderers. What was all the shouting about? I asked. McCloskey eyed me speculatively.

"Aren't you glad to have that first-degree murder rap removed?" he said.

"It don't make no difference to us one way or the other," Joe said.

The inspector smiled.

"Just a couple of tough punks, eh?" he grunted.

What Joe said to the inspector cannot be quoted. And Joe concluded his remarks with the statement that neither he nor I would appear as a witness against the Chinks. McCloskey smiled at that crack, too.

"Does that go for you too, Jimmy?" he asked.

I was with Joe forty ways from the jack, I replied. "Chesty George" laughed uproariously.

"We're not stool pigeons or rats," Joe cried, "and so we don't put th' finger on nobody, not even a Chink. So you'll have to do th' best y' can without us, Mr. Copper."

"Well, boys," said the inspector, "you can suit yourself about that matter. You can appear as a witness for the state, or you can duck the issue. But get this"—he leveled a menacing forefinger at us—"if you don't tell what you know at the Chinks' trial I'll have you indicted for first-degree burglary and sent to Dannemora for ten years."

Ten years in Dannemora didn't mean a thing to us. We could stand on our heads that long, we told the inspector. It was the dope that gave Joe and me this false, melodramatic courage. The astute McCloskey knew that something was wrong. He knew what was wrong when the warden of the Tombs told him that we were celling with Little Benny Schwartz, for everybody—criminals, detectives, court officials and prison officials—were aware of the fact that Benny was a drug addict.

"Chesty George" played his trump card when he got the lowdown on us.

Forthwith he had us removed from the Tombs to the Old Jefferson Market Prison, over which Pete Mallon ruled. Pete, incidentally, was killed in that Tombs riot some three or four years back. No crook could get away with any dope in the Jefferson Market Prison. No, sir! Pete Mallon was a square-shooter from away back—a square-shooter and a hard hitter who feared nobody. I have seen Pete step into a cell and lick a half dozen crooks. And yet he was the most humble of men, and a good friend if you behaved yourself and obeyed the rules.

Pete knew Joe Tularey. He knew that Joe was an addict. But he had never seen me before, and when he learned that I was a first offender and came from a respectable family, he made an effort to steer me straight. All crooks, he told me, had but three endings facing them—death in the chair, death from old age in a prison or a poor house, or death while trying to stage a crime. I should wake up and look around me before it was too late, he said.

His good advice entered one inattentive, contemptuous ear and went out the other. He was the sucker, not I. I was the wise guy. The world owed me a living and I was determined to collect it come what may.

THIS was my attitude while I was still under the influence of the subtle and sinister dope. A guy has a heap of imaginary courage while his system is charged with hop. But I, like all mongrels, reverted to type when the dope ran out, as also did Mr. Tularey.

A week passed before George McCloskey came to visit us. He came with the bit between his handsome white teeth. If I seem to discuss this great

detective rather intimately I would have you know that he and I later became fine friends. Pete Mallon and I also became fine friends. "Chesty George," I repeat, came to us with the bit between his teeth. It was not, "boys, will you do this or that?" but rather, "you blankety-blank, blank, blanks, you will do what I want you to do and you'll like it."

We were meek and humble when George told us where we got off. We were different boys with that dope out of our system. Would we testify against the two hatchetmen of Mongolia? I'll say we did, and as George said, we liked it. We did not, however, like the idea of being indicted for breaking and entering, even though Inspector McCloskey and the district attorney told us that we were lucky to have the charge reduced from first-degree burglary.

We pleaded guilty, and a merciful judge sent us to Sing Sing to serve three years. Quong Ming and Moy Tung, sentenced to death in the electric chair, went up the river with us, accompanied by four officers. Ming and Tung were all dolled up like a couple of kings at a coronation. They had bracelets on the wrists and bracelets on their ankles. They didn't seem the least bit worried, for they laughed and chatted in that strange singsong lingo all the way from New York to Ossining. And they died chuckling. Strange folk, these slant-eyed sons of Han.

CHAPTER IV

The First Taste of Stir

THE Sing Sing of twenty-odd years ago was a far different institution from the Sing Sing of today, with its baseball diamonds and football fields and moving pictures and

band concerts and handball courts. The officials, too, were of a different sort. The boys who directed the affairs of the Big House twenty-odd years ago were of the knock-'em-down-and-drag-'em-out sort.

They were something like the Irish coppers of old San Francisco, who used to say:

"I arrest y' because I have the authority, not because y' have done anything."

The Sing Sing keepers of twenty-odd years ago used to slug the cons silly simply because they believed that they had to break their heads and their hearts before they could manage them. 'A cock-eyed philosophy! Just as cock-eyed, I hasten to add, is Warden Lawes' philosophy that a kiss and a kind word of plenty of entertainment will make a burglar see the error of his ways.

I met a fellow in Sing Sing on that first trip up the river who captivated my naïve, adolescent heart. He was a jewel thief and a cracksmen. His name was Oscar Williamson, alias "Bible Back Slim." I shall never forget the first time that I saw him waltzing across the big prison yard with his cap tilted at a rakish angle over the corner of his left eye and a big wad of tobacco in his jaw. I loved the way he wore that cap over the left eye and I loved the manner in which he expectorated long streams of tobacco juice through his front teeth. There was something stately and majestic in his stride, too. He carried his head between his hunched shoulders and his hands were always elbow deep in his trouser pockets.

Immediately I began to imitate Bible Back Slim. I wore my cap tilted at a rakish angle over my left eye. I bought a plug of tobacco and practiced ex-

pectorating between my front teeth until I became most efficient. And when I got in my cell I rehearsed Bible Back Slim's stride for hours at a stretch.

After mastering the great man's stride, my next ambition was to talk with him. That, I concluded, would be a worthwhile experience. Talking with a great jewel thief and a great cracksmen! Not many youngsters, I told myself, ever had such a glorious and momentous experience. Anybody could meet a great doctor or a great lawyer or a great actor; but a great underworld guy, well, that was something else!

And so I accosted Bible Back Slim in the yard one Sunday morning. I had the cap over my left eye and the wad of tobacco in my mouth.

"Hello there, old-timer," I said, and shot a stream of tobacco juice between my teeth. "How goes it, old-timer?"

"How goes what?" he barked.

"Everything," I said.

"How goes everything with you?" he asked.

"Swell! Swell!" I said, and shot out another stream of tobacco juice between my front teeth.

He smiled.

"Doing a long stretch?" I kept after him.

"Not so long," he answered. "How long are you doing?"

"A three specker," I said. "I got it for a safe job in the big town."

"A safe job?" his eyes lighted up. "A safe job?" he repeated. "Where in the hell did you ever learn how to knock open a peter?"

"Just picked it up," I said.

Then he began to throw questions at me on the subject of opening petes. I, of course, knew nothing about blowing petes. Slim laughed at me. I was embarrassed and I blushed crimson

when he told me that I was a pretty punk peterman. And then my idol proceeded to dynamite all my dreams.

"Kid," he began, "you're nuts, plumb nuts, or you wouldn't be rambling around the country trying to blow petes. If you had any sense you'd be at school putting something in your noodle. Where did you ever get the idea that crooking is a swell racket? Who started you off in the crooking business?"

"I started myself," I replied.

"Oh, yeah?" he smiled.

"Sure! I started myself."

"You did, eh?"

"Yeah," I went on, "and I'm going to be a good peterman some of these days."

"Well, kid," he said, "it's easy to see that you don't know nothing about this life or you wouldn't talk that way. All crooks are suckers. I been in the business for twenty-five years, so I ought to know what I'm talking about. If you'll take my advice you'll go home and get yourself a job when you do your bit."

I was shocked! A famous safe cracker and jewel thief was talking to me like a preacher!

"Hell!" I thought, "he must be a ham or he wouldn't hand me such silly guff."

But Bible Back Slim couldn't discourage me. I was determined to become a crook regardless of what he or anybody else said about the penalties of crooking. It was possible, I thought, that Slim was stir-simple. Or perhaps he was not the clever and desperate marauder that the inmates of Sing Sing said he was. I'd look into the matter. And I did.

Slim was not stir-simple, the boys told me. He was, without exception, the greatest jewel thief and safe

cracker and prowler that ever came down the old pike, the boys assured me. He was a lone traveler, too. He had pulled some of the biggest robberies in the world. And he had operated all over the world—England and France and Italy.

After hearing all these wonderful things I decided that Slim was kidding me.

He didn't mean what he said about crooking being a sucker's business. No big-time crook like him would tell a guy to go to work. Yes, he was only kidding me. Well, I'd show him that I had the stuff in me out of which first-class crooks were made. I'd show him that I had courage, and so I began to act the hard guy with the Sing Sing screws. That would convince Bible Back Slim that I had the makings.

I BEGAN the hard guy stuff by socking a keeper on the bugle.

The keeper turned right around and socked me on the bugle, and then he dragged me into the warden's office, where he and the warden kicked me around for a few minutes. After that they tossed me into the dungeon. The warden told me that he would release me from the dungeon when I got ready to apologize for socking the keeper. I didn't think I'd ever apologize.

"That's okay by me," the warden said, "but if you don't apologize you can croak in that dungeon."

Ten days in that dungeon on a bread and water diet almost broke my heart, but I didn't hoist the white flag. I stuck it out until the doctor ordered the warden to remove me to the hospital. I looked forward with much pleasure to my triumphant return to the cell house. I was sure that I had demonstrated to Bible Back Slim that I was a game guy.

"He'll not give me anymore of that bunk about crooking being a sucker's racket," I thought. "He knows now that I'm there with the real stuff."

I had my cap over my left eye and I had a big wad of tobacco in my kisser when I strolled into the cell house on the memorable day when I was discharged from the hospital. The cons greeted me right and left with pats on the back and they hoped that I'd take a sock at a few more of "them" keepers. I smiled and strutted around the cell house like a peacock, looking for Bible Back Slim. I wanted to hear what he had to say. If he patted me on the back and told me that I was a game guy all would be hunky-dory. I found him, finally, off in a corner. He was reading a book.

"Hello, old-timer," I greeted him.

He raised his head and smiled. "Hello," he said.

"Hear about me socking that keeper?" I snapped.

"Yeah," he nodded, "I heard about it. And I also heard about the socking that they gave you. No smart guy ever socks a prison screw, kid. Smart guys behave themselves when they land in stirs, because they know that it don't do no good to fight prison screws."

Bible Back made me feel like a chump! After that last bum play I watched my step. I resolved that I would win his confidence and admiration. And sure enough I did. I think I was the happiest convict in the prison when he invited me to share his cell with him. But he did not stop trying to steer me back to the straight and narrow. No, sir, he kept after me all the time, and I kept on announcing that I was headed for an underworld career. I wanted to be a safe cracker and a big jewel thief like Bible Back.

He began to weaken, finally, when he saw that I was determined to turn crook. I pleaded with him to teach me the safe cracking business, but he held off on that; hoping, I think, that he would be able to talk me out of the idea before my sentence was up.

Some three or four months before the expiration of my sentence he made his last stand on the straight and narrow stuff. A friend of his, Dayton Tom, an expert safe cracker, was being executed. Bible Back was moody that night as the hands of the clock moved around slowly to eleven, the hour at which the executions were pulled off.

He paced the cell floor from the wall to the door and back to the wall again, talking about Dayton Tom. Tom was seventeen when Bible Back first met him in an Ohio city. He had talked to Tom as he had talked to me; but Tom, like me, was determined to become a peterman. And now he was dying in the electric chair! There was an example for me, he pointed out. I should turn back while the turning was good.

"Every time you go out to do a job, kid," he said, "you're liable to croak somebody; and when they get you, you will go as Dayton Tom is going tonight. You ought to think of that, kid, before you start out on this underworld business."

"I've thought of all those things," I said, "but they don't mean a thing to me."

He smiled and took to pacing the cell again. At five minutes to eleven he stopped and stood at the door with his face against the bars peering into the yard and the death house. He stood there until he saw the witnesses and the newspaper men emerge from the chamber of death and pass through the big gate to the warden's office.

"Well," he sighed, "Dayton Tom is dead."

Slim never talked to me again about squaring it after that night. He decided that I was inherently larcenous, and since I was determined to become a crook he would make me a good one. At last I was happy. I looked forward with much pleasure to be taught the rudiments of the profession. I was sure that I would prove myself a most worthy pupil, a pupil of whom Slim would always be proud.

The remaining months of my term were spent in learning how to make skeleton keys for all sorts of locks. I became quite adept as a "screw" maker. The material out of which we made the skeleton "screws," files and tin and pieces of light iron and steel, were obtained from the prison machine shop. The locks with which we experimented were stolen from different parts of the prison.

I even made a skeleton "screw" to open our cell door. I was so proud of that piece of work that I, contrary to Slim's orders, made the mistake of telling about it and exhibiting it to several cons; one of whom, though I didn't know it, was a stool pigeon. The stool, Sandy Phillips, immediately communicated with the warden. Slim and I were haled before the prison court to answer to the charge of attempting a jail delivery. We denied that we had been planning a break. Why should we, two short term men with only a month or two before us, plan a jail delivery, we protested?

The warden then produced the evidence, the key which unlocked our cell door. He had searched our cell while we were at work in the shops. He found all the keys that I had made, some of which fitted various shop doors throughout the prison. The warden

had the goods on us, and since he was as hard and as unyielding as chilled steel, the kind of a mug who never overlooked a delinquency of any kind, he handed the evidence to the county district attorney and told that dignitary to burn us up.

HE wanted to make an example of us and the D.A. proceeded to carry out his wishes with a lightninglike rapidity. Within forty-eight hours we were indicted and removed to the county jail to await trial on the charge of "conspiring to break jail." A few days later we went up for trial. Slim pleaded guilty and told the court that I knew absolutely nothing about the keys which had been found in our cell. Immediately the district attorney was on his feet denouncing Slim.

"Your honor," he cried, "this is all a frame-up on the part of this old criminal to save his young associate. The ruse is almost as old as crime itself. Your honor knows from experience that when more than one criminal is involved some member of the gang takes the rap. That is what this defendant is trying to do."

"Is there any evidence in the case," the judge asked, "that definitely links the defendant James Harrington with this conspiracy to break jail?"

The D.A. had plenty of evidence and he lost no time in submitting it to the court. First came the warden, who swore that he and the principal keeper had found the keys and the key-making apparatus in my bunk. Then came the stool pigeon, Sandy Phillips, to swear that I had shown him the key that unlocked our cell door. Moreover, the snitch added, that I had told him that I had made the cell skeleton "screw."

His testimony put the kibosh on Slim's efforts to take the rap and turn me up, so we withdrew the plea and stood trial. The jury convicted us without leaving the box, and the judge sentenced Slim and me to three years and six months.

I was loaded for bear when we got back to the Big House. I wanted revenge upon the person of Sandy Phillips for his treachery. But Slim said no.

"If we ever run across him outside we'll take our revenge," he said, "but not behind these walls, Jimmy. Just charge the affair up to experience, son. It ought to be a great lesson to you."

Sandy Phillips, who was doing fifteen years, received a pardon for his treachery three or four days after we returned to prison. Th experience with Mr. Phillips certainly taught me a great lesson. Thereafter I never confided in any crook whom I didn't know intimately. In the years that followed I learned, much to my amazement by the way, that around fifty percent of the sons of the underworld were rats at heart.

CHAPTER V

The Jewelry Job

MY first six years in the underworld were decidedly unprofitable. A more imaginative young man might have quit the cock-eyed life after that three years and six months term that I got for making a few skeleton keys. Six years and six months in the Big House. And I hadn't a nickel to show for all those long, dreary, monotonous days and nights.

I was a criminal with a record, and yet I hadn't stolen a dollar. Naturally I was determined to make up for lost

time when I got my dogs on *terra firma* again. Bible Back felt pretty much the same as I did, and so when we were released from Sing Sing we went to work immediately looking for a job that would produce plenty coin.

The first job that we found didn't appeal to me at all, for it seemed like an uncommonly risky one. Bible Back himself said it was risky.

"But that's where the big money is," he said. "There's no money in the easy jobs, and if we're going to jeopardize our lives and liberty we might just as well take a big chance. If we win we've got something, and if we lose we have lost trying for something big."

This first job was a big city job, a jewelry store on the main business thoroughfare that was patrolled at all hours of the night by the police of the city and by Pinkerton watchmen. The safe was in full view of the street and a big incandescent hung directly over it.

How Bible Back ever expected to knock off that safe I didn't know. He had no idea himself how the job could be pulled off when we first tabbed it, but he was sure that we would find a way around all the obstacles.

"I can't even see how you're going to get into the joint, Slim," I said.

"It does look kind of tough, Jimmy," he replied.

That was our first problem getting into the joint. We couldn't make an entrance through the front door because the Pinkerton men and the city bulls prowled that street almost every minute of the night. I was leary. I didn't want to go right back to prison after serving those six years and six months.

I tried to talk Slim out of taking such a desperate chance. I suggested

that we pick something easy for the first job, but he wouldn't listen to me. We would solve all the problems one by one, he said, and when we took that jewelry we would be well paid for all our trouble. We spent three weeks looking over the proposition, figuring out this plan and that—none of which appealed to me at all. Finally old Bible Back hit the nail on the head.

"Jimmy," he said, "if we can get in the place without a tumble we can pull the job and make a getaway without a tumble."

I thought he was bugs, for an explosion in that store would shake out the huge plate glass windows. But he wasn't going to blow the safe, he said. He was going to use a can opener on it.

"We'll take her from the back, son," he explained. "It's a big pete, and we can work on the back of it without being seen from the street."

That sounded feasible.

"But how are you going to get into that place without a tumble?" I asked.

"I've worked that out too," he said. "We'll go in through the candy store next door and tunnel through the wall. We can turn off the candy store door with a skeleton screw."

"But what about those prowling Pinkerton men and the city bulls?" I asked.

"A fire alarm will take care of those mugs," he smiled. "We'll plug that fire box at the corner and when the engines arrive every copper in the neighborhood will beat it to the corner. When they do we'll make an entrance to the candy store and go to work."

The plan worked like a charm. When the fire engines arrived every Pinkerton man and city copper went down the street hell bent for election, and Slim and I went into the candy

store with a skeleton key. We began the laborious task of tunneling through the walls of the candy store into the jewelry store.

That was where Slim made his first serious mistake. He had calculated that it would take us approximately two hours to dig a hole through those walls. It took us three hours, despite the fact that we worked without a let-up. We were so tired when we finally got into the jewelry store that we had to lay off half an hour to catch our breath.

Then came the job on the big pete. Ye gods, what labor! Never in all my days, not even in prisons, did I ever work as I did that night. Digging through the walls was bad enough and heartbreaking enough, but cutting out the back of that big pete was terrible.

The haul, however, paid us for our trouble. There was seventy-five thousand in cash, and a hundred and fifty in diamonds and jewels and precious stones. So far so good. We had the swag, but could we get away with it? No crook ever has much trouble coping the loot. Seldom is he caught while committing a crime. It's on the getaway that nearly all the boys are nailed to the cross.

Fortunately for us we could plant the loot in our pockets since we had taken nothing but cash and jewels. We crawled through the hole into the candy store and cleaned up before making an attempt to breeze out on the street. My knees were knocking and my heart was racing with the suspense and the perspiration was running down my back.

A PINKERTON man came to the front door and rattled the lock.

We tiptoed to the front of the store when the Pink departed. Across the street a city bull was hopping in

and out of doorways, trying the locks. When he disappeared we prepared to duck out of the candy store. Slim stuck the skeleton key in the lock and opened the door and in another second we had locked the door and were out on the sidewalk. At that moment a Pinkerton watchman bobbed out of a doorway some forty or fifty yards down the street and headed toward us.

"Easy now, Jimmy. Don't get rattled," Slim whispered.

"He's got us," I murmured. "He saw us come out of the joint."

"Keep your mouth shut and I'll handle him," Slim said. He took a firm grip on his gun.

I was scared stiff. I dropped behind Slim. The Pink came on up the street with his hand on his right hip as though he were preparing to draw his gun. I wanted to run, but it seemed that I had lost all power of movement. A gunfight was imminent, I thought. The Pink was a big, husky-looking fellow.

"Pull yourself together and try to act natural," Slim said as the watchman neared us.

"Okay!" I gasped.

"And don't pull that gun regardless of what happens." He grabbed my arm and squeezed it.

"Okay!" I said.

"Well! Well!" Slim chuckled as we pulled up in front of the Pinkerton bull. "You're just the man that we're looking for. You're a Pinkerton watchman, are you not, sir?"

"Yeah, that's what I am," the bull grunted and surveyed us suspiciously, "and—"

"I'm Mr. Carrington," Slim continued, handing him a card. "My manager telephoned me a little while ago that he was not sure that he had locked our safe, and since we are carrying

considerable money during the holidays I came down to investigate. And that reminds me," Slim added, "I wish that you and the other boys on this beat would drop in on me in a day or two for your Christmas present. Meanwhile I would appreciate it very much if you and the other boys on the beat would give us a little extra attention until after the holidays."

"All right, Mr. Carrington," said the Pinkerton man, "I'll speak to the other boys on the beat and I'll tell them what you said about dropping in on you for their Christmas present."

"Fine! Fine!" said Slim, rattling the bunch of skeleton keys in his hand. "Well," he added turning away, "good night, officer!"

"Good night, Mr. Carrington," said the bull.

"By George!" said Slim. "Did I lock my door?" He jumped into the doorway of the candy store and unlocked and re-locked the door. "Yes," he laughed, "it's locked, all right." He faced the bull and smiled, "I'll say good night again to you, officer."

"Good night, Mr. Carrington."

"My God!" Slim grunted, "I'm glad I picked up that card in the candy store. We might have had a gun battle with that mug if I hadn't had that card with me."

I was on the verge of nervous prostration during those few fleeting moments when life and death hung on balanced scales, and I did not recover my wits until we landed behind the doors of our fence, Percentage Sam.

Sam, who would buy anything from a needle to an anchor, paid us forty-five thousand dollars for the jewels. The hazardous job netted us exactly one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, one of the biggest jewel robberies in the history of American crime.

The Pinkerton watchman, incidentally, lost his job. For a while his superiors entertained the idea that he was "in" on the job. The poor fellow made the mistake of telling his superiors the truth regarding his conversation with us on the sidewalk in front of the plundered jewelry store. He should have known better.

A day or two later Slim and I were on the high seas bound for France. We knew that the Pinkerton Agency would be combing the underworlds of the big cities for clues, and so we thought we'd get out of the country and lie low for a few months. The Pinks, like your Uncle Sam, never give up a case; and in those days they had a sleuth, George S. Dougherty, later the head of the New York City detective bureau, on their pay roll who was a wizard in solving seemingly unsolvable crimes.

That guy Dougherty was one of the greatest detectives that ever lived! I hated his guts, but I cannot deny the truth that he was a most extraordinary manhunter. Slim and I might have remained in the United States if the Pinks hadn't had George S. Dougherty on their pay roll.

We hadn't been in Paris very long before we learned, from the New York *Herald*, that Brother Dougherty was on our trail. The Pinkerton watchman whom we had hornswoggled had identified a rogues gallery picture of Slim. There was, so said the *Herald*, a reward of five thousand bucks for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the burglars who had looted the exclusive Brown, Starr and Sanderson jewelry store.

The news didn't alarm us particularly, for we had an ironclad alibi. That alibi had been framed before we knocked off the jewelry store. Harry

Tomkinson and Eddie Murphy, Philadelphia saloon keepers, had been tipped by us to swear that we were in Philadelphia on the night of December 17th. We knew they would perjure themselves like gentlemen if it came to a show-down. Slim always framed an alibi before he turned off a job.

CHAPTER VI

Fall Money

AFTER four months in France and Italy we returned to the United States by the way of Canada. We had cultivated some worthwhile friends in Europe. On the way across I had got very well acquainted with a young American musician, Carlo Hemingway, who was an assistant conductor at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. Through Carlo I met some very nice ladies, opera singers.

I had represented myself to all those nice folks as a young man who had recently inherited a bundle of dough from a rich father. I wined and dined them all from sunup to sundown in the hotels of France and Italy, and thus won the reputation of being a spender from away back.

Bible Back, however, did not approve of my antics. I should save my money, he said. I should always have "fall money" laid away in the event of a pinch, so that I could bribe crooked cops and pay for the service of good lawyers. He insisted that I provide for those inevitable emergencies, and he refused to operate with me if I didn't take his advice. I should get in touch with my folks, he said. I should take care of them and then when I got in a jam they would take care of me. They, after all, were the only people in the world upon whom I could de-

pend when I fell into the hands of the law.

"You're a sap," Slim said, "if you don't invest your dough in real estate. Buy your mother a home somewhere, and then if you need dough in a hurry to square a rap you can slap a mortgage on it and raise it."

And so I bought Mom a country home. Mom, of course, wanted to know where I had corralled the bank roll. I told her I was a promoter. I promoted prize fights, wrestling matches, hockey matches, horse races and similar sporting propositions.

Mom fell for the promoter stuff, but my wise sisters and brothers did not. But they never said anything. My Uncle Hughey never went for my stall, either. One day he told me that I was doing pretty well for a twenty-five year old youngster. Not many twenty-five year old youngsters, he said, had been able to buy their mothers a country home with two hundred acres of land and a private lake. I ignored the intimation and admitted that I had been doing pretty well by myself.

I have indelible memories of the first summer that I spent with Mom and the family at the home in the Schwangunk Mountains for it was up there that I met a girl who knocked me off my pins, a girl who was far above the rest of the dames I had met. But it was not a case of love at first sight. At least I don't think it was on my part.

The young lady was a secretary to the Mother Superior at a girl's camp some three or four miles down the road from our home. I had seen her time and again on her way to and from the post office that summer. She had to pass our house to get to the post office. There was something about her that caught my eye. She was of middle

height, around five feet seven inches, and weighed, I should say, around a hundred and twenty-five pounds. She was a brunette, a very good looking brunette. My kid sister Florence first had called my attention to her one day as she passed the house with a gang of young children.

"What a lovely looking girl!" Florence said.

"A knockout," I said. "I'd like to know her, and I'll bet she's as nice as she looks."

I made up my mind that I'd meet her some way or other and meet her I did, sooner than I expected. One morning she had a blowout on her way to the post office. I was Johnny-on-the-spot when I saw the car stop in front of our house. I dashed down to the road and volunteered to change the tire for her.

It was the first tire I had ever tried to change and the job proved plenty tough. But I changed it and the young lady, Marion Connely, was most grateful. I introduced myself and expressed the hope that we would be able to get together sometime. She smiled knowingly and drove away without replying to me. She was a strange young lady, I thought, an upstage young lady.

That afternoon Mom and I were on the road in front of the lake when she came by with the Mother Superior. My heart gave a leap when the car stopped and the angelic nun, Mother Elizabeth, beamed on Mom and me and proceeded to thank me for changing the tire for Miss Connely. The conversation concluded with an invitation to Mom and me to visit the camp.

I was delighted. That night Mom, Florence and Uncle Hughey and I drove up to the camp. Miss Connely was still reticent and reserved, but

when she did utter an occasional word her voice thrilled me. It was one of those deep, throaty voices with emotional cadences. I recited a few of Robert Services's and Tennyson's poems to the kids that night in front of the huge fireplace of the recreation hall. I made a hit with the kids, some twenty-five or thirty girls ranging in ages from eleven or twelve to sixteen.

I got on well, too, with Mother Elizabeth and the rest of the nuns. They all thought that Mr. Harrington was a very nice young man. I must confess that there were times when I felt ill at ease among those saintly nuns and their charges, and I frequently wondered what they would say and do if they learned that the "nice Mr. Harrington" was a burglar. It was the first time that my history annoyed me.

One night when my sister Florence played the piano for the girls, Mother Elizabeth asked Miss Connelly to sing. She responded with Schubert's "Ava Maria." She possessed a high, well-pitched dramatic soprano voice which surprised me. I had heard some professional singers sing the "Ava Maria," but none of them put it over any better than Miss Connelly.

"She can sing, can't she?" I whispered in my sister's ear.

Florence thought she had a "marvellous voice." Mother Elizabeth grew confidential with Mom that night. She told my mother that Marion had been with her since she was a little ten year old tot. Her father, a rich man once, had drunk himself into the grave. Her mother had died while bringing her into the world. Marion, Mother Elizabeth added, was a most precocious girl. She spoke French and Italian and was an accomplished pianist. She was a girl, Mother Elizabeth said, who would

go far in life if she got the opportunity. My mother thought so, too. I was of the same opinion. Any girl with a voice such as she possessed might scale the height of the singing world, I told myself.

BEFORE the summer was over I was madly in love with Miss Marion Connelly. She was the light at the end of the trail for me. I was a criminal with a record and she was a good, clean girl. I pulled up and looked myself over and asked myself a flock of questions. I realized what would happen if I made a strong play for her. Some day some copper would come along and tip me off, and then there would be big front page scandal about the burglar who was making a play for the girl from the convent. A scandal of that kind might ruin her.

I know that she liked me and she knew, I was sure, that I liked her. I gave substantial evidence of my interest in her when I volunteered to arrange an audition for her, through my friend Carlo Hemingway, at the Metropolitan Opera House.

The idea of an audition at the great Metropolitan thrilled her. Did I know any of the great singers there? Did I know opera? Was I interested in music? We got a little closer to each other when she learned that I was interested in music and had connections and friends at the world's greatest opera house.

She was calling me Jimmy and I was calling her Marion before I quit the country that fall to return to New York to meet Bible Back and to arrange an audition for her. Afraid that I might encounter some copper, I gave her a wide berth when she came to New York with Mother Elizabeth for the audition. I kept in the background

until I had heard from Carlo. He said she had the finest natural voice that he had ever heard, and he predicted a successful career for her if she could be trained and coached for three or four years.

"What do you mean by could?" I asked him.

One had to have money, he explained, to study singing. He had spoken to her and Mother Elizabeth about her career. He had told her that he thought she would develop into a big opera singer if she could finance the three or four years of study.

"And what did she say to that?" I asked.

"Well," said Carlo, "I thought she was going to faint when I told her it would cost around ten thousand dollars. She hasn't got any money, the poor kid."

Ten grand didn't mean any more to me than ten cents. I had the dough in my kick and I wanted to give it to the young lady. But I had a strong hunch that she wasn't the sort who would accept money from a comparative stranger. I was in a quandary trying to figure out a scheme by which I could finance her training.

Carlo himself solved the problem of how I might finance Marion's career without letting her know it.

"It's quite common," he said, "for a conductor or a singing teacher to assume the expense of a promising singer's career. We simply sign her to a contract which gives us a cut on her earnings for a period of ten years after she has made her debut. If you want to put up the money I can tell her that I'll take her in hand and train her if she'll sign a long term contract with me. She need never know that you are the angel, Jimmy."

That was swell, but I didn't like the

idea of his tying her up on the contract which would give him a percentage of her earnings for ten years. So I consulted an underworld lawyer. That sharpshooter found a way to keep Carlo from taking any cuts. He drew up an agreement between Carlo and me in which Carlo waived all rights in Marion's career and her earnings.

I WAS ready for the road after I had framed everything for the young lady's career. I hit the road with some definite ambitions for the future. I didn't intend to crook all my life. No, indeed! I planned to corral a couple of hundred thousand dollars and retire and settle in some kind of a legitimate business. I made up my mind that I'd get the dough I needed and get started in the business, whatever it might be, before Marion won recognition as a great artist.

Bible Back and I took a scouting trip through the Middle West, lining up five or six sweet looking jobs, and immediately thereafter we prepared to knock off the county treasurer's office at Johnsonville.

Taxes were literally rolling into the county treasurer's office, so Slim and I figured that the job would be good for at least seventy-five thousand bucks. We tabbed the joint for three or four days. The location was by no means ideal. There were homes on both sides of the building, but Slim thought that if we used a can opener on the safe and vault we could pull off the job without arousing the occupants of those homes.

When a mob of crooks finds a rich looking job they are immediately plagued by the thought that there must be something wrong with it. Slim and I thought there was something wrong with the Johnsonville job when we saw the vault and safe. We just couldn't

understand how it was that nobody had taken a shot at it, because the vault and safe were of the period of Noah's Ark. They were at least fifty years old.

"It's damn queer," Slim said, "that none of the boys have hit this joint."

I agreed with Slim. Well, queer or not queer, we got our tools together and headed for Johnsonville. We took a train to Spartan Junction, from which point we had to go down a narrow gauge railroad for five miles and then inland for a mile and a quarter. We walked the five miles to the Johnsonville station so as to avoid being seen by anybody.

We arrived at the station around one-thirty in the morning, and sat down on a pile of railroad ties to have a smoke before going up town. We figured on getting to work around two o'clock, at which hour all good citizens are putting on the snore. It was a swell night for the snore, too. Halfway between the station and the town we heard shooting. The shots, we decided, were going off in the town. We stopped and listened. They seemed to be getting nearer by the second.

"I think we better double on our tracks back to the railroad," Slim said, "for I have a hunch that something's up."

We wheeled and went back toward the station as fast as our legs would carry us. Meanwhile the shooting was becoming more distinct, indicating that the shooters, whoever they were, were coming toward us. At the railroad Slim told me to hop into a box car and shut the doors, while he, from behind a pile of railroad ties, would try to get an earful of what was going on. A few minutes after I got into the car I heard somebody pass at breakneck speed. When I heard a medley of voices I knew that a manhunt was on. Presently I heard the posse roaring:

"They went down the track, Sheriff! They went down the track!"

The yells were punctuated with curses and all the while the shooting never ceased for a moment. The medley burst into a crescendo, finally. I listened with apprehensive ears and a pounding heart as I crouched in the corner of the empty box car. Suddenly I heard somebody shout:

"Search them box cars, boys, they mighta went in one o' them!"

I went to my hip for my gat when I heard that crack. I had a bag of tools in my possession, and I couldn't stand for a pinch in that state—which gave a burglar ten years who was caught with tools on his person.

CONTINUE THIS TRUE STORY NEXT WEEK

"I NEVER HAD SUCH A SMOOTH SHAVE"

says **PEPPER MARTIN** praising Probak

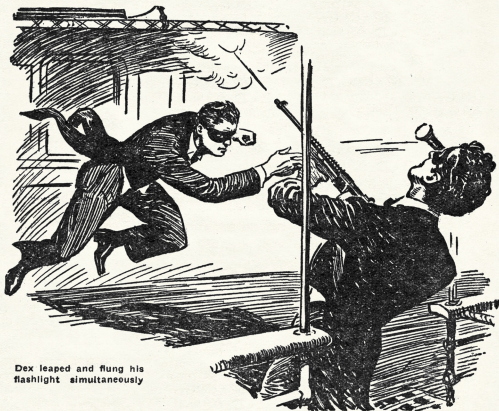
DEAR PEPPER MARTIN: Your good word for Probak is appreciated. And now we'd like to tell you about Probak Junior, the marvelous new double-edge razor blade that combines shaving comfort with an extremely low price. Think of it! 25 keen, smooth-shaving blades, uniform in quality, for only 59¢. Probak Junior is automatically tempered, honed and stropped to produce a shaving edge that removes even the toughest beard swiftly, cleanly and with perfect comfort.



Probak Junior is a product of Gillette and fits all Gillette and Probak razors.

NOW!
PROBAK JUNIOR
25 BLADES FOR 59¢
Also trial package of 4 blades for 10¢ at your dealer

MURDER for MILLIONS



Dex leaped and flung his flashlight simultaneously

A Complete Short Novel

By Richard Howells Watkins

Out of Newport Sailed Five Masked Millionaires — to Win Back by Plunder the Fortunes They Had Lost

CHAPTER I

Murder on Schedule

THE tall man in the speedboat glanced casually at his watch. Then he flicked a hand toward a break in the rugged cliffs of Newport. Instantly the pilot throttled down

and turned the wheel. The mahogany boat, slowing, swung toward the Rhode Island coast, and with the motor muttering in restrained power slid smoothly through the narrow cleft in the rocky wall into a small, cuplike cove and brought up alongside a landing float at the foot of a flight of steps cut out of the living cliff.

This float was the only sign of living occupancy in the high-walled basin.

The tall man sprang out onto the landing stage. No more than thirty

years old, he handled his huge body with easy precision. He watched the pilot fumble a half hitch in mooring, and his slate-colored eyes, small in close contrast with a heavy forehead, massive nose and solid, crag-like jaw, gleamed in sardonic amusement. "Not nervous, are you, Cort?"

Cortlandt Arkwright, 3rd, the pilot, straightened up. The wrinkles on his damp, slanting forehead deepened in perplexity and in something more than perplexity.

"Why do you take on this game, Ramsay?" he muttered. "You aren't broke—not by a good two hundred million—and yet—"

"You underestimate my little nest-egg," the tall man replied. "It isn't what I possess; it's what another man possesses."

"You're risking—"

"Everything—for something," the tall man broke in. "Why not—if I find risk entertaining? The world's steadily going to pot—our world." Thin-lipped, he smiled. "Meanwhile I gamble for power."

The peculiar emphasis on that last word silenced Arkwright. The tall man was glancing again at his watch.

"We're due now at Ballantyne's," he said. "We must reach our—ah—possible recruit—before the sheriff does. Handle your job right, Cort, and you'll score for your country in many another chukker of the Internationals."

As he began to mount the steps that spark of cynical amusement once more showed deep in the tall man's eyes.

"For your country!" he said, turning a mocking glance back at Arkwright. "And I'll plug along for me—Ramsay, that crude and unmannerly climber in sacred Newport."

Hugh van Lennep Ramsay's manner suddenly changed.

"Have you those two shells handy?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Any questions?"

"No. But—my polo may be a safer game than your power," Arkwright asserted in a thin, strained voice.

For the first time Ramsay laughed.

"Safer!" he repeated scornfully. "Come on! Your fortune in eight figures lies ahead."

Arkwright's handsome face became transfixed with sudden, moist-lipped greed. The two men moved upward.

At the top of the cliff Hugh van Lennep Ramsay smiled broadly. Marshall Ballantyne, a plump, ruddy man, was standing there awaiting them.

"Marsh, old fellow!" Ramsay cried.

"I hope you came here because you couldn't wait to hear my little proposition."

"Correct," Ballantyne agreed. "I couldn't wait to hear this confidential offer. It will have to be murder or worse for me to turn it down."

Covertly the slate-hard eyes of Ramsay appraised the round little man.

"My offer will restore the famous old Ballantyne family to wealth," he said.

For an instant Ballantyne's good-natured face puckered up in some doubt. Then, trotting beside the two taller men, he showed the way through ill-kept grounds to a stone-flagged terrace outside the southern face of the much photographed, dignified old Ballantyne residence.

He opened a French window, turned to face them again.

"The bank and other creditors have nabbed most of the furniture," he said cheerfully. "But so far they haven't got to my gunroom."

ARKWRIGHT, the polo player, halted on the terrace.

"I'll take a turn around outside while Hugh's jawing you, Marsh," he said, touching his forehead with his handkerchief. "Save me a drink."

He strolled away as Ramsay and Ballantyne went in.

Once out of sight Arkwright's pace quickened. He circled the house, moving quietly through rank grass that had once been a beautiful lawn. Convinced that no one was near the house, he mounted a rising slope. From this height he looked through an opening in the shrubbery toward the distant gates of the estate.

A man wrapped in a light motoring coat with the brim of his Panama turned down over his eyes was standing against the wall beside the driveway, just inside the iron gates. The instant he saw Arkwright he raised his hand over his head in a quick gesture. O.K. Their lookout was on the job. There was no one near the Ballantyne estate.

The man in the Panama turned toward the gate and Arkwright, satisfied, made his way back to the terrace. He entered the gunroom by the French window. Just inside he stopped.

The rubicund young master of that house of vanished grandeur was on his feet in front of Hugh Ramsay, who lounged on the arm of a chair.

Ballantyne's face was redder than usual—the scarlet of wrath. He was shaking his clenched fist at Ramsay.

Quite unmoved, the big man glanced toward Arkwright, who nodded and closed the window behind him.

"So that's it!" Ballantyne was crying. "I half suspected—but nothing like this! That's why you're worming around among my crowd with your loans and your—"

He jerked his head around toward Arkwright; then pointed a finger trembling with anger at Ramsay.

"Cort, this big crook—" he began.

Hugh Ramsay lifted himself swiftly off the chair with a push of his huge hands. He swung a long arm around Marsh Ballantyne, enveloping him in a grip that lifted the plump little man off the floor.

"Take your time," Ramsay said over his shoulder to Arkwright. Heedless of Ballantyne's shouts he placed his other hand over his captive's throat, paralyzing his utterance without exerting enough pressure to mark the flesh.

"I need your grounds far more than I need your services, little man," he murmured. "And you know or might suspect something."

Cort Arkwright had not moved.

Ramsay's eyes, abruptly the bitter, glittering blue of an iceberg in the sun, bored into the eyes of his accomplice in crime. In them was terrible, compelling power. Arkwright came to life. He walked over to one of the guncases and took from it a single-barreled shotgun. He drew from his pocket two shells. He looked at them carefully. One was loaded with buckshot; the other was charged only with powder and wadding. He put that one back into his pocket.

With steady hands he slipped the buckshot cartridge into the gun. Then he approached the two locked figures. His face was expressionless.

At the sight of the gun the eyes of the helpless Ballantyne bulged in horror. He fought with convulsive and desperate fury. But in the mighty grip of Hugh Ramsay his efforts were of no more avail than the squirmings and contortions of a rabbit in the coils of a snake.

And suddenly he realized this. He

ceased to wriggle. His body stiffened; his eyes fastened upon Arkwright.

Quick to take advantage, Ramsay released the grip of his right hand. Instantly and almost gently he hit Ballantyne with his fist at the base of the jaw, almost under the ear. The man went limp.

Ramsay sat him down in a straight chair. Arkwright bent in front of him. Ramsay opened his jaws.

Arkwright rested the stock of the gun on the floor. Then he thrust the muzzle of the gun into Ballantyne's open mouth.

For an instant Hugh Ramsay surveyed the man's position, the gun and the room with critical care. Then he nodded.

"Go ahead!" he commanded and stepped back.

Arkwright pressed the trigger. The gun blared.

Marshall Ballantyne continued to sit in the chair. But the top of his head was almost blown off.

CHAPTER II

A Billionaire Is Balked

PENDEXTER LLOYD fidgeted with his unlit pipe. He looked out the window at the sparkling water of Narragansett Bay.

Many a captain of industry would have parted with a small fortune to sit where he sat at the moment. It would have paid.

Alexander Somerville, conservatively reputed to be the world's only billionaire, invited few men to face him across his desk in the library of his unassuming Newport residence. And of none of these visitors had he ever asked a favor.

But Dex was unimpressed. His own family, as noted in America as the

Somerville line, had lost its wealth in the panic of 1907. Dex himself was rarely more than a few thousand ahead in his roving career as a civil engineer in uncivil places. But right now all he asked of life was a good chance to interrupt with a polite refusal the urgings of old Somerville.

The tall, fragile old man with a narrow, almost peaked gray face kept black eyes upon his caller. The eyes were almost feverishly bright.

"Did it ever occur to you, Pendexter, that your talents in the service of the underdog might be needed here in the old home of your family?" he had asked.

"I always thought the Newport crowd could take care of themselves," Dex Lloyd replied rather dryly. "I—"

"They can't!" The leaden-faced billionaire, taut as a steel shroud, leaned toward him. "The young men of families ruined in this long depression are annihilating themselves," he declared. "They are rotting away!"

He tapped upon the desk top with clawlike, agitated fingers.

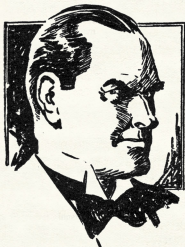
"They're scattering their last resources in reckless frivolity or gambling wildly to regain their wealth."

"I haven't the makings of a Y. M. secretary, sir," Dex assured him earnestly. He would have risen, but Somerville, with a leveled, fleshless finger, restrained him.

"Half a dozen of these young idiots are following the lead of a spendthrift, foolish young man—Hugh van Lennep Ramsay. He isn't of Newport by birth or family, but he exerts an unpleasant influence over them. Although wealthy and untouched by the depression the man is hysterical—hysterical! Do you know what he is doing? He is selling short many thousands of shares of stock in companies in which I am

interested. Absurd. The market will rise—will wipe him out utterly—quite without a move on my part. But meanwhile he corrupts our youth with his pernicious leadership."

"HE won't last a long time," Dex Lloyd reassured Newport's billionaire patron saint, and rose. "And, speaking of time I've—" "Sit down! Doesn't it mean any-



RAMSAY

thing to you that these young men of your class are throwing away position, money, dignity, everything, in dancing to the tune that Ramsay pipes?"

"Not a th—"

"I have reason to know that that Arkwright boy—the polo player—lost a hundred thousand in one day in Havana on horseracing—horseracing! Stuyvesant Priestley—son of old Bainbridge—has practically obliterated a dwindling fortune that has been the Priestleys' since Colonial days in a silly fling in the wheat market. Frederick Hurlingham and Melville Cross—wild, idle young men—desperate for money—"

Upon a door on one side of the

spacious, book-lined room someone tapped gently.

Alexander Somerville looked at it in astonishment, as if he had not realized that it existed. And Dex Lloyd followed his glance, quite as curiously. He knew that that door, one of two soundproof panels, led to Somerville's famous Communications Room, subject of countless though ill-informed magazine articles—the room wherein were crowded news stock and bond tickers, direct telephones, telegraph and cable lines and a short wave radio transmitter. These instruments, and his men on the other ends, kept Alexander Somerville in instant and unceasing contact with every political and financial center of the five continents. He had not been in downtown New York for five years.

But what Dex wondered about was the vast importance of news that had caused someone in the billionaire's household to venture to interrupt him. Somerville was not accustomed to interruptions.

The billionaire touched a button on his desk.

The door opened; a blank-faced secretary crossed the room with swift strides, laid a typewritten slip before his master, and vanished.

Somerville picked it up, frowning. He shot a quick glance at Dex.

"And there is a young gentleman with an over-burdened estate—a neighbour of mine"—he gestured to westward—"who has the effrontery to gamble with the Toronto mining crowd in the hope of rehabilitating himself. Marshall Ballantyne!" He kept his eyes on the slip of paper.

"I know him well—I came to Newport to see him," Dex said. "He is broke—but cheerful rather than desperate."

Slowly Alexander Somerville pushed the paper aside.

"Ballantyne's manservant reports him killed—just a minute ago, in a gun-cleaning accident," the billionaire said with ironical emphasis on that last word. "I distrust these gunroom fatalities. The unfortunate young fool killed himself."

Dex Lloyd leaped to his feet.

"The hell you say!" he shouted at his startled host. "Marsh Ballantyne never killed himself—not Marsh!"

Swiftly he swung on his heel and darted toward the door.

"Wait!" cried the old man, half rising from his desk. "You have not heard what I wish to say—"

"I'll see you later!" Dex retorted and rushed from the room.

CHAPTER III

A Leap in Time

THE wrought iron gates of the Somerville grounds were open when Dex Lloyd reached them. He rushed through and turned to the left. He ran hard. He had covered more than three-quarters of the distance separating the entrances of the two nearby estates when he saw a powerful roadster, a cream-colored car of sixteen cylinders, parked by the side of the road. A man in a down-turned Panama hat was looking at him through the small rear window of the luxurious machine.

The iron gates of the Ballantyne house were closed and locked. Sure of that, and equally sure that the estate no longer possessed a lodge-keeper, he moved past the gates and drew back, gathering himself together for a run and leap to grasp the top of the stone wall. It was no barrier at all for an active man.

But instead of the leap he whirled suddenly, instincts shrieking of danger.

With a hum of fast-driven motor the roadster he had passed was swerving from the road. It was shooting directly toward him. It came like a hurtling projectile.

Fast as he was, and ready as he was, Dex Lloyd could not dodge it. One broad, flaring fender was sweeping along close to the wall; he could not flatten out against the stonework. All he had time to do was to leap mightily, feet first, over bumper and radiator. His body slid along the long, polished motor hood.

His shoes struck the windshield with a crash; he folded up against it as if he had jumped out of a second story window. The shock was stunning.

For an instant, as the car raced on, close to the wall, he straightened out and floundered on the slippery painted surface. With both hands he clutched fruitlessly to save himself. Inevitably he was sliding off.

Even as he lost his balance the driver of the car, slowing, reached around outside the starred surface of the safety glass in the windshield. The man laid hold of one of Dex's feet and tried to drag him off. It was the grip that Dex, without anything to hold on to, could not resist.

The resistance came from elsewhere. As he wrenched at Dex the driver must also have jerked his wheel. With Dex's body blocking his view he could not know just where he was going, but he could see the wall on his left.

The car, swerving sharply toward the road, crashed into one of the row of small maple trees. Before the momentum of the machine the little tree went down, The car itself, with bumper smashed and right fender crumpled, was almost halted by the impact.

Dex himself was flung forward, into the scant branches of the maple. Though they broke his fall somewhat they stung like whips. When he crawled to his knees the roadster, with right wheel wobbling crazily, was limping on down the road.

Staring after it, Dex saw again the Panama hat at the rear window, but of the face under it he could make out nothing.

"Drunken fool!" he raged. "Just stop and I'll—"

The car had slowed, but suddenly it picked up speed again, despite the bent axle. To Dex's ears came the shrill wail of a police siren.

The sound recalled him to his mission; he had no time to waste on drunken drivers. He limped toward the wall, mustered up what energy was left in his aching body and managed to get hold of the coping. It took all his will power to pull himself up. On the top he lay flat on his stomach to look down into the road.

The cream-colored roadster had vanished. The police car with the screaming siren was coming up fast in the other direction.

"That blasted idiot must have been bending down when the car swerved—I didn't see his face above the wheel," Dex recalled. "Maybe he was so tight he passed out for an instant."

On stinging feet he dropped inside the grounds. As he got up he heard a rattle at the gate and caught sight of a white-faced old manservant, Marsh Ballantyne's one luxury, opening the gates.

The police car shot into the entrance before Dex could hail the man. The patrolman at the wheel braked hard, pulled the old servant onto the running-board and started with gears screaming up the grass-grown drive-

way. Plainly the police regarded a call to the Ballantyne house as a serious matter.

Dex followed the machine with his pipe clenched in his teeth, his face white and set.

The double shock of being hit by a car and then flung off was much worse than the bruises he had suffered. But his disciplined body was quickly coming back, under control; his pace was fast when he reached the house.

CHAPTER IV

Two Gentlemen Collide

MARSHALL BALLANTYNE was stretched out on the floor of the little gun room. A single-barreled shotgun, stock toward his feet, lay beside him.

Dex Lloyd's hope that his rotund, cheery old playmate still lived was dispelled by one look at him. A charge of buckshot had literally obliterated the top of Ballantyne's head.

There were cleaning rags and an open bottle of gun oil on a low bench near the body.

The young police chauffeur stood staring with fascinated, awestruck eyes at the corpse.

His features a trifle pinched, Dex Lloyd stepped out of the gun room through a French window and paused on the terrace overlooking the bay. Thoughtfully he drew in a deep breath of the mild, salty air. Then he turned to listen to two men answering the first questions of a perspiring and apologetic detective who was manifestly afraid of millionaires.

One of the two being interrogated was Cort Arkwright. Only because he had heard the other man give his name, Hugh van Lennep Ramsay, did Rex know him.

It was the massive Ramsay who held his eyes. A self-possessed and forceful personality. Yet Alexander Somerville had described Ramsay as a hysterical young fool who was throwing away a fortune in attempting to "bear" Somerville's companies. Queer.

"Mr. Arkwright and I left Mr. Ballantyne alone in the gun room with the shotgun across his knees," Ramsay was explaining. "We came out through the window and weren't five feet from it when the gun went off inside."

"What did you do, sir?" asked the detective.

"I followed Mr. Arkwright back through the window. You know what we saw. An instant afterward this man of Mr. Ballantyne's—Johnson?—came running in from the cliff."

"What was Johnson doing there?" the plainclothesman inquired somewhat irrelevantly. He glanced over his shoulder at the ghastly pale manservant waiting at a respectful distance.

"I had asked Johnson to see if my speedboat would be safe at the landing stage while we called on some other people. He had gone over to look at it."

The detective digested this, staring at Johnson. Then an idea struck him.

"Johnson saw you both outside here at the time the shot was fired in the gunroom?"

Hugh van Lennep Ramsay shriveled the detective with a white-hot glare.

"Yes, officer," he said tartly. "If it is your thought that Mr. Arkwright and I murdered Mr. Ballantyne, then I may tell you that we were both in plain sight, outside the room, at the moment Mr. Ballantyne died. Any other questions?"

"Sorry, sir," the detective muttered. "Just getting some stuff for the chief—not meanin'—"

"Quite!" snapped Ramsay. He

strolled away. The detective turned hastily toward Johnson.

ARKWRIGHT, following Ramsay, recognized Dex Lloyd and introduced him to Ramsay.

"Sad—this," Ramsay said, shaking hands casually. "Here today and gone tomorrow and so forth. But Marsh was a bit messy about it—unnecessarily so."

Dex Lloyd frowned. "I'm not convinced that Marsh killed himself," he said bluntly. "Marsh was no quitter."

"Quite," agreed Ramsay. "Just one of those distressing accidents, if you say so. But I've a feeling, y'know, that if I'd seen my way clear to lending him another ten thou he'd have been more careful about that trigger."

He would have moved on, but Lloyd did not give way. "Just a moment—" he began.

A hand touched his arm, lightly. He turned and found himself looking down into the face of a girl, strangely familiar and yet strangely different. There were tears in her eyes, but she was smiling with quivering lips.

"Doris!" Dex muttered. "I'd never have recog—"

Doris Hayle's troubled eyes were glistening brightly. "I want to speak to you—about poor Marsh."

Ramsay, who had taken a step toward the girl, drew back.

"Excuse me," he said. "I was about to offer my sympathy in your loss of a good friend, Doris, and also"—he glanced at Dex Lloyd—"to remark that poverty is dangerous. If old Marsh had only taken my advice, as your father is doing, he would not have—he would have hired a man to clean his guns for him."

Dex Lloyd rounded swiftly upon Ramsay.

"Poverty isn't half as dangerous as unpleasant hints—when they are used against a dead man before his friends," he said sternly. "Mr. Ramsay, anyone who suggests that Marsh Ballantyne committed suicide is a liar."

"Please!" Doris Hoyle broke in. "Mr. Ramsay is a good friend of my father's. I want to speak to you, Dex."

"I regret to have dragged you into this, however innocently, Doris," the big millionaire said to her. "Perhaps my withdrawal will mend matters."

He turned away.

In another moment Dex found himself walking slowly across the lawn with Doris in the direction of the Hayle grounds, which adjoined the Ballantyne estate.

"Don't quarrel with—with Hugh Ramsay," she whispered. "It—it won't do any good—not to poor Marsh. Marsh didn't kill himself—I'm sure of it, Dex!"

CHAPTER V

A Queer Crusade

HE had not seen this girl for eight years. Then she had been a schoolgirl. Now she was a slender, graceful young woman with eyes a deeper blue than the bay. And her compassion for Marsh Ballantyne was plainly mingled with some more active emotion.

"What happened, Doris?" Dex demanded. "We both know that Marsh and his father and his grandfather all lived by a simple code—face the music! Suicide is absurd. And it's hard to shoot yourself accidentally with a shotgun, you know."

He stared at her, his eyes hard with meaning. But she shook her head.

"No," she said, answering that unspoken question. "I'd believe any-

thing of Ramsay. But neither he nor Cort Arkwright had a thing to do with this. Poor old Johnson ran over to our place after it happened. He told me he saw those two outside when the shot was fired."

Dex Lloyd nodded thoughtfully.

"And there's no motive," the girl went on. "Who'd want to kill a penniless, happy-go-lucky chap like Marsh? He had nothing to be killed for—not even that house. He and Johnson had the bank's permission to stay there till the end of the summer—more as caretakers than anything else."

Again Dex nodded. "Marsh told me he was flat, but he wouldn't take a nickel from me. And yet Ramsay hinted that he'd lent him money and had been asked for more. I can't see—"

"Ramsay may have pressed money on him," the girl interrupted. "He's—He's lent money to lots of once wealthy people in Newport. And he's done more than that. He has spread among some of our old crowd a sort of recklessness—"

"Hullo!" exclaimed Dex, astonished. "That's just what old Somerville himself was telling me."

"It's true!" the girl asserted unhappily. "And not the young men alone. Dex, he has even changed Dad. He has! Some days Dad seems to have lost interest in fussing about with his aquarium and specimens."

"That's queer," Dex conceded. He knew of old the consuming interest of Rutherford Hayle in marine life.

"I don't know just what's happened but Dad's doing something with our money—buying stocks on margin, Dex. And Hugh Ramsay told me, as a joke of course, that if Dad's speculations failed he'd give me a job that I'd be in no position to refuse."

Dex scowled. He had seen and disliked the look in Ramsay's eyes when they had fallen on her.

"Urging your father to buy—yet he's selling stocks himself. Not quite what you'd call consistent. Is your father in deep?"

"As deep as he can be," the girl confided. "We've about a hundred thousand left, or had the last time Dad told me." Her little laugh was desperate. "Imagine—a hundred thousand to run a house on the cliffs at Newport! But Dad—he isn't going to live long, Dex. The doctor says so. And he might not outlast the hundred thousand if he had to turn out of our old house."

THEY walked on, passing through the Ballantyne estate into the Hayle property. Abruptly Dex asked a question:

"Did Marsh mean a great deal to you, Pud—Doris?"

"There hasn't been any wall between our places since I can remember," she answered in a low voice. "I feel as if I'd lost my only brother."

"It's tough, Pudgy," he muttered, gripping her arm tightly. "Old Marsh—Hullo!"

Up the Hayle driveway at a sedate pace was coming the great black limousine of Alexander Somerville, with two sober-faced, dark liveried men on the box. Alone on the rear seat sat Somerville himself. The old billionaire looked frail, inaccessible.

The car passed them and stopped. Inside, in motionless patience, Somerville waited.

"The old man intends to finish an interrupted conversation," Dex decided. "How did he know I was here?"

"He has ways of knowing things. He's worth listening to, Dex."

"You may be right," Dex conceded.

"Look here, do you think you can get Johnson, Marsh's man, over here so I can ask him a couple of quiet questions?"

"I'll bring him if the police will let him go," Doris agreed and departed at once.

The chauffeur and footman descended from the car as Dex approached. The footman opened the door; then both men retreated into the background.

Somerville hit hard, without preliminary.

"You have just seen the end of a fine old American family, young man," he said gravely.

"Just what do you want me to do?" Dex demanded.

Somerville selected his words with care. "This may seem quixotic to you, Pendexter. I would like to free some of these young men from the evil influence of Ramsay. I can do this by tiding them over until life in this country becomes again an existence in which family and tradition mean something."

Coming from anyone else this would seem absolute drivel. But from Alexander Somerville—

"Haven't I given millions to aid other classes—labor—the white collar man? Why should I not also spend a fraction of my fortune on my own people?"

His anxious black eyes peered at Dex. "You, who are of their own crowd, who have proved yourself able in a difficult and venturesome field, would command their respect. You could be my emissary. It would be a most delicate matter to get them to accept my help."

Dex Lloyd suppressed a quiet grin. "It might be managed."

In his eagerness the old man purposely misunderstood.

"You will help, then!" he cried. For the moment he seemed almost happy.

"I'll take a look around town—for more reasons than one," Dex replied crisply. His face was grim and his thoughts were on the mutilated head of Marsh Ballantyne. "What they deserve I will be pleased to see that they get—but it won't be money!"

CHAPTER VI

More Violence

"**S**PLENDID! Splendid!" Somerville exclaimed. "We'll start tonight—you and I. As you remember I give each year a small dinner on the Rhodian. A few more of my friends come aboard later for the musicale. The affair takes place this evening."

The explanation was superfluous. The fame of that annual dinner was widespread.

"I'll approach a few of my own generation who have been—ah—seriously hit," Somerville said. "Poor old Rutherford Hayle, for instance. You must renew your acquaintanceship with such young men as Cortlandt Arkwright, 3rd, Stuyvesant Priestley, Mel—"

Dex was not listening. Quite without reason the shocking death of Ballantyne and his own narrow escape from a somewhat like fate at the hands of an unknown driver had linked themselves in his mind. Was that roadster a getaway car? Had he tried to enter the Ballantyne grounds at the very time murder was being committed?

Dex broke in suddenly on the billionaire. "Has anything else of a violent nature occurred around here lately to

you or your neighbors? Anything at all peculiar?"

Somerville frowned at this digression. "I'm the shining target of every crank in the country but they do not get very far," he answered wearily. "I believe two men who looked like typical thugs did enter my grounds a few days ago. But we are getting off the subject."

Dex nodded. "Returning to it, don't you think that in view of our incomplete plans it might be wise to postpone this musicale? A cold—a touch of flu—something of that sort?"

Alexander Somerville clasped his hands with decision.

"I assure you, Pendexter," he said sternly, "that nothing whatsoever except the most severe illness or the most definite danger would keep me from observing a custom started by my grandfather. Nothing!"

Dex stood and opened the door of the limousine.

"We have that settled, at any rate," he said uncomfortably. "I must return to the Ballantyne place. I'll call on you or telephone later."

Dex had not gone far across the Hayle grounds when he met Doris coming back with Ballantyne's distressed manservant. He laid a sympathetic hand on the shaken old man's shoulder.

"Johnson," he said gently, "did Mr. Ballantyne expect Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Arkwright to call on him in the gunroom this afternoon?"

"He did, sir," Johnson replied. "The furniture in most of this house has—I mean, sir, he preferred the gunroom."

"Was he feeling low?"

"No, sir! Mr. Ballantyne was quite hopeful; I gathered that he expected Mr. Ramsay to offer him some sort of

lucrative position. Mr. Ballantyne is —" his voice caught in his throat. "He was sometimes quite communicative to me, sir."

"Did you receive the two gentlemen?"

Johnson shook his head. "No, sir. Mr. Ballantyne had sent me to town on an errand. They were there when I came back. Mr. Ramsay, who was on the lawn, sent me over to the cliff top to look at his speedboat. I saw both gentlemen out on the terrace at the moment the shot was fired."

With a word of thanks Dex dismissed the man.

Doris Hayle met his glance gravely but did not speak.

"An interesting character, Ramsay," Dex commented dryly. "Too bad his market enmity prevents Alexander the Great from asking him on the Rhodian tonight with the other lads."

"They won't be Mr. Somerville's guests, either," Doris informed him. "Not if you mean Cort Arkwright, Stuyve Priestley and that crowd—they're all going to a cocktail party on Ramsay's schooner, Huvalera. She lies close to the Rhodian in Brenton's Cove."

The intent face of Dex urged her to go on.

"The schooner's small but she is most luxuriously fitted. Ramsay entertains frequently for the little group he has gathered round him."

"At the risk of seeming a social climber I must keep in touch with Ramsay," Dex Lloyd decided. "I'm wondering how—"

"Come on!" said the girl briskly. "Besides a fifty foot yawl that nobody will buy I've a sailing dinghy down in the Cove. We'll reconnoiter!"

Dex Lloyd glanced with quick calcu-

lation at the westering September sun.

"Not quite yet," he said. "I don't want to be considered too pushing by Mr. Ramsay. We'll wait till dusk."

He tucked her hand under his arm and began walking.

"If you haven't taken out your telephone yet, Pudgy, I'll let Somerville know his wild young men won't be eating out of his hand tonight and also that I'm going to be busy—in a quiet way, I hope!"

CHAPTER VII

The Black Tie

THE breeze went down with the sun. Dex Lloyd, despite his bruises, took to the oars. He did not lower the brightly striped sail of the little dinghy.

"We mustn't seem to be trying to avoid attention, Doris," he said. "We don't care who knows we're out for a sail or a drift."

The big yachts in the Cove lay silent and still at their moorings. Colors had been made and their riding lights were lit. Only a few light craft were astir on the water.

"There's the Huvalera," the girl said softly.

With an occasional dip of the oars Dex Lloyd put their boat closer to the schooner. She was big—until he compared her to the Rhodian, Somerville's white steam yacht, a veritable ocean liner which rarely left her moorings.

Both gangways of the Huvalera were down and a couple of seamen and the professional sailing master of the schooner were standing by at the starboard ladder, as if to receive guests. Dex Lloyd looked hard through the smoke of his pipe at the man with four gold stripes on his sleeve. All he could make out was a red, knobby face on

top of a slightly hunched, barrel-like body. And the gold-banded arms were incredibly long and thick.

"Hardly the kind of a sailing master a gentleman like Hugh Ramsay would pick—unless he has hidden qualities that make him useful," Dex commented.

Doris shuddered—and she was not given to shudders.

"I—I don't like him," she whispered.

At that moment a young man in a tail coat that fitted him like a glove thrust himself up the after companion-way of the schooner. For an instant he stood there, with his black bow tie a dot above the white of his stiff bosomed shirt. He looked impatiently toward shore, head jutting forward angrily.

"That's Freddie Hurlingham—he's a beast," murmured the girl. "Killed a woman and injured several others in motor smash-ups—and he got into trouble by forging his uncle's name, too. Oh!"

Doris gurgled with suppressed laughter.

"Freddie—of all people," she whispered. "He's nasty—but always so correct. I would have said he'd rather *die* than wear a black tie with full evening dress."

Dex Lloyd did not share her mirth.

"The get-up of a waiter—or of a person unfamiliar with social usages," he muttered.

"You don't think it means anything, do you?" Doris demanded.

"I reject no crumbs," Dex answered. With sudden decision he knocked out his pipe and then filled it again. "We'd better be getting back. I wonder how Freddie would look peering out the back window of a roadster in a turned-down Panama hat."

WHEN they landed at the club pier, Dex told the girl that he had a few personal matters to attend to in the town. Although her blue eyes rested inquiringly upon his face Doris took her dismissal with good grace and went off immediately toward her roadster.

Dex Lloyd lingered upon the pier.

"Wait a bit," he said to the club boatman, who was preparing to moor the dinghy on the line of small boats. "I may go out in her again."

But he made no move to enter the boat. His eyes were thoughtful. Of a sudden they fell upon an approaching tender—a beautiful, swift, varnished craft that looked far too perfect to exist in salt water. In the bow he made out, as the boat slipped alongside the landing pier, the ramrod-backed Smithers in a high-crowned derby hat. Plainly Somerville's butler had been out assisting the Rhodian's steward with preparations for the night's entertainment.

Dex Lloyd motioned him over as the tender went ruffling back to the steam yacht.

"Half a moment, Smithers," he said, writing rapidly in his notebook. "I'll be obliged if you'll deliver this to your master provided, Smithers—" He looked up into the butler's attentive face—"provided that I do not find time to speak to him in person. Just hold this note until eight o'clock, will you?"

"I understand, sir," said the old man. He placed the note in his pocket, raised his hat respectfully and hurried off the pier.

For twenty minutes, while dusk thickened to blackness, Dex Lloyd did nothing but toy with his pipe. He witnessed the embarkation, in sections, of a famous concert orchestra which had

crossed the continent to play for Mr. Somerville's guests.

The billionaire avoided display, as Dex knew, but he considered no expense excessive when he entertained his friends. And though some of the small group Mr. Somerville had mentioned as his guests were depleted in finances they were, nevertheless, of the first families in the land. Already several tenders similar to the glossy creation in which Smithers had landed were awaiting the ladies and gentlemen to whom Mr. Somerville this night played host. Any one of the little craft cost more than the most expensive motor car.

Truly Mr. Somerville intended that his friends should enjoy themselves.

The Rhodian herself was put in commission some years merely for this one party. The billionaire himself rarely boarded his yacht and never cruised in her.

Dex Lloyd, after a quick look at the twilight sky and another around the crowded anchorage, stepped into Doris's dinghy.

"Good hunting!" he murmured to himself and pulled rapidly away from the pier.

It was now dark enough so that a man in an unlighted small boat could count on being unobserved. The riding lights of the anchored craft shed but a feeble pinhole illumination.

Dex ran no little danger from fast moving motorboats as he swung his oars. He earned the heartfelt curses of a few startled boatmen but neared the Huvalera without being run down. Of a sudden he backed water. A boat that passed him a hundred feet away stopped with grinding reverse gear at the schooner's rail. For only a moment it lingered alongside; then surged off again.

Twice, at a cautious distance, Dex

rowed around the Huvalera, inspecting her deck.

The schooner's skylights were ablaze with the illumination below. Besides her glowing oblongs only two oil lanterns, swinging from forestay and main topping lift, lighted her deck.

A sailor, squatting against the foremast with his arms folded and his head sagging, was the only man visible.

Noiselessly Dex drew alongside the crew gangway on the port side of the quarterdeck. He made fast his boat to the grating and crept up the steps to the deck.

Hardly had he taken three gliding steps toward the open skylight nearest him when the sailor forward looked around. In the light blazing up through the heavy glass from the cabin Dex was plainly visible to the man on anchor watch.

Rigidly Dex restrained an impulse to fling himself flat on the deck. It was too late. He was seen!

CHAPTER VIII

A Fist, a Gun and a Warning

DEX waited as the seaman came pelting aft. He saw that the man had a tense hand near the bulging pocket of his peajacket.

Dex spoke before the man could open his mouth. His casual voice was not loud enough to be heard below.

"Message for Mr. Arkwright, buddy," he said.

"Why in hell don't you hail us and wait to get asked to come alongside?" the man growled wrathfully. But he, too, had modulated his tone at the sound of the prosaic words.

"Didn't see anybody round, buddy," Dex answered in mild surprise. "I'm supposed to tell Mr. Arkwright something." He put a hand against the

mainmast and rested on one foot. "Confidential—get it?"

The man stared uncertainly and then headed for the companionway. Within sixty seconds he was on deck again. He muttered something and walked forward.

Cortlandt Arkwright, 3rd, did not keep Dex waiting long. Despite the mildness of the night the young polo star had a scarf wrapped around his throat, concealing his tie. Like Freddie Hurlingham he wore formal evening attire instead of the dinner jacket that is correct at stag parties.

Arkwright stared in unconcealed amazement at Dex Lloyd.

"What the deuce—"

"A word in your ear, Cort," Dex Lloyd said crisply. He drew Arkwright to a part of the quarterdeck concealed from the seaman's observation.

"Well?"

"That Ballantyne murder wasn't carried out cleverly enough."

Arkwright took a backward step, staggered by that abrupt, quiet statement.

"Wh—What murder?" he stammered. "You're insane! Ballantyne w-w-wasn't murdered!"

Dex Lloyd swung around on his heel.

"Explain that to the cops," he said over his shoulder.

Cort Arkwright clutched at him suddenly.

"Wait!" he muttered. "Are—are they after us? How do you know—"

Dex Lloyd shook off the importunate hand.

"I'm on Marsh Ballantyne's side, Cort," he said with ice in his voice. "That was the blackest deed a man ever did and I'll see you pay for it!"

"You'll see nothing!" Arkwright

snarled. His shaking fingers darted toward his left armpit.

Dex Lloyd's fist came up like the swing of a brassie under Arkwright's chin. The force of it lifted Dex himself onto his tiptoes; it knocked Arkwright completely off his feet. Limp as a bag of rags he dropped to the deck.

SOMETHING prodded Dex gently between the shoulder blades—gently, but with a suggestion of metallic firmness.

"Perfect timing," a clear high voice, entirely unexcited, said behind him. "Almost as precise as the working of an automatic pistol—I said *almost*!"

Rudely the object between his shoulder blades emphasized that last word.

Without moving his body Dex Lloyd looked over his shoulder. Somehow the massive and formidable owner of the yacht had closed in behind him without the slightest sound.

"Arkwright was only a sideline; you're the man I came aboard to see, Ramsay," Dex said. His voice subtly expressed contempt. "If you don't feel safe without your gun I'll talk to you this way."

"I'll conquer my fear of you sufficiently to put my weapon away—after you've accepted an invitation to go below," the man of destiny retorted.

Dex swung around immediately and strode toward the saloon companionway. Without hesitation he clattered down and entered the main cabin. Ramsay was close behind him.

Three men around the table in the center of the room abruptly ceased their talk to stare at Dex Lloyd.

Dex Lloyd knew of old all three—Stuyve Priestley, Freddie Hurlingham and Mel Cross. They all wore tail coats and incorrect black ties.

As he paused there, Ramsay's pistol against his back, they looked at him, with the eyes of merciless strangers.

They had been friends of Marshall Ballantyne, too. And he was dead!

"Your pardon, gentlemen," Ramsay said to his guests, jabbing Dex Lloyd with the automatic. "We have a matter to discuss. Forward and through the starboard door, old man."

"Right!" said Dex again. His eyes were still on these changed playmates of his. "I seem to have come back to Newport too late—or too early." He threw a casual nod to the stunned diners and passed on into the passage.

Ramsay directed him to a small stateroom and followed him in. He motioned his prisoner to a chair and closed the door. He stood with his broad, muscled back to the wall. His slate-hued eyes, deep set in his massive face, brooded upon Dex. The automatic was no longer in his hand; his fingers played instead with a pushbutton beside the light switch.

"Did I by chance overhear an attempt to extract an admission of murder from young Arkwright?" he inquired. His high voice was sharp with irony.

"A successful attempt," Dex Lloyd replied to his question. "You made an error in using that young man. He'd have tremendous courage in a front-line trench. But under a district attorney's third degree he'd let you down."

Ramsay considered this thoughtfully. But how would he let me down? What makes you think Ballantyne was murdered?"

Dex Lloyd looked up at him—a glance conveying contemptuous refusal to speak. Then, leisurely, he thrust a hand in his pocket, ignoring the pistol that leaped into threatening aim in

Ramsay's fingers. He took out his pipe, lit it and puffed away in silence.

"You distrust the testimony of Johnson that Arkwright and I were not in the gunroom when the shot was fired?" Ramsay probed.

"No," said Dex Lloyd, shifting the pipestem to the corner of his mouth and watching his captor's face. "I believe his testimony, including the fact that he was not on the premises a little earlier—at the time when the shot that *did* kill Ballantyne was fired. As for the shot Johnson heard while you two were out on the terrace—the shot he believed was the one that killed his master—"

His forehead wrinkled thoughtfully. "Several ways of causing that shot or a sound like a shot occur to me, Mr. Ramsay. A shotgun loaded with a blank shell, with a cord stretching from the trigger to the outer door; a giant firecracker with a long fuse, exploded in the gun barrel; even a blank shell in the fireplace if a fire were burning at the time. You had plenty of time to remove all indications of the trick while that poor old man was running from the edge of the cliff back to the house."

"I MUST compliment you upon your imagination," Ramsay applauded. "And the evidence backing this assertion?"

"I did your intellect the honor of not looking overhard for that," Dex Lloyd replied.

"We appear to have reached a deadlock then," remarked Ramsay. "You are too smart to be taken in by my poor attempt to conceal a killing and I am too smart to let you prove it murder."

"I doubt the deadlock," retorted Dex Lloyd. "But my immediate mission concerns another matter."

"I am all attention."

Dex Lloyd stood up. His eyes bore upon Hugh van Lennep Ramsay like the twin muzzles of a shotgun. He gestured aft toward the main cabin.

"You plan tonight to lead these foolish young men into a crime against Alexander Somerville that may well result in murder, Mr. Ramsay. My advice to you is simple: Don't!"



DEX LLOYD

Ramsay nodded his head with unfeigned admiration.

"Your perspicacity is amazing, Lloyd," he declared. "It should be rewarded. It will be—to the tune of a fortune, if you are sensible."

He leaned forward, speaking earnestly.

"I do not play poker for matchsticks, Lloyd. Come in with us in stripping this old dotard of a good few of his millions! I do not insult you by offering to make you a rich man—I offer you enough money to make you a powerful man—one of the mighty of the world!"

Dex Lloyd shook his head.

"You should resist your Jehovah

complex, Mr. Ramsay," he warned. "Your plan won't work."

"And why not?"

Dex knocked out his pipe on the edge of the chair.

"Because I shall stop it."

For an instant Ramsay frowned. Then abruptly, his big chest heaved in swift laughter. It was genuine mirth, with an overtone of triumph, easily distinguishable.

"No, you will not stop it, my bright young man," he declared. "On the contrary, you will play your part in it, either as confederate or victim."

"I neglected to mention," Dex said suavely, "that my presence on this schooner is not unknown in quarters extremely influential with the police."

Ramsay laughed again. Again his fingers slid lightly over the pushbutton.

"You are mistaken," he retorted. Reaching in his pocket he brought out a folded sheet torn out of a notebook. He displayed to Dex the note he had scrawled on the club pier.

"You underestimate the pulling power of a fortune to a greedy old man who has gambled himself into sad financial straits," he pointed out dryly. "That honest ancient servant, Smithers, is my man!"

CHAPTER IX

The Needle

THOSE involuntary responses to the stimulus of astonishment or chagrin, such as a rush of blood to the face, are difficult to check. In the moment following that revelation the quick brain and obedient nervous system of Dex Lloyd was exerted to the full to restrain the telltale indications of his surprise.

When one's life depended upon it, one can do much. Only a faint color

showed itself to Ramsay's searching eyes.

Dex nodded acknowledgment of the bit of crumpled paper Ramsay held out to him and dropped his pipe into his pocket.

"The one I gave Smithers, eh?" he remarked. "Too bad you didn't intercept both notes. Really, Mr. Ramsay, your cleverness merits success. Have you ever tried to get anywhere by mixing honesty with your intelligence?"

Ramsay shook his head. "It's no good, Lloyd," he said. "Mel Cross had you under discreet observation from the moment you came ashore with Miss Hayle to the time you shoved off again alone. It was to Cross that Smithers delivered your note. You're in—or is the expression *on* a spot?"

Dex Lloyd shrugged his shoulders. Casually he glanced at the porthole, drawing Ramsay's eyes with his own. "You'd be more familiar with gunmen's lingo than—"

Like a spring released he hurled himself at the massive figure. His fist snapped upward in the same swift, powerful blow that had accounted for Cort Arkwright.

Ramsay was quick. The jerk of his head saved his chin, though Dex's hard knuckle scored his cheek.

Almost simultaneously Dex's left hand closed upon the knob. He flung open the door—and stopped dead.

In the passageway outside stood the knobby-faced sailing master, flanked by two seamen. All three held leveled revolvers. Behind them hovered Cortlandt Arkwright, 3rd, with a hand on his jaw.

Hugh Ramsay laughed softly.

"My guard of honor," he explained. "I press a button—they do the rest. Believe me?"

"Yes," returned Dex Lloyd curtly.

He would have closed the door in the faces of the formidable three but Ramsay stopped him.

"Wait here for me, will you?" the master of the yacht asked with scrupulous politeness. "I won't be long."

He slipped past the armed men and vanished. With returning composure Dex devoted himself to a careful, methodic scrutiny of the countenances of his guard. Scowling, the sailing master closed the door upon him. In swift desperation Dex turned toward the closed porthole. It was far too small to permit him to squeeze through. There was nothing in the room with which to smash the glass; he put pressure on the wingnut and began unscrewing it.

Ramsay himself opened the door and stepped into the room. He motioned the three seamen to follow him in. Arkwright, unregarded, came as far as the doorway to snarl at Dex with bared teeth.

"Grab him!" Ramsay commanded. In an instant, though the sailing master took a hard right to the corner of the jaw, the three husky seamen had him helpless in their grip.

Ramsay held out a pair of handcuffs to Arkwright. "Put those on him—and keep the key yourself."

"Delighted!" said Arkwright, touching his chin with meaning. "You're crazy not to get rid of—"

"I need him alive—for the moment," Ramsay retorted as Arkwright snapped on the cuffs. "Lay him on the bed and pull up his sleeve."

He was taking something out of a small leather case. Dex Lloyd, looking up from the bed, saw that the thing was a hypodermic syringe.

With minute care Ramsay measured into the syringe a few cubic centimeters from a blue bottle.

"The advantage of this is twofold," he explained genially. "The overdose I give you will put you to sleep securely enough; yet a medical examiner will regard you only as an addict who gave himself a slight jolt to stiffen his courage before he went into action. I hope you'll take your medicine like a little gentleman, Lloyd. Maybe it will make you dream of Doris." He laughed softly and bent low: "But your dream won't come true if you dream that I'll let her alone."

With a nod toward the door he dismissed the two staring seamen. He held the syringe poised while Arkwright and the sailing master threw themselves on the grimly struggling captive. Well Dex knew that unconsciousness would be but a prelude to death. He fought despite the hopelessness of it. A fight to the end against overpowering odds was no disgrace in his code.

QUITE with the touch of a doctor Ramsay plucked up a fold of the flesh of Dex Lloyd's upper arm. Despite all that Dex could do he thrust in the needle. As his fingers moved toward the plunger Dex, with another desperate twist, almost wrenched the needle out. He bowed his back and for all Arkwright's efforts, snapped himself up to sitting position.

Ramsay again thrust the needle forcefully through the flesh. Suddenly in the midst of his mighty struggles, Dex Lloyd realized that the syringe had been pushed in deeper than before—that the end of the hollow steel needle had come out through the other side of the fold of flesh beneath Ramsay's pinching fingers. His sleeve had dropped over his forearm again; Ramsay, though he knew the needle

was deeply in, could not see the protruding tip. His fingers were pressing the little plunger again.

With fierce determination Dex Lloyd kicked loose one leg. He registered with his shoe on the neck of the sailing master before the man could grab it again. But he permitted his arm to be held steady. He felt the solution in the syringe gushing out of the needle tip not into his own muscles, but into the cloth of his sleeve.

In an instant Ramsay withdrew the needle.

"That'll hold you!" he muttered.

Dex Lloyd flung himself sideways on the bed, with his punctured arm under him. He gave vent to a hopeless groan and ceased to struggle.

The massive man stood above him, motionless. "An interesting psychological phenomenon," he observed coolly to Arkwright. "Although the stuff won't take effect for five minutes he feels it already—look at him!"

"What are you going to do to me?" Dex Lloyd muttered. "What—"

Ramsay laughed. "It's too late to worry about that now," he said. "But if you want something to dream about—here it is:

"When we leave after our little visit to the Rhodian there'll be plenty of excitement in the anchorage. I'll be dropping off the speedboat as we pass close to this yacht. Simultaneously somebody on our deck beside your unconscious form will cut loose with a gun, apparently firing at the speedboat. Actually you'll get one of the bullets through your head.

"You see how useful you'll be, Lloyd? I'll climb quietly aboard; you'll be dropped over just as quietly—and the police eventually will pick you up as one of the criminals. In consequence they'll go chasing every-

where but in my direction. I may even decide to be the hero who shot you myself."

Dex Lloyd made no reply. He flung himself over onto his back, as if moving at all was a great effort.

"But what about the handcuffs on him?" Arkwright demanded.

Dex Lloyd, almost as exhausted as he appeared to be, watched through half closed eyes as Ramsay turned to the younger man and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"This has compelled me to change our plans a bit—but for the better, Cort," he said. "Instead of going with the Rhodian party you'll remain on the schooner and run this end of it, with Captain Bergson.

"How?"

"I want you to stay in this room with Lloyd. He'll be completely out. Take off the handcuffs just about five minutes—our original timetable is still good—before the rest of us are due to leave the Rhodian. But just to be sure, don't unlock the cuffs until you call Bergson and another man down to watch him and to carry him up. Wait for us to get close. You can handle the automatic, if you feel so disposed. Get it?"

"He'll get it!" Cort retorted. His voice shook. "D'you realize how close he's come to giving us away?"

"Not too close," Ramsay replied.

Dex Lloyd did not move, but breathed more heavily as the man bent over him.

"He's gone off already," Ramsay diagnosed. "You'll have no trouble with him."

"The trouble will be his," Cort predicted savagely. "Good luck to you."

Ramsay paused at the door, watch in hand.

"We won't be going for twenty

minutes," he replied. And all at once his voice shook with hate. "Watch your schedule and kill that fool on time!"

The door closed on him.

CHAPTER X

The Face

D EX LLOYD lay still. Cort Arkwright spent a moment or two looking down at the manacled man who had once been his friend. Then he made a restless tour of the little room and finally flung himself down in the armchair in a corner opposite the bed.

Minutes ticked by but Dex Lloyd did not move his body or his handcuffed arms. Only his eyes, ambushed behind their down-turned lids, opened a trifle, enough to detect light and movement. He located Cort Arkwright's exact position, a good seven feet from him.

Time dragged on. In that silence Dex could hear little waves slapping against the side of the yacht and a murmur of voices from aft. Lying like one dead, he looked unwinkingly through the screen of his eyelashes at the ceiling of the stateroom and the wall at the foot of the bed.

Then, attracted by some slight suggestion of movement, his gaze turned cautiously toward the wall to the left of his outstretched body—the side of the ship.

His eyes twitched involuntarily; then clung to the porthole.

In that small circle of thick glass a wet face was framed and blue eyes were turned down upon him. It was the oval, startled countenance of Doris Hayle.

For just an instant he contrived to let his left eyelid—the one nearer the side of the ship—flicker up at her.

He heard a sudden exclamation and the scrape of feet on the carpet. Cort Arkwright had leaped to his feet.

It took all the will power Dex Lloyd possessed to continue to lie impassive, limp.

In two steps Arkwright had crossed the room. He leaned over the bed to stare at the face of the girl.

Dex Lloyd came to life. Like a spring his body bent; his linked hands closed on Arkwright's throat; his iron fingers dug into his windpipe.

Arkwright struggled backward. From his throat came a muffled, feeble sound. His arms, outflung, whipped wildly. They wrenched and tore at Dex Lloyd's fingers, hands and wrists. They ripped skin and flesh off but they never broke that terrible lock on his throat.

Dex Lloyd was off the bed. He forced the clawing, strangling man down on his knees by the pressure of his ruthless fingers; then flung him over onto his back. Never in the slightest did he relax that double grip. The handcuffs were no handicap in that hold—but in that hold alone.

Dex Lloyd swarmed onto the prostrate figure. Arkwright was writhing feebly but there was not enough good oxygen in his lungs to support a long struggle. By the very violence with which he had fought to rip loose those unflinching hands he had depleted his supply of air.

Dex's body was weighing on Arkwright's chest. Now one knee came down heavily on his throat. It was pressing harder and harder as Dex suddenly let go with his linked hands.

The manacled wrists moved in unison as Dex flung back his knotted fists. Then they came forward and Dex's knuckles crashed against Arkwright's vulnerable jaw.

It was the end. Arkwright's struggles ceased instantly.

PANTING, Dex Lloyd tumbled off him. He looked up, with a feeble, apologetic smile at Doris.

The girl's wet face was very white and drawn but she contrived to smile back. Her lips contrived a word that Dex read easily, though he could not hear. "Boat!"

Dex thrust hands under Arkwright's coat. They touched a shoulder holster but there was no gun in it. Nor was the pistol in any pocket.

Sure of that, Dex leaped onto the bed, unscrewed the butterfly nut, and flung open the porthole. The girl's eyes, apprehensive, stared into his.

"Thanks, Pudgy," he muttered. Impulsively he bent forward. The brass ring of the rim cut cruelly against his forehead and chin but he kissed her on the lips. Nor did she draw back.

"No gun—I've got to get these cuffs off. Doris, swim to your boat—and warn them on the Rhodian that—"

"I won't warn anyone—till you're off this yacht!" she declared rebelliously. "I knew you meant to come back when you'd gotten rid of me."

"Smart girl!" murmured Dex.

"Hurry! The boat I rowed out in is made fast to that motor cruiser anchored just ahead of this yacht. We'll have to swim—"

He dropped down beside Arkwright's prostrate form and searched him for the key to the handcuffs. His fingers pulled out of Arkwright's pockets a black silk mask and a flashlight. At last he found the key and brought it to the girl. Clinging with one hand to the rail above, she opened the little locks. He caught up a towel and wiped the blood from his arms and hands.

"I'll stay here till you're safe over-side," she whispered.

"I've got to try disguise to get by—too many men with guns between me and the water," he muttered. "The only way out is through the main cabin."

"If they try to—hurt you, I won't be able to help except by screaming—it would be impossible to get help in time—but I'll scream like—everybody will hear," the girl promised shakily.

Dex grinned up at her. She wasn't normally the screaming kind.

Already he was stripping off Arkwright's tailcoat, stiff bosomed shirt and trousers. He put them on himself, dressing in faster time than ever before he had managed to climb into evening clothes. Then he slipped his own clothes onto Arkwright, snapped on the handcuffs and lifted the man, still quite unconscious, onto the bed. He turned his face to the side of the ship.

"Now if—" he began and then froze. "Get away!" he implored in a whisper and shoved the porthole shut.

The girl vanished as he caught up the flashlight and leaped to the light switch. He clicked it off as the footsteps he had heard drew nearer. Then he flung himself back into the chair in which Arkwright had been sitting. His legs were bunched under him, ready for a leap. He held the flashlight club style in one hand.

He did not breathe.

CHAPTER XI

Black Ties in Action

THE door opened. Instantly Dex flicked the light into the face of the man who stood in the doorway, then turned it toward the bed, revealing Arkwright's handcuffed figure.

"Why turn out the—" the dazzled Ramsay began and then, with a glance of comprehension toward the porthole, added: "You're right, Cort. Some busybody in a boat might look in. No use taking any unnecessary risk."

"That's it!" Dex retorted. It was his first attempt at mimicking a voice, and his voice, as well as his body, was tense.

Ramsay gave no indication of suspicion. But neither did he advance into the room, within reasonable range of Dex's makeshift weapon.

"We're off!" Ramsay told him curtly. "We'll be changing boats outside the Cove in five minutes. Remember the timetable. Don't fail us—and don't get any telltale blood on the deck."

"Right!" Dex promised grimly.

Without another word Ramsay closed the door.

Crouching beside it, Dex could hear his retreating footsteps. When he opened the door a crack he could make out the low murmur of voices aft. Then he heard thud of footfalls on deck. He tiptoed over to the porthole.

Doris was gone. The sounds coming through that narrow aperture only a couple of feet above the water told plainly that Ramsay and his friends of the black tie were already leaving. He saw the black hull of the tender slide past.

Dex stowed the mask in his pocket. With the flashlight in his hand he stepped out into the dimly lighted corridor. Unseen, he flitted down the passage and peered into the main cabin. It was empty. He hurried through it toward the companion stairs. His fingers gripped the flashlight tightly. He was almost at the foot of the companionway when a man's legs came into his sight, descending. They were blue

uniformed legs—the legs of the knobby-faced sailing master, Bergson.

Dex flung himself forward. He grabbed the man by the ankles and jerked him off his feet. With a crash the yacht captain came down on his back and bumped down to the floor of the cabin. His head hit the lowest step. Dex, swinging at him with the flashlight, diverted the blow. That crack of his head on the edge of the step had put the yacht's captain out—probably for much longer than was necessary.

D EX darted up to the deck. He looked around for sailor on anchor watch. But the after deck was deserted.

He crept toward the starboard side and looked over. A low hail, hardly more than an overtone in the murmurous harbor noises, came to his ears. Stretching out over the rail, he peered aft.

There was a rowboat securely concealed under the overhang of the schooner. He moved silently to the stern and slipped over the taffrail.

He could see a girl's shoulders and arms gleaming whitely above a dark bathing suit. It was Doris.

He dropped into the boat. Without a word she put the handles of the oars in his hands and left the rowing seat. It was a silent warning that they were not out of danger yet—that the strength of his arms might be needed to propel them to safety.

He rowed with a light stroke, keeping dead astern of the schooner. The oars lifted and dipped without a splash; the leathers neither creaked nor brought a telltale rumble from the oarlocks. He put a hundred feet between them and the yacht.

"I've got to get to the Rhodian at once—to warn Somerville and arm the

crew," he whispered, rowing more strongly. "Ramsay and his gang are going to board her. I'm not certain just what he plans—but it's something big—and Somerville may not come out of it alive."

"But why—I don't understand how Somerville's death would benefit Ramsay," the girl murmured.

Dex was rowing hard, now, bending his back and sending the boat leaping through the water.

"The market would drop at the news of his death—like a plane with the wings sheered off," he gasped. "Ramsay's short—he's sold borrowed stock—he'd make millions. And your father—would be cleaned out."

The girl asked no more questions. Occasionally, when the boat veered to one side, she guided him toward the glittering bulk of the Rhodian with an outstretched hand.

As they drew nearer she scanned the big steam yacht and then reported:

"There isn't any boat alongside her now. I see no one on her decks, though the after deck is brilliantly lighted."

He nodded grimly.

"After I go aboard you take the boat clear of the gangway, Doris."

She did not speak.

With a twist of his blades he laid the boat alongside the starboard grating. Lightly he ran up the steps toward the bulwark looming overhead.

He charged onto the deck at top speed, for speed was his only weapon if Ramsay's gang were already on board. The instant he touched the white planks he stumbled.

He had tripped over a body—the body of a petty officer with a gash on his forehead. Plainly he had been struck dead or unconscious as he stood at the top of the ladder.

Doubtless the wounded man was the calling card of Hugh van Lennep Ramsay. Had he and his men already gone?

Dex paused long enough to search the seaman for a gun. As once before that evening he found a holster empty.

He crept toward a big skylight of heavy glass. One side had been raised. An oblong slice of the main saloon was before his eyes.

THE place was crowded with people—silent people in evening attire. The bare shoulders of pallid women and the black clad shoulders of angry, cowed men were directly below him. The men's hands were raised to the level of their heads. A woman was on the floor in a faint; two others knelt beside her, loosening her scant gown. One of the men was bleeding steadily from a slashed upper lip but his hands, still clutching a crimsoned handkerchief, continued to stretch high.

Bunched in a corner were a group of seamen, glumly silent amidst the wreckage of music stands and the instruments of the orchestra. The blunt, ugly muzzle of a submachine gun in the hands of a masked gentleman in black tie and tailcoat menaced them.

A voice, raucous, high-pitched, slurring the words, cried out:

"For a society bunch you people ain't so loaded with ice and cash as you might be. Don't waste time on these pikers, boys! We'll just pull the little snatch-play that didn't work this afternoon."

Though the voice was disguised there was in it something of the high tenor of Hugh Ramsay.

"I understand," Dex muttered. "Gentlemen disguised as thugs themselves aping gentlemen. A double

dodge. That explains those two toughs who invaded Somerville's garden so aimlessly. Red herrings for the police!"

There was a stir below. Another masked man with a black tie was forcing his way through the crush below. His right hand, too, held a submachine gun and his movements were both wary and belligerent. He met with no opposition. Though the tail coat he wore was an execrable fit, distorting his figure, and his face was invisible, Dex put him down as Stuyve Priestley.

With a final glance through the skylight at him Dex moved hastily toward what seemed to be the nearest companion stairs. He held ready his flashlight and crouched just out of sight of anyone ascending. His ears were alert to gauge the man's progress.

But instead of the clatter of feet upon the stairs he heard from below the shrill unnatural voice of Ramsay:

"Drop the search, boys; it's time to go. Grab old Somerville! He'll come through—after he's been with us a couple days. Grab him—and slug him if—"

Dex whirled at the sound of a foot-fall near him on deck. He had time to dive into cover behind a ventilator as Stuyve Priestley emerged from the companionway furthest aft. He was still masked and the weapon was leveled. He walked swiftly to the starboard quarter and pulled a small flashlight from his pocket.

Holding it pointed out over the dark harbor, he blinked it three times, paused and again sent three spots of light winking out into the blackness. Rapidly he thrust the torch away and walked toward the starboard gangway and the body of the Rhodian's petty officer. With his foot he prodded the man callously, to make sure that he was still unconscious.

Then, in quick glances, he divided his attention between the anchorage and the companionway near which Dex was crouching in the shelter of the ventilator. His vigilance was tense and impatient.

"It's a chance!" Dex muttered. His eyes dwelt hungrily upon the sub-machine gun in Stuyve Priestley's grasp. There was a wide stretch of bare deck, without the slightest cover, between him and Priestley.

"A chance!" Dex muttered again. Swiftly he drew out of his pocket the mask he had taken from Arkwright at the time he had changed clothes with the polo player. He adjusted it over his face. With his flashlight held casually in his hand he waited for a moment when Priestley was looking out over the water. Then he stepped quickly in front of the companionway, as if just ascending from the lower deck.

Priestley's wary eyes were on him an instant later.

Boldly Dex walked toward the man with the rapid fire gun. It was a long, long walk.

"Why don't they hurry?" Priestley demanded harshly. "I've signaled the boat—it'll be alongside—"

His voice cut off abruptly. Behind the black mask his eyes glittered an instant as they surveyed intently the figure and the bleeding wrists of the man approaching him. Then, with a snarl, he raised his machine gun.

Still six feet away, Dex leaped and flung his flashlight simultaneously.

CHAPTER XXII

Mock Murder!

THE gun in Stuyve Priestley's hands barked at the instant the flashlight smashed into his face. The first bullet bored past Dex's ear.

Dex himself hit Priestley only a fraction of a second after the impact of the flashlight.

Together the men were flung by the force of his desperate charge against the rail protecting the gangway landing. The wooden bar was built for no such hard usage; it cracked and parted.

Priestley fell instantly into the black water. Dex, falling with him, caught at the wooden ladder and dangled with an aching wrist. But his eager snatch at Priestley's submachine gun, tumbling erratically down the steps, failed miserably. It splashed into the water near his feet.

For an instant after he pulled himself onto the wooden stairs he stared downward. He saw not the slightest sign of Priestley's body. Either the man had sunk or he had swum out of the radius of the gangway lights under water.

He ran up the ladder to the deck again. There he froze, with one hand on his slipping mask. Tensely he faced the deck house.

Out of that companionway over which he had watched so anxiously a little group of men erupted. It was as if Priestley's shot had speeded them from below. Three wore black ties and black masks. One carried two leather bags of loot.

In their midst they hustled along the tottering, bent figure of Alexander Somerville. The tall, slender old master of millions was barely able to walk. His face was the gray of wood ash.

In Dex's ears, at that moment when he awaited recognition by Ramsay with no weapon in his hands, came the bellow of powerful motors close alongside the ship. The getaway boat was coming.

The burly form of Ramsay was

plain to Dex's initiated eyes, although a padded back gave him almost a hump and black hair showed beneath his felt hat. He hovered at the top of the companionway, looking backward. The others held automatics; he gripped a gun like Priestley's.

"In the boat with him!" Ramsay commanded, but it seemed that he turned his voice downward, toward the huddled crowd of victims in the saloon below, rather than toward his men. Suddenly his voice rose in shrill alarm. "Stop! Stop him!"

For all his own imminent peril Dex stared at Ramsay and the thin little millionaire.

Somerville had not made the least attempt to flee. But Ramsay fired two shots into the air. Then he railed more loudly than ever, still directing his words down into the saloon:

"Ya killed him! I told ya to stop him, blast ya — not to plug him! Where's our snatch play now, you heel! Dead! Sling him over! We got to lam! Chuck him over, you dumb lug!"

At that last command one of the masked men caught up a deck chair and flung it over the side. It struck the water with a loud splash. There was a deadly intentness about this playacting that robbed it of its humor.

"Get going now," Ramsay shrieked. "There'll be all hell to pay! Jim, stay here and plug anybody who shows a head! Into the boat, you—"

He propelled Somerville ahead of him almost into Dex Lloyd's arms.

"Get him aboard quick, Stuyve!" he whispered. "Tap him if he tries to squeak. Get going!"

AGAINST three men with guns— and more in the cabin cruiser that came rushing to the gangway below with propellers churning

astern—Dex Lloyd made no attempt to fight. That would be death for himself and Somerville, he divined. Instead he caught up Somerville in his arms and ran down the gangway ladder. He leaped into the boat as it halted alongside, stumbled on something and fell sprawling with the millionaire groaning beneath him. The others tumbled in on top of him.

The boat, motors blaring in fiendish din, shot away from the side of the Rhodian.

That tumultuous rush into the cruiser had flattened Dex Lloyd out in the cockpit with the slight body of Alexander Somerville between him and the floorboards. Now, although unhurt, he did not pull himself up onto his feet again. Somerville lay still.

Dex groped cautiously for something that might serve as a weapon. But his fingers touched nothing loose.

Black as was the harbor, this cockpit was even darker. Not even the faint glow of a binnacle lamp over the compass relieved the gloom.

Dex looked warily at his companions. They all continued to wear their masks, although the darkness kept their features quite indistinguishable.

The boat hammered on at tremendous speed. Her nose rose higher and higher as she planed along over the water. Dex understood that this was a cheap, inconspicuous boat with super-powerful motors. Her crew consisted of two men, the man steering her and a fellow in the cabin, tending the two engines by the gleam of a feeble, shaded electric light bulb.

Ramsay moved immediately to the helmsman, whose wheel was located in the forward end of the long cockpit.

Suddenly the big millionaire ducked involuntarily as a powerful white beam of light fell upon the boat.

"Harbor's waking up!" Ramsay shouted to the steersman above the roar of the thunderous motors. "We've got to get out of here—no chance to drop off near my schooner with that infernal searchlight—"

He stopped to indicate with outstretched arm the new course to be followed. The helmsman nodded, turning the wheel.

"Saw some blasted girl—bathing suit—rowing to beat hell up to that yacht that's got the light on us," the man reported. "She was giving the alarm!"

"Good work, Doris!" Dex muttered.

Hugh van Lennep Ramsay gave vent to a plebeian curse.

"A girl—giving the alarm? I wonder—"

Abruptly he laid hold of the wheel, shoving the helmsman aside. The boat heeled dangerously to starboard as he spun the wheel over; then swung sharply.

Deeper into the crowded harbor the cruiser surged while the masked men stared at each other. Hugh Ramsay was heading straight up the blinding path of the searchlight on the big black yacht near the Rhodian.

He spoke crisply to the deposed helmsman; then savagely shook off Mel Cross's hand as the man touched his shoulder imploringly. The steersman hastily flung a blanket over Somerville's body.

Here and there spots of light now winked in the night—not searchlights, these, but the mark of barking guns.

The officers of the Rhodian, unaware that their owner was still alive and on the cruiser, lined up at the rail and blazed away at the bandits.

Ramsay, secure in his belief in his star, paid no more heed to whining bullets than to pelting spray.

Close under the source of that blinding white beam Ramsay spun the wheel again, rasping another command at the man he had supplanted. Instantly his fingers snapped to a spotlight mounted on the cabin top. He played it on the bridge of the black yacht, whence the powerful ray was blazing.

The sudden maneuver of the flying cruiser wrenched her out of the searchlight's glare. For an instant they could see those on the yacht by the weaker illumination of Ramsay's own spotlight.

Doris Hayle was there above them, leaning over the rail. Momentarily the light picked out with ruthless vividness her animated, fearless face, her slender body and white, rounded limbs.

Hugh Ramsay raised a clenched hand high, as if he would drag the girl down off her high place.

"Later, my lady!" The gloating, prophetic words came plainly to Dex Lloyd's ears above the clamor of the motors. "Later!"

CHAPTER XIII

Trick Lights

AROUND the stern of the yacht Ramsay piloted the hurtling boat. Then, pointing once more toward the mouth of the Cove, he relinquished the wheel to the helmsman.

Only the cruiser's super-powerful motors brought her safely through the hail of bullets as she raced away among the anchored yachts.

Grim-faced, Dex Lloyd awaited the chance that might come to him from a chunk of lead in a vital part of the engines, the boat or her master. But no leaden missile bore the mark of destiny that night.

"I've got to stay alive while Ramsay lives!" Dex warned himself.

Hugh Ramsay, turning from the wheel, bent, pulled aside the blanket and turned a flashlight on his prisoner. Somerville was unconscious—either in a faint or out from the effects of his rough descent into the cruiser. Solicitously Ramsay felt his pulse; then nodded with satisfaction.

"He's all right," he declared.

The searchlight's beam was distinctly less brilliant now. They stormed out of Brenton's Cove. Behind them more lights split the black sky. Some followed the fast speeding cruiser; others blazed at the Rhodian. Not a sound but the blare of the engines reached Dex's ears, but he knew the night was hideous with the din of whistles and sirens astern.

Freddie Hurlingham and Mel Cross held their automatics ready for any enemy that might rise up in the night.

"Not a chance—now," Dex muttered. It was cold reason—and cold comfort. He gripped his pipe with fingers itching for a gun.

The boat rounded Fort Adams and headed for the open sea. She rode a broad, low ocean swell as easily as if the surface had been smooth as a pond; only choppier waves would have slowed her down.

Ramsay switched on the dim binacle light.

"Keep her due south!" he commanded. "If they want to think we came from a ship offshore it's all right with me."

He squared his shoulders, folded his hands behind his back and touched Somerville's prostrate body with a possessive satisfaction.

"Good work, boys!" he commended the others. "Your time's worth a hundred thousand a minute to me. And don't worry about not being paid."

Behind the black silken cloth on his

face Dex Lloyd grinned, perhaps a bit wryly, and clenched his empty hands.

"The hell you say!" he murmured.

Ramsay bent over the two bags brought from the Rhodian. His torch shot fire into each in turn and from each the fire flashed back from the myriad facets of a mass of precious stones resting upon crumpled bank notes. Swiftly Ramsay packed into the bags two weighty submachine guns. Then he snapped shut the locks, lifted the bags and deliberately flung them into the sea.

His confederates gasped; Mel Cross roared angry protest.

Ramsay laughed. "Chicken feed!" he said. "Not a million in the lot! Would you be taken trying to peddle jewelry after accomplishing unsuspected an exploit worthy of a place in history?"

Nobody answered him.

Ramsay's hand fell suddenly on Dex's shoulder. "Go up to the house and keep a lookout, Stuyve," he said in Dex's ear. "I want to run her wide of anything that could make out our movements."

Obediently Dex started forward, but Ramsay stopped him.

"Take off your mask," he commanded. "He"—he pointed down at Somerville—"isn't going to be in any condition to recognize anybody?"

He laughed again and Dex rasped out an accompanying sound of amusement. But not until he was up on top of the cabin did he remove his silken shield. And then he kept his face rigidly forward. Even the errant beam of a flashlight might betray him.

The flying cruiser surged on over the broad swell. Their course took them from the land, out of the way of any craft rounding Point Judith and heading up toward the bay.

All at once Dex Lloyd cocked his head and listened more intently to the clamor of the engines. Although the boat's speed did not slacken the belching exhaust was softening to a less ear-racking sound. Just as the full-bodied resonance of an orchestra might decrease as a hand turned a radio dial so the trumpet-tongued motors were dying out.

"Something new in a deep underwater exhaust manifold," he decided. "This boat has all the stuff."

FOR perhaps fifteen minutes longer the cruiser held its course. And as it shot on Dex saw that its running lights as well as its motor noises were fading steadily. Finally, when the engines were reduced to a mere throbbing, the lights died out altogether. The illusion presented to a watcher on shore or in a distant boat was that the cruiser had dwindled away seaward.

Abruptly the helmsman, at a word from Ramsay, throttled down the motors and turned her almost a complete hundred and eighty degrees. The boat was now moving almost soundlessly back toward the coast of Rhode Island. She was headed about a point to the eastward of Brenton Reef light-ship.

With his hand held casually to his face Dex Lloyd looked around. The bulk of Ramsay was kneeling beside Somerville, with a flashlight leveled at his arm. Ramsay was just withdrawing from the flesh the hypodermic needle with which he had failed to put Dex to sleep. This time it had not failed. The millionaire struggled weakly, but soon ceased to move.

Dex kept a strangle hold on his impulses.

"That doping means we're going where even Somerville's feeble voice or

struggles might give the show away," Dex told himself. "I've got to lie as low as an eel till we get there."

Far less rapidly than she had gone to sea the cruiser crept back toward the rocky shore. Ramsay came and stood beside the helmsman, conning the boat. A tug at Dex's ankle forced him to turn his head.

"We're looking for a big rowboat without lights!" Ramsay told him. "See if you can pick it up for us."

Dex nodded. "I'm with you on that," he muttered. Intently he searched. The cliffs, irregular masses blacker than the dark water, were close ahead now, but the boat was still stealing on.

Suddenly Dex raised his hand to point to starboard. The rowboat was there—a vague gray shadow. The cruiser ceased to move; the shadow drifted alongside. The solitary occupant, shipping his oars, laid hold of the gunwale.

"Masks!" whispered Ramsay, adjusting his own. "Into her, Stuyve and Mel! Give me a hand with him, Freddie!"

Quickly the light body of the unconscious Somerville was transferred to the sternsheets of the big rowboat. Then Ramsay and Hurlingham joined the others in her.

The motor of the cruiser had been shut off. She lay to while the silent man at the oars turned his clumsy craft and headed toward the cliffs. Dex sat crouched over in the bow, a shapeless, watching figure. Within five minutes he saw rocks on either hand.

They were entering a cleft in the shoreline. That could only be the entrance to Ballantyne's little cove.

"Guns handy!" murmured Ramsay. A minute later the rowboat drifted in alongside the landing stage. For

another long moment nobody moved. But the dark rocks above them were as devoid of sound and movement as a crater on the moon. They lifted out Somerville and laid him on the plank-ing.

The rowboat ghosted away as silently as it had appeared. The raiders were committed to the land!

CHAPTER XIV

The Tightest Place

DEX planted his feet upon that floating connection with the land with a certain grim satisfaction. He knew this territory as well as the others.

"One warning," said Ramsay in a voice that did not carry more than five feet. "If we are discovered by more people than we can cope with you must all get away as best you can to the place you know. But Somerville must be dead before you go. That is the one essential. Our success and our safety depends on it. He spoke my name—he recognized me—before I could put him to sleep. Remember! Finish him!"

There was a mutter of assent. Dex's empty hands worked involuntarily.

At a gesture from Ramsay, Hurlingham picked up Somerville and slung him over his shoulders. Ramsay led the way to the stone steps cut in the rocky wall of the cove. With taut lips and a furrowed brow Dex Lloyd lingered an instant to let the others precede him.

"Tough!" he told himself soundlessly. "How can I make a move yet—after that command? They'd get him sure."

At the top of the cliff they halted again, crouching warily. Here was no absolute darkness. Again the vague whiteness of the sky above the distant lighted city the huge bulk of the old

Ballantyne house showed plainly. Not the faintest glimmer showed from a single window; the place was as dead as its last master.

Far to the right of it Doris Hayle's house could be seen, a cheerier sight, with a good fourth of its windows outlined in light.

The others were moving on. Dex followed.

Ramsay led them into the grounds of the Ballantyne estate and turned sharply right. Through neglected shrubberies, in knee-deep grass, he moved with a catlike step almost weird in one of such massive body. He crept along to a high knoll that overlooked the rocky ledges dropping into the sea.

"The old lookout house! No wonder he wanted poor Marsh in on this and killed him when he refused." Dex's lips framed the words, but he did not utter them.

With swift confidence Ramsay approached the small two-storied building of rustic logs that topped the rise. A key rattled faintly. Without the slightest sound a wide door swung open. They filed in.

NOT until the door was shut and locked behind them did Ramsay show a light. Then his torch shone upon the floor and passed briefly around the walls of the building.

The windows were all securely boarded up. This ground floor had been devoted to a gardener's needs, when the Ballantynes had had a gardener. Lawn mowers, garden tools, boxes, the uprights of a tennis court backstop and such things were stored here.

Hurlingham slid the body of Alexander Somerville to the floor and sat down on a wheelbarrow with a grunt.

For an instant the flashlight re-

vealed with cruel intensity the frail gray head and limp body of the man who was the patron saint of Newport.

"Gentlemen," Ramsay murmured, "this should be a lesson to us, who supplant him, not to seek power in this uncertain world. But we will disregard lessons. He still has a few hours to live. Barring accidents such as I mentioned to you, he is to live until today at one P.M. precisely."

Mel Cross spoke, almost tremulously. "But you said he recognized you!" he objected. "How can you dare let him go, even for a short time, when he will inform the police—have you arrested—at once?"

"A dead man cannot testify—and I have told you that he will be dead today at one o'clock," Ramsay said in a cold voice.

"What you gentlemen propose is that I abandon my plan because I fear a fantastic accusation by an overwrought old fool who will be dead before the police pluck up the courage to act against me. Do you think I will be arrested like an ordinary criminal—I?"

They were silent an instant.

"Somerville has a deuced heavy drag with the police," Hurlingham muttered. "Think of what you'll clean up even if—he's found dead."

"You ask me to forego two-thirds of my profits—no more than that!" Ramsay rasped in exasperation. "Can't you get the thing through your thick heads?"

"Tomorrow morning at ten o'clock, gentlemen, the markets of the world, and more particularly the New York Stock Exchange, will open in the wildest confusion because of the death of the great Somerville at the hands of a blundering gang of kidnapers. Stocks will crumple like sand castles.

"About eleven-thirty it will occur to

me, who have been short of Somerville stock for months, that this is a good time to cover—in other words, to buy and deliver the stocks I borrowed and sold so long ago.

"I will also conclude that it is a good time to purchase stocks at the ridiculously low levels to which panic has driven them. I will buy when everyone else is selling.

"Then, when I have bought to the limit of my means and credit, there will come a flash from Newport: 'Somerville was not killed by the kidnapers! He escaped today and is safe at home!' That report will be confirmed. Why? Because it will be true!

"Can you imagine the sensation—and the wild scurry to buy stocks? The market speculator always overdoes things.

"Stocks which broke to one quarter of their value will soar to four times their worth. Like a wise speculator I will sell everything I bought, and sell short, too, at the top of this boom.

"And then at one o'clock a crazy Communist, maddened by the return to life of a man he hated, will break into Somerville's house and shoot him at his desk. Again panic—and profit!"

He paused a moment. "The—ah—Communist is arranged for," he added dryly. "He will escape—if he is not killed—leaving a scrawled note which will put the blame for the crime on the Reds and incidentally take the blame from any other suspects. I bear alone the danger of this accusation—if he makes it."

They were silent until Hurlingham spoke, his voice husky with greed. "Three turns—three big swings of the market—instead of one! And what does the extra risk amount to—after what we've gotten away with already?"

"The chief's right!" Mel Cross declared. "How about it, Stuyve?"

The three others turned toward the silent Dex Lloyd. The pool of light from the flashlight was upon the floor at their feet, but some diffused radiance from it was thrown upward on the four men.

Dex nodded his head in response to Cross's question, summoning his dubious talent of mimicry to speak out in the voice of Stuyve Priestley.

But suddenly Ramsay spoke for him, in a voice that set his nerves taut:

"I think we can dispense with our masks in here, Stuyve."

Was there the faintest tinge of suspicion in the huge leader's smooth tenor? Cross and Hurlingham were looking at him, like their leader. It was the tightest place yet.

CHAPTER XV

Traps and Bullets!

AGAIN Dex nodded. As the others stripped off their masks he raised a hand toward his own. But suddenly he stiffened and turned his head toward the front of the house with a gesture of warning to the others. He took two soundless steps toward the locked door and placed his ear against its rough planking. He listened, not moving a muscle.

Hugh Ramsay swung his long legs across the body of Somerville and crept toward Dex without a sound. Freddie Hurlingham, crouching close to Dex, pointed his automatic at the door. In that instant of extreme tension, Dex thrust out his hand commandingly toward Hurlingham.

"Gun!" he murmured.

Swiftly Hurlingham placed it in his fingers.

"Don't give him—" Ramsay shrielled,

reaching toward his shoulder for his own weapon.

But the gun was already tight in Dex Lloyd's caressing hand. At the sight of the pistol jerking upward Mel Cross jabbed his own gun squarely into Dex Lloyd's side.

Dex's left arm slashed at the pistol, knocking it aside a scant six inches. Its bellowing explosion sent a bullet clipping through his tailcoat and hot powder burning through his flesh. But simultaneously his own trigger finger flexed.

Cross, with a bullet through his chest, went down without firing another shot.

The room was in blackness. The wary Ramsay had flicked off his torch and fired simultaneously.

His lead smashed through the planking of the door against which Dex had stood.

Free of Cross, his most imminent menace, Dex had slipped between the falling man and Hurlingham. In those few minutes in which he had stood within the room with three enemies, his eyes had studied it to good purpose. Now he bent and groped for old Alexander Somerville. His head was raised, his pistol ready for the blaze of the torch.

His hand closed on the old man's leg. He lifted the light, limp body and swung it a few feet through the gloom to the scant shelter of a heavy iron lawn roller.

Silence and darkness were suddenly rent by the roar and red spurt of a pistol. It slung three chunks of lead at the spot where Somerville had lain; then ceased.

Dex's fingers encountered a big wrench behind the roller; he flung it violently across the room toward a rack where garden implements were fas-

tened. It hit with a terrific clatter. Ramsay's torch blazed in that direction. His pistol roared before he could realize that his target was not there.

Dex, sidestepping from behind the roller, fired once at the gap between flashlight and orange spurt of fire. He heard nothing as he shifted position again.

SUDDEN silence fell once more. Dex tore off his mask. Both antagonists knew that Ramsay's flashlight was a weapon of double edge against a man who had so swiftly dropped Mel Cross and dodged lead hurtling toward him from two guns.

Reaction time! That would win this fight.

In that room were five men—one probably dead, one unconscious, one unarmed—unless Freddie had found Cross's gun—and two with pistols. The flashlight was dynamite that might blast anyone into eternity.

Dex waited, listening. He remained close enough to Somerville to defend the old man.

To kill him at once was plainly Ramsay's aim, since his cat-and-mouse plan was now impossible.

Seconds crawled past without a sound from his enemies. He did not move. Time fought for him.

Somewhere in the darkness he heard a sudden splash and trickle, as if liquid poured or spilled. His brows contracted in perplexity; it was impossible to locate that sound.

Then, in the corner opposite, the flashlight flicked on. He fired instantly—three rapid shots, ranging the blackness near the torch. Edging to the right on noiseless feet he heard a distinct groan. The flashlight thumped to the ground. The glaring circle of light was turned toward the corner; between

him and it on the floor loomed vaguely a rounded, bulky object like a body. It did not stir.

With the greatest caution, crouching, Dex slipped behind an up-ended wheelbarrow with a rusted metal body. Darkness was no longer absolute; the fight now might be fierce and fatal unless—

"Did I get him?" Dex asked himself.

At that instant a breath of air struck him. He whirled toward the door, vaguely aware that it was open. Had Ramsay fled?

From outside Hugh Ramsay's big hand tossed onto the floor a flaming book of paper matches. Even as Dex cut loose through the side of the building at his enemy outside a train of flaring fire lit up the place with livid flickerings.

The blaze ran across the wooden floor. It jumped toward the still dripping gasoline tank of a motor lawn mower.

The machine was close to the corner where the flashlight still glowed. The rounded thing near it was not Ramsay's body; it was a burlap bag arranged there.

With a yell Freddie Hurlingham dashed out of his useless refuge behind a coil of netting. He hurled himself toward the doorway.

"Hugh! Wait! For God's—"

He stumbled over Mel Cross's body, recovered and flung himself at the closing door. In a diminishing crack an automatic showed for the barest instant below the sardonic, grinning face of Hugh Ramsay. Point-blank, the gun roared at Hurlingham's chest. He crumpled up, one arm across the trail of blazing gasoline on the boards. Flames licked it instantly but arm and the man did not move.

Hugh Ramsay's two confederates were beyond talk and beyond sharing.

DEX fired again through the door at a blind target. He heard a cry like the echo of his shot but the door banged shut. He heard the click of a turning key. Locked!

He had light in plenty now to appraise the situation. The flames were leaping up almost to the ceiling; they were spreading along the floor and two sides of the place.

The drugged Somerville lay behind the roller no less immovable than the two dead men on the floor. The heat was intense; the smoke acrid and choking.

Dex caught up a heavy crowbar. Gathering himself together he drove at the lock of the door with all his force. It was of rough, strong construction but lock and woodwork shivered and splintered under the impact of that mighty lance of iron. The door was ready to open. But Dex did not approach it.

Whirling, he charged with his crowbar at the boarded window in the rear of the building. This was an easier matter; the boards came off; nails groaning as they were torn out of the woodwork.

There were bushes outside, he noted; unless a man came through them and peered directly into the swirling smoke within his fast moving figure would not make too plain a target.

Coughing, gasping, Dex flung down the bar. He darted to the body of Mel Cross, lifted the dead man in his arms and ran across the room with him. Feet first he heaved the corpse out. The bushes crackled under the sudden weight.

Not for an instant did he pause to see the effect of this trap. His skin

was cracking; his head whirling giddily; his feet stumbling where the way was smooth. He fought toward the space behind the lawn roller and dragged out Somerville. He seemed unable to lift even that slight body from the floor.

As he staggered toward the door, with the old millionaire's body trailing on the floor, he heard a sound that made him lift his head. It was the crash of an automatic in the bushes behind the house. Ramsay had, for the moment, fallen into his snare.

The sound energized him. Not even Ramsay could be in two places at once. "Killing a dead man!" he gasped.

With his back he hit the door. The broken lock dropped out of the splintered woodwork. The door swung open. Foot by foot, drinking in the cool night air, he pulled his burden away from the blazing summer house into the depth of the nearest shrubbery.

His ringing ears made out the sound of voices—shouting men were charging toward the blaze.

"Blast them!" Dex raged.

As quietly as he could he crept out of the bushes and circled the building, automatic ready.

But Ramsay's pistol had ceased to roar and he heard no telltale crackling of the bushes while he forced his way toward the spot outside where he had flung the body of Cross.

He halted. Did he hear the pound of running feet? A pistol barked again, well away toward the east boundary. A bullet thudded against the wall near his head. His body was outlined against the roaring fire. He swung his gun toward the distant flash and pressed the trigger.

The pistol clicked harmlessly. The man of destiny was safe.

Grimly he started in pursuit. But

he had taken no more than a few staggering steps when Doris Hayle came rushing through the rhododendrons. She caught him as he staggered.

CHAPTER XVI

Death at 10.01

SOMEBODY was shaking Dex Lloyd. He started up and cast a bewildered glance out of grimy, aching eyes.

He was in bed—a soft bed—in a big room he did not remember. The bright light of morning was slanting against a drawn blind.

"Dex! Dex!" a girl was saying in an agitated voice.

It seemed good to Dex that if a girl had to awaken him the girl was Doris Hayle. He opened his eyes again with more determination to keep them open. And then he gripped Doris by the hands in swift dawning comprehension.

"Did I pass out, Doris?" he asked. "What's up? Where's Ramsay—and Somerville?"

"You've been unconscious for hours," the girl replied. "You're in our house—but I had to wake you. Poor old Somerville was here too—but he has just gone!"

"Gone—"

"Gone to his own house—I thought I'd better tell you. I don't know where Ramsay is."

Dex slid out of bed. He was in somebody's silk pajamas. He got no further than to sit on the edge. His head was whirling rebelliously.

"Somerville's in danger there!" he exclaimed. "I must get to him! Why did he go?"

"I tried to keep him here in bed," Doris explained. "But when he came to—he'd been drugged, the doctor said—he was in a frightfully excited con-

dition—and very, very weak. When the doctor told him he must rest quietly in bed he got worse—said that he must go home—to his library immediately. The doctor finally gave in—he was afraid not to—but they had to carry the poor old man. He couldn't stand. He kept saying he had a duty to perform."

"Do the police know—"

"He refused to see them and a mob of reporters—until late today. Insisted that he had something much more important to do than talk to them about what had happened to him."

Dex uttered a groan.

"Where are my clothes?"

Not without an anxious look the girl brought him a pile of clothes.

"Some of father's," she said.

"Somehow I'm afraid, Dex—poor old Alexander is so weak and so alone—"

"Get me a gun and a car, Doris," he said, grabbing the clothes. "Tell the driver to shoot me through cops, reporters, gatekeepers, everybody—to Somerville's door. Notify the old man by phone I'm coming and must see him instantly. Get his valet or secretary—not his butler—using my name, so I'll be sure to be passed through."

Doris fled. Fifteen minutes later Dex Lloyd's car skidded to a stop with shrieking brakes in front of the dignified portico of the Somerville mansion. Dex shot out.

"Where's Smithers?" he demanded of the footman who held the door open for him.

"Gone, sir—vanished!" said the man mournfully. "A most inexplicable disappear—"

Dex straightarmed a man clutching his coat and brushed past the servant. He hurried down the long hall to the library. As he entered Alexander Somerville looked up with a start. Dex

could not repress a gasp at the sight of him.

FRAIL as he had seemed on the day before, Alexander Somerville was now only a wraith of himself. His eyes were mere holes jabbed ruthlessly through a wrinkled gray rag. There was no flesh on his skull; nothing save cords and bones in his neck and trembling hands. He did not rise; it seemed impossible that a creature so close to dissolution could rise.

"Ah—you!" he muttered, and in the depth of his eye sockets a gleam showed for an instant. "Come in; you find me in the midst of an important duty. I—"

"Why didn't you turn out the police to hunt down Ramsay?" Dex demanded. "You knew—you should have done that at once!"

Somerville moved an impatient, clawlike hand. "Later—later." He peered at the clock. "Nine-fifty-seven!"

He began to write again, scrawling brief lines on sheet after sheet of paper. "Ramsay is much too dangerous a man to have money," he mumbled. "He will have none after these market orders are executed when the Stock Exchange opens. His wealth—his power—must go first. It is nine-tenths of him."

His burnt-out eyes turned toward Dex. He pushed a slip of paper toward him. "Do you know what I have discovered?" he croaked. "A judge of the United States Circuit Court—a man whose corruption must have cost Ramsay millions—has already mentioned to friends that he and Ramsay were playing chess last night at the hour when Ramsay dragged me from the Rhodian! While Ramsay has money—"

"We can break down Arkwright—make him confess—"

Somerville's wrinkled lips twitched. His skeletonesque fingers strayed among the sheets on his desk. "Arkwright and Priestley were picked up in Brenton's Cove this morning—both drowned. No; we must strip that villain of his money before we can punish—"

"This is madness!" Dex exclaimed. "Since you are known to be alive this coup has failed. You should be in bed—in an impenetrable room, talking to the police."

"Later! Later!" Somerville repeated. He shuddered violently, as if an icy wind had blown upon him. "How could I rest—with a powerful demon like him, armed with riches, pursuing me? Don't you see, Pendexter? By forcing the market up—up—up—up I can wipe him out in fifteen minutes." He peered at the clock and pressed a button. "Ten o'clock! His brokers will protect themselves by covering as the market goes against him—they must—or be ruined with him!"

He darted a fleshless finger toward an oblong of frosted glass let into the side of the wall nearest the Communications Room. Already figures and symbols—the projected record of a stock ticker were moving across it, telling the tale of the market opening in Wall Street.

A man came flying in from the Communications Room, caught up the pile of market orders and raced out again.

"You don't understand!" Dex retorted fiercely. "Your life is in grave peril this instant! Ramsay has bought some of your trusted servants and guards—he commands a way into your house! He has planned your assassination here!"

The pen in Somerville's shaking fingers trickled onto the blotter. His sunken eyes turned upon Dex Lloyd's tense figure. And then, suddenly they shifted to something behind Dex and terror flamed up in them. It was an awful sight, that fleshless, agonized horror-stricken face.

He screamed, in a high, rending voice. And then his eyes died—the life went out of them, and out of that gray, tortured face. His head thumped onto the desk top.

The man was dead.

CHAPTER XVII

A Chance Is Offered

DEX LLOYD whirled around. In a doorway opening from some inner room stood Hugh Ramsay. The huge millionaire, a masterful figure, had a pistol in his hand but he was thrusting it back into his pocket. His cold, slate-colored eyes were fixed upon what remained of Alexander Somerville.

Abruptly he laughed, and his mirth was not sardonic but jubilant, vibrant with delight. He looked at his watch. Only after he had noted the time did he glance into Dex Lloyd's face.

"So I win—after all, my clever spy!" he said. "The old fool has died of fright—and he never talked!"

Dex Lloyd's automatic had leaped into his hand.

"Sit down, Mr. Ramsay!" he commanded. His voice was steady, despite the fiery rage in his eyes. "I'll take that gun!"

Ramsay smiled with easy contempt. Without hesitation, though with some slight caution lest his movement be misunderstood, tossed his weapon to the floor at Dex's feet.

"I have a permit for it, you know,"

he taunted. "And as for any accusation of evil-doing from you it seems now to be down to your word, unsupported, against mine and a most honorable judge's."

"Sit down!" Dex repeated unwaveringly as he picked up the gun.

"Surely you wouldn't murder me!" the big millionaire remonstrated, quite undisturbed.

"Give me the slightest excuse!" The words were a fervent prayer.

Ramsay sat down at one end of the desk upon which Alexander Somerville's head had dropped. He looked at his watch again.

"My time—" he began.

Dex Lloyd pulled a chair to the other side. He slipped the cartridge from the barrel of his automatic and drew the clip out of the gun and dropped pistol, clip and cartridge into the waste basket before the desk.

"I invited you to sit down and witness the destruction of a fortune, Mr. Ramsay," he said and indicated the flitting figures on the ground glass plate. "*Your* fortune. It will be scattered by the hand of a dead man—your victim."

Ramsay glanced up at the moving record. His suave, forceful features remained untroubled for an instant. And then his face changed.

A tide of blood swept into his forehead and his eyes started, glared, narrowed to slits of gleaming steel. His square rugged jaw sagged; his hard mouth came open in a grotesque imitation of an idiot's wondering gape.

His hands gripped the arms of his chair as if an overwhelming current of electricity was surging through his body. To Lloyd these figures meant nothing—to Ramsay they meant doom.

"Don't get up!" Dex flamed. "Don't!"

Hugh Ramsay sank back, eyes still upon the mounting symbols of disaster.

"I wonder if the old man was right," Dex Lloyd said slowly. "He seemed to think your money—your power—meant more to you than your life or your liberty. He struck at you through that, first. Don't!"

The pistol he had taken from his enemy snapped up to command Ramsay's chest as the man made a grab at the telephone. In Dex Lloyd's face blazed a determination to be obeyed or to slay.

Ramsay's hand drew back.

"Rather than let you get out of this punishment I'll finish you, Mr. Ramsay, and take my chance on murder in this world and the next," Dex assured him grimly. "Sit and take it, strong man; it's just beginning."

RAMSAY looked at the unwavering pistol. He jerked his hand spasmodically through his hair and licked his lips. Then, almost unwittingly, his eyes were drawn once more to the moving figures on the wall. He uttered a groan.

"Let me telephone—I'll give you ten million—my own money!" he begged hoarsely.

"I'm giving you just one chance, Mr. Ramsay, and I hope you take it," Dex said, meeting his enemy's glittering eyes. "For you life will be very hard as a pauper. So perhaps you had better take this chance."

Coolly, in the center of the desk, he laid down Ramsay's pistol. And quietly he voiced his challenge.

"Take it—if you think you can get it!"

From opposite sides of the table the men looked at each other, at the telephone that might yet save part of a mighty fortune and at the pistol that

forbade the use of the telephone. Neither man moved a muscle as they studied each other—the challenger and the challenged.

Across the ground glass screen flowed the symbols and figures that told of a market sent soaring upward by the impact of Somerville's massed buying orders. Minutes passed and still the market continued to rise—while the man who had willed that rise sat dead at his desk between two others upon whom the shadow of death rested.

Of a sudden Hugh Ramsay's eyes pivoted to the body of Alexander Somerville. He started back in his chair.

"I saw him move!" he gasped.

Dex's glance flicked toward the old millionaire. In that instant Ramsay rebounded from his start. His hand shot out; his body darted lithely after it cross the desk.

It was a perfect maneuver.

Ramsay's fingers closed on the butt of the pistol as Dex's two hands clamped tightly on the gun and on his wrist.

With a snarl of triumph Ramsay straightened up his mighty body. He dragged Dex, still clinging to the pistol, toward him across the table top. His gun hand was for the moment in chancery; with his other he caught up the telephone and lashed out in murderous effort at Dex's head. With a sidewise jerk Dex dodged the sweeping blow. The instrument crashed against the desk top.

Before it came up again Dex's right hand had slipped from Ramsay's wrist to his trigger finger—the finger that Dex's left hand on the gun was keeping outside the trigger guard. He wrenched the finger backward and heard a snap.

Next instant, letting go with both hands, Dex thrust himself off the desk in time to avoid the second downward smash of the telephone.

It was a battle of might against speed.

Cursing, Ramsay let the telephone drop to shift the pistol to his other hand.

It was an error.

To shift a gun from hand to hand and into shooting position takes a perceptible fraction of a second. And in that moment Dex Lloyd had shot up his fist at Ramsay's unguarded temple.

The man staggered back, dazed but not out. Deliberately Dex went with him as he took his backward step and Dex's left hand went leaping to the gun again. Ramsay's injured right hand thrust at Dex's neck. His three good fingers and thumb sank into Dex's throat with more power than an ordinary man could exert with unhurt hand.

But throttling takes time. Dex's shoulder had slipped under Ramsay's left elbow. Now, though his own eyes were starting out of his head, he had the man's gun arm stretched helplessly out over that rigid shoulder. There was enough air left in Dex's starved lungs and enough courage in his straining heart to break it. He put quick pressure against the elbow.

The pistol in that tortured arm thumped to the rug as Ramsay let go the terrible hold that would strangle Dex to death to save his arm. He saved it, at a price. For as Ramsay's fingers relaxed on Dex's throat Dex instantly released the arm and dropped to Ramsay's feet. He rolled away as Ramsay kicked wildly at his head. He bounced to his knees.

The pistol was in his hand and red murder raging in his brain.

"Dex!"

The wild fighting fury in Dex Lloyd's face faded at the sound of that voice.

Doris Hayle was standing in the doorway.

D EX drew another gulp of air through his tortured throat. It soothed him. He stood up and flashed a swift, reassuring grin at the girl.

He held the gun with a casual ease that did not deceive Hugh Ramsay. The man, panting hoarsely, stood still, nursing his broken finger.

"Always glad to see you but you came too soon, Doris," Dex told her. His eyes were full of unsaid things.

The girl was looking with pitying eyes at the frail figure in the desk chair.

"Yes," he said gravely, in response to her questioning glance. "But though the poor old man is dead, he died a victor. Mr. Ramsay is alive but he is beaten—stripped of the only thing he cherished—his money."

He stretched out a hand. "Sit down, Mr. Ramsay," he ordered. "The market may still command your attention."

Ramsay glanced once more at the figures that still pursued their imperishable way across the screen, piling up fortunes and tearing down fortunes. Then, with a fatalistic shrug, he looked away.

"The market's going up," Dex said to Doris. "That will be good news for your father."

Hugh Ramsay smiled. His iron control had asserted itself. He pulled on his sardonic mask.

"I regret, Doris, that you will not need that job I promised to give you—when you should be in no position to refuse," he said. "It was not my in-

tention to make your father's fortune for him."

His voice was once more polished, calm, with an edge of sarcastic humor in it. "Let us call the job postponed—for the moment."

Doris Hayle did not look at him or appear to hear him; her cheeks neither took on color nor lost color. It was the perfect rebuke of a gentlewoman—complete indifference, as to a hoodlum bawling obscenities in the gutter.

Ramsay's face writhed as if under a lash. Quickly he stooped and picked up the battered telephone.

"Allow me to call Police Headquarters for you," he said urbanely.

"I'm not the sort that acknowledges defeat by committing suicide, you know. Up to a point I shall be happy to assist you in your efforts to put me in prison." His lips tightened. "You'll need help."

"Thank you," said Dex. He studied the length of the telephone cord. Then, deliberately he dropped Ramsay's automatic into his pocket.

"You will call Police Headquarters with that thing—if, as you say you're not the sort that commits suicide," Dex said.

The man of destiny looked at him. Then he spoke:

"Police Headquarters."

FIFTY stories above the world, five millionaires cowered, raising a last frantic barricade against their taunting assailant—the man who had sworn he would get through walls of steel and murder them before the morning. Don't miss this amazing yarn by a celebrated writer.

"The Vault of Death"

A Novelette

By Erle Stanley Gardner

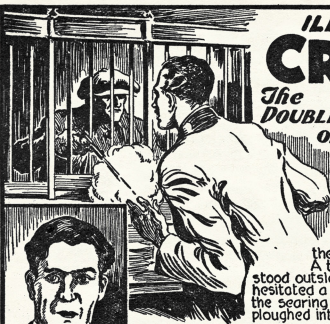
It will appear in next week's issue

<p>I'VE FOUND VICKS VA-TRO-NOL HELPS PREVENT COLDS</p> <p>• JUST A FEW DROPS UP EACH NOSTRIL •</p>		<p>YES..AND VICKS VAPORUB HELPS SHORTEN A COLD</p> <p>• JUST RUB ON THROAT & CHEST •</p>
<p>Follow VICKS PLAN for better CONTROL OF COLDS</p> <p>Full details in each Vicks package</p>		


ILLUSTRATED CRIMES

The by Paul Berdanier
**DOUBLE-FACED RAIDER
OF MONTREAL**

"Stick 'em up!"



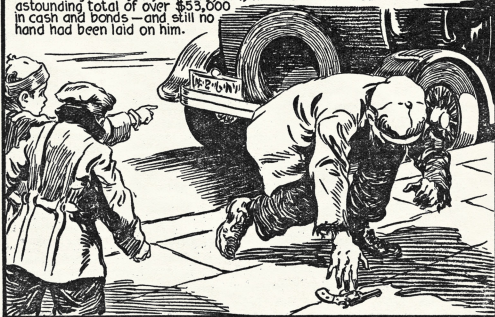
Armand Renaud, paying teller in a branch of the *Banque Canadienne Nationale*, Montreal, looked up, startled, into the ugly muzzle of a pistol. A tall thug, shabbily dressed, stood outside his cage. The teller hesitated a fatal moment—and felt the searing pain of a bullet as it ploughed into his hand.



Less than a minute later the robber vanished into thin air outside the bank—and with him \$13,000 in cash. He left no trail to follow.

"W.G. NEVIN"

That was on February 8, 1933. During the next nine months the lone raider spread a trail of terror in the Canadian metropolis. Always he used the same plan—a lightning raid, a menacing threat, and a perfectly executed getaway. By January, 1934, his known loot had reached the astounding total of over \$53,000 in cash and bonds—and still no hand had been laid on him.



COMING NEXT WEEK—



respectability again after he had his crime and leaped back into his waiting car.

Nevin's home yielded guns, ammunition and a fraction of the stolen loot—but not a trace of the elusive robber with two faces.

Will the police of two countries succeed in tightening the dragnet about the gentleman-ruffian of Montreal? At last reports he was still eluding the law.

Strangely, two boys playing detective succeeded where the best police minds had failed. It was on January 30, 1934, and the daylight marauder had just looted the Royal Bank of Canada. As always, his getaway was successful. But this time, in his flight, his revolver dropped to the sidewalk. As he picked it up and leaped into a limousine driven by a uniformed chauffeur, the observant youngsters noted the license.

It was a slight clue—a clue that is usually worthless—but in this case it led to astonishing developments.

Police traced the license number to W.G. Nevin, a well-known and respected insurance broker in the city. Just as a matter of routine, authorities checked up on Nevin, then called at his home to question him.

But he was not there—and thus disappeared the strangest Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde criminal in modern times. Later police deduced how he had operated. Nevin, leaving his office on "business calls," would get into his car driven by an accomplice, Jean Desrochers, and change into the rags of a desperado. In a matter of minutes the business man would become the unkempt thug—and with equal speed he could don the garb of

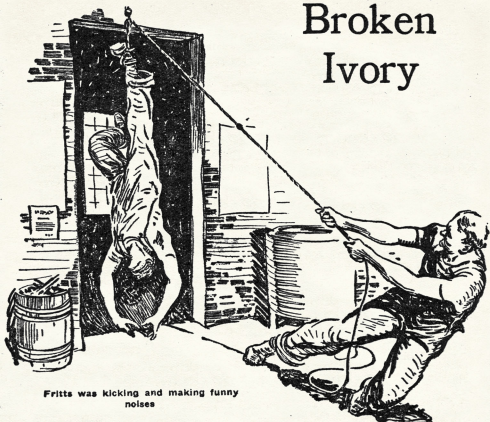


JEAN DESROCHERS,
NEVIN'S CHAUFFEUR.



• THE BOBBED HAIR BANDIT OF BROOKLYN

Broken Ivory



Fritts was kicking and making funny noises

He Stood Beside a Vat of Molten Lead—and Watched Himself Die

By David Crewe

I WATCHED myself die. My face was all puffed and dirty, and it was red, too, from the blood running down into it. It had a funny look, like I was seeing the end, only it hurt so much on the way I didn't care how soon it came. I had to laugh because I knew something nobody else would ever know—the man who was dying wasn't me at all. It was old Germany Fritts.

Germany works in the foundry room of the Apex Press. I work there too. We are two toothless old men nobody cares anything about, and we keep out

of the poorhouse by tending vats and pouring hot lead in the matrices.

It is a good job and we get good money. All we have to do is keep the lead melted. Of course we suck in lead dust when we breathe. It does not kill you on the spot. It plants lead poison in you like a seed, so finally you quit work and go home to die comfortable in bed. Then they get another man to take your place. Germany and me were old, but we were tough. All the lead had done to us was make our teeth fall out.

Maybe the lead did something to our

heads, too, because Germany and me hated each other. We were crazy jealous of each other, even after the whistle blew to quit work. One time Germany bought a new hat and felt pretty good all day, but the next noon I got one that was better, and it was rain-proof, too.

Another time he got his false teeth. I didn't need any false teeth because I can chew my food with my gums, but I didn't like to see Germany making a smile at me all day with his mouth full of teeth. So I went to the bank and drew out \$27.84, which was all I had then, and I gave it to the same dentist and told him to make me a better set. I wore them the next day but one.

After that Germany didn't smile at me all day any more. The men in the plant had to admit I was a hard fellow to play those kind of tricks on. They liked Germany better than me and they always sided with him, but after that they called me "Ivory." I showed them, all right.

So I guess I killed Germany because I was jealous.

ONE day two months ago Germany came in with a sad face.

He walked up to me and put his hand in mine. I was surprised, because he never comes near me at all.

"I'm a sick man, Ivory," he said.

He couldn't make friends with me that easy. "I guess you are sick in the head," I said.

He dug his fingers into my arm. "This time you shouldn't laugh," he said. "Because I went to the doctor's last night. He said I have the high blood pressure. I should not stoop over too much. Some day the blood will all try to get into my head at once and something will go out. Then you will not have me to swear at. *Nein.*"

Before I could think of anything to say back he came and squeezed my arm again. He said:

"Don't tell Mack." Mack is Mr. McArdle, our boss. A man here said something about Mack once and it made me laugh. He said Mack was the man Simon Legree tried to copy, but he didn't have a chance because his heart was too soft.

"Mack would fire me," said Germany, "and I got to go on working."

It was then that I got the idea. I felt pretty good after I had thought of it.

"Maybe he told you worse than it was. I hope so. Anyway," I said, "I wouldn't tell McArdle."

When the whistle blew for noon I went up to Mack's office. He was looking at some papers and didn't say anything.

"I'm a sick man," I said.

He stopped looking at the papers and swung his chair around. "So," he said. "You look as strong as a bull. We can't afford sickness, with contracts to fill."

"Yes," I said. "I have got high blood pressure. The doctor says I have to be careful about things. I can't stoop over too much any more. I might get a shock."

He let go the papers then and got up and patted my shoulder. "Be careful of yourself," he said quickly. "You're a good man, Ivory, and we can't afford to lose good men these days. I'll have to see if we can't find some easier work for you."

Of course he didn't. But he didn't fire me, either. That's where Germany was wrong. Germany didn't know that strong old men like us don't get fired, even if it's for our own good. Because we can do our jobs fine and we don't cost as much as the young fellows.

The next few weeks I acted pretty smart. I wrote a letter to my nephew in Denver. My nephew is the man who is supposed to get my ten thousand dollar insurance when I die. I wrote that I was coming out there soon to stay. I said he was going to have a thousand dollars if he didn't tell anyone I was coming. I knew him. For a thousand dollars he'd do anything.

The other thing I did was smart, all right. I took a hammer and broke off a tooth from my new false teeth. Then I went around and made believe I was very mad about it. Every day I walked around and showed that broken tooth to every one I could think of. I made believe I was mad because my false teeth were bad, while Germany's were all white and even.

They all laughed, because they knew I had paid more for mine than Germany had. They always took sides with Germany anyway. He did not care one way or another. I guess he was too sick to want to fight. And I didn't care how he took it, either; because after I got through being smart, Germany would not be around any more.

Finally the night came I had been waiting for. Just before the whistle blew Mack came in and said: "You two boys better work till midnight. We're behind schedule in this department. Do it for me and I'll see you get time off later."

Time off forever and ten thousand dollars, I was thinking. Because that was what I was going to get for working overtime.

II

WHEN Germany went out to have some beer and sandwiches I took a taxi home. I had \$108.94 which I had taken from the bank. I got it from my dresser. Then

I put my blue suit in a suitcase and hurried back so that I could get back before Germany. When I got there I saw I had plenty of time. No one had seen me come in. Germany and me were going to be all alone, only for the watchman, who comes around hourly.

That was the time I was smartest of all. I took a piece of rope and made a big loop over the threshold of the door going to the washroom. The washroom is in the corner of the composing room, which is next to us, and there's a little movable set of steps running down to it.

The next room is about three feet lower than ours, so to get out to the washroom Germany and me used to have to walk way around through the composing room. But after we made some movable steps we could go through a hole in the wall which started out to be a door but never got finished.

Well, over this imitation door was a pulley hook. After I fixed the loop in the threshold I put the end of the cord through the pulley and laid it flat along the floor so it was next to where I stood when I was working. Then I stepped over the loop and pulled the stairway out of the way. Anybody who stepped down there was going to step into the air, and if I pulled the end of the rope while he was stepping the loop was going to catch him by the feet and trip him up, and if I pulled it some more it was going to hang him in the air upside down.

I knew Germany would go to the washroom sometime that night, but I wasn't smart enough to plan on the way he did it. If I hadn't been quick like a cat he would have spoiled all my plan. So he was trying to be smarter than me, even when he was on his way to die.

WE had been working about an hour, not saying a word to each other. Maybe just then a piece of lead splashed on him. Anyway, he gave a jump in the air and ran for the washroom. I had to be fast to reach that rope in time, all right.

Just while he ran through the doorway I pulled the rope, and when I felt it catch his feet I ran backwards and pulled at the same time. When I looked about Germany Fritts was hanging upside down under the door and kicking and making funny noises. He was not going to reach that washroom, ever.

I tied the rope to an iron stand which was screwed to the floor. And I went over to look at the upside down man, the fellow who was going to turn into me. Then I laughed.

It looked crazy, but the doctor had told Germany to be careful about stooping over. Well, he was hanging with his head down now, and kicking so the rope was doing a little dance all by itself. I guess I knew it wasn't going to take very long for that thing to go out in his sick head. Anyhow, I had four hours to stay, if it did. His short arms couldn't touch the side of the door either. I was watching that.

I didn't like to look at him after a few minutes. Do you know what that jealous old man did? He just made his eyes bulge out, he was trying so hard to look at me, and he wouldn't say a word. He knew I had had the best joke on him, all right, and he knew he wasn't going to get a chance to answer. He knew I had him, but he wouldn't say a word. And I waited and he waited together for the thing to go out in his head.

It didn't take very long. Finally the rope didn't jump any more, and when I squeezed his wrist I couldn't feel any

pulse. It was the last joke of all, all right, for me and Germany.

After I cut him down I put the rope in the suitcase. Then I pulled Germany over and laid him on the floor. That was when I was smartest of all. I took the broken set of false teeth from my mouth and I opened Germany's jaws.

It was easier than I had planned, because that old man had forgotten to wear his own teeth and I didn't have to think about getting rid of them. I put my false teeth in his mouth and I pushed his jaws shut. Then I dragged him over to the place where he was going to stop being Germany Fritts and turn into Ivory, which is me.

I got behind him and held him beside the vat. Then I let him forward a little at a time. First his hair, then his head went into the stuff that was turning him into me. Boiling lead is good for a lot of things, all right.

That was the way I left Germany. Just a mean old man who was stooping over a mess of molten lead after his doctor had told him not to, and had died for his meanness. Both his feet were still standing on the floor, but after you looked above his pants you didn't see him any more, only something which had gone into the vat.

III

WHEN I went to Denver I got a New York paper. They had my death account in an inside page, next to the "Situations Wanted." I was mad at that, I tell you, but then I thought: Who cares when a toothless old man in a foundry dies? That isn't much to read about.

There was something about Germany, too. It said he was probably excited and crazy over seeing me dead that way, because he was missing and would probably turn up in a few days.

They called what they found in the vat of lead me all right. Every fellow in that place knew those broken old teeth. That was why they named me Ivory.

Then I went to get my money. Ten thousand dollars insurance, but only nine was for me. My nephew liked the idea fine. So I made up my mind I would stay right with him all the time, and I went to sleep with a shotgun beside my bed. Saul is my nephew, and he is a good smart boy.

I told Saul how to write them for the insurance, and about a week after that two men drove up to the house in a car. I heard Saul at the door, and the man in front said he was the Denver man from the insurance office, come with my check. When he said that I came out in the hall myself. A man in the Denver office wouldn't know me, not with my teeth out and a two weeks' beard. Anyway, he had the check. So I came out to watch where that check went. Saul is a smart boy.

The Denver man didn't know me, but the man with him must have, because he snapped handcuffs on my wrists before I could move. Then he turned to the other man and said:

"Imagine such a dumb-bell, Ed!"

"What are you doing?" I said.

The big fellow laughed and said:

"Imagine, Ed. Him! I can't."

I was pretty mad and scared too.

"Imagine what?" I said.

"Imagine a guy dumb enough to stick his false teeth in another guy's mouth," he said.

"Let me go," I said, but he pulled the iron hard so it hurt my arm, and I felt cold under my shirt where my heart was pounding.

"Inside another guy's mouth," he finished, "and all the time there was another set of teeth in the guy's windpipe choking him to death!"

After that I knew what they were laughing at. And I knew why Germany had jumped in the air and ran for the washroom.

I also knew why he wouldn't say a word to me when he was hanging upside down. Germany couldn't speak to me because he was choking to death from the teeth which were in his windpipe.

"Why, you dumb-bell," the little man said to me, "you wouldn't have had to kill him if you'd waited five minutes."

He jerked his thumb at the big fellow and they started to walk out Saul's front door, me following because of the handcuffs.

The Crime Jury Selects—

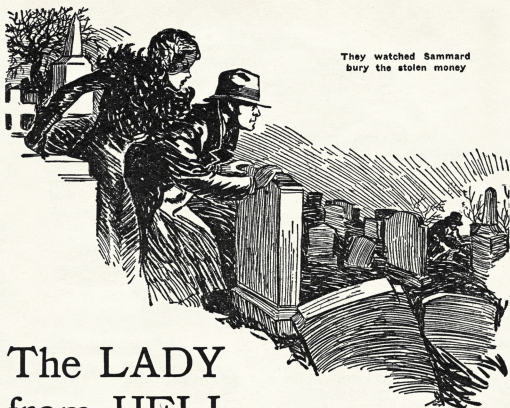
"THE MUTE ONE"

A Thrilling Daffy Dill Novelette

By Richard B. Sale

Next Week in

DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY



They watched Sammard
bury the stolen money

The LADY from HELL

A True Story
By
Eugene Thomas

*From the Confession of a
Tortured Apache Vivian
Legrand Frames a Devilish
Scheme to Blackmail the
Monte Carlo Banker: The
Episode of the Grave
Robbers*

"BRING him in!" Vivian Legrand herself had opened the door of the little villa on the outskirts of Monte Carlo. Her greenish eyes narrowed and a grim smile of triumph flickered across her beautiful face as she saw that one of the three men who stood on the door-

step was a prisoner, with a gun shoved into his ribs.

Night and day, for more than a week, this prisoner had been dogging the footsteps of an old woman whom Vivian Legrand had selected as a likely victim to enrich the Legrand gang. And night and day her confederates had dogged the footsteps of both the man and the old woman, seeking some whispered hint of the information that Vivian Legrand sought. Now the long and patient shadowing was bearing fruit.

She stepped back to permit the two men to shove their prisoner through the door, then closed and locked it.

"Was there any trouble?" she inquired of Adrian Wylie, her chief assistant.

"No trouble," Wylie said. He looked as grim as the gun he was thrusting back into the concealed holster. "He came like a lamb to the slaughter."

The captive winced at the implication.

"Just wait until Raoul Valente hears of this," he said defiantly.

"Oh, so Raoul Valente is interested in the Signora Tomasino?" Vivian Legrand said softly, switching to French as flawless as that of a Parisienne. She looked at her prisoner with the unreadable, faintly slant-eyed gaze that, had he known her better, would have told him meant trouble. "I wondered . . . but I did not think of him. I was right, then. The affair is worthwhile."

Raoul Valente, at this time, shortly before the World War, was one of the leading figures of the Monte Carlo underworld. Clever, audacious, he had been suspected by the police of many things, but they had been unable to pin anything on him.

Vivian Legrand followed as the prisoner was hustled into a small room opening off the hall. She drew the heavy hangings across the windows.

"I do not think that I shall worry about Valente," she said. "He had best be careful himself, lest he find himself in the same trap that closed about his spy." She turned to Wylie. "Tie him up."

The man yelped shrilly and tried to dodge as the two men seized him, but his resistance was futile against the strength of the two. The other man held him down while Wylie tied each arm to the chair, lashed the feet together and fastened a running noose around his neck, the other end of the rope being tied to the rung of the chair.

Vivian Legrand watched with a lazy

smile twitching at her lips. She had picked up a fluffy Persian cat that lay dozing on a chair and held its head close to her cheek.

"Dear Cleo," she cooed to the animal, her eyes watching the man in the chair. "So lazy, so useless—but so beautiful."

The resemblance between the eyes of the cat and her own was remarkable. In them both was the same greenish glint, and in their depths lay the same hint of latent cruelty that might spring to life at any moment. As she stroked the animal her bracelet caught in its thick fur and pulled. A feline paw came out and raked Babe's white arm.

A BLAZE of ferocity shown in the eyes of the woman. With a swift gesture she hurled the beautiful animal across the room. It struck the stone fireplace with a thud, dropped to the floor and lay there motionless, mewing a little, with eyes fixed piteously on the woman who had been stroking it a moment before.

But Vivian Legrand did not accord the stricken animal a second glance. She leaned forward, her hands on the edge of the table, her smile cruel as she watched the shrinking figure in the chair. Her voice, when she spoke, was as soft as the purr of the cat she had held.

"You have just one chance of leaving this room alive, Vincente Delgado," she advised him. "Tell me what I want to know, and you can go."

The shadow of the callous cruelty he had just witnessed had not left the man's face. He was tall and slender; a Greek or an Italian, dressed in spotless white flannels and sport shoes. The clear olive of his face was set off by a small waxen mustache under a

slender aquiline nose. The hands were long and supple and slender; almost the hands of a woman—or a professional killer.

"What do you want to know?" he muttered in French.

"Where does the Signora Tomasino get the money that she loses at the gambling tables?"

"I don't know what you mean," the man said. "I do not know the Signora Tomasino. You have come to the wrong man for information."

"Don't lie!" Vivian Legrand spat at him. "I know that you watch her every night at the Casino. You follow her from table to table. Yet you are careful to keep out of her sight—careful that she does not know that you watch her. She is not wealthy. She lives in one room in a house that a pig would turn up its nose at. Yet she has a card for the Casino, and she loses thousands of francs nightly at roulette and *chemin de fer*. I know these things. But I wish to know where the money comes from. If you desire to live, tell me. If not—"

She shrugged. No need to finish the sentence to make her meaning clear.

Delgado's voice cracked as he said:

"I don't know. God help me, I don't know."

"That is too bad," Vivian Legrand said calmly. "Perhaps you will know more after a little—er—treatment."

"Treatment?" the man said uneasily.

"Yes," she said. Reaching over to the table, she picked up a little leather case. It contained a hypodermic needle and two tiny phials, one filled with a colored liquid and the other with a clear substance. "Even in the most obstinate cases of do-not-knowness, this has been known to work wonders."

Picking out the colored phial she

held it before Delgado's eyes, so that he might see the label: *Poison*.

The man stared and stared.

Two drops of sweat splashed from his forehead. His eyes, venomous with hatred and fear, watched Vivian Legrand.

"You see, poison," she said sweetly. She drew the cork and carefully filled



VIVIAN LEGRAND

the barrel of the needle. "In the event that you are not familiar with the stuff, you might like to know that it kills—oh, quite painlessly—in about fifteen minutes after it is injected. That is, unless an antidote is injected before it is too late. This"—she held up the other phial—"is the antidote."

"But—you wouldn't poison me!" gasped Delgado, staring at the phial as though it were his death warrant.

"I shall inject the poison," Vivian Legrand went on evenly. "But if you are willing to talk, I shall inject the antidote. If not, when the fifteen minutes are up, the two men who brought

you here will simply toss your body over the cliffs into the sea."

Wylie's companion looked closely at Vivian. Hardened Apache though he was, he was unable to credit her with the serious intention of putting the thing she threatened into practice. Several years later, when the exploits of the Legrand gang of blackmailers were the talk of the underworld, the Apache, boasting of his early connection with the gang, told his comrades that at first it seemed incredible to him that any woman could have the iron strength of will, the ruthlessness, to put such a thing through. But one look at Vivian Legrand's blazing eyes made him realize that this was not an empty threat.

SHE rolled up the prisoner's sleeve. He shrank back, struggling to escape the needle she held poised. But it was useless. The tight ropes, allowed him no leeway. She pinched up the flesh of his upper arm and despite his frenzied protests, injected the contents of the syringe.

The man's face was drawn in terror as she stepped back.

"The first symptom," her relentless voice went on, "will be a slight pain in the arm, followed by a numbness, gradually spreading through the arm and from there to the shoulder. There will be no further pain. As the poison spreads through the system, the numbness will follow, until it reaches the heart.

"After that," she added significantly, "it won't matter. So you had better talk before then."

"But I can't tell you anything!" Delgado wailed. He was straining forward against his bonds, gasping, greenish of face. His body shook. "I don't know anything! I swear I don't. I

don't know the woman you are talking about. I tell you I don't!"

Vivian Legrand glanced at her watch. "The antidote must be injected at least three minutes before the fifteenth minute is up. You have now just eleven more minutes in which to talk."

Fear clung to the man like an aura, hung in the still room like a tangible thing. But still he insisted that he did not know the information she wanted. Minute after minute passed, and from time to time, Vivian Legrand spoke, her words falling in the silence like fateful things.

"Ten minutes more."

She paused and showed him the label on the phial.

Delgado's voice cracked and he gave a hollow groan.

"I don't know . . . I don't know!"

"Five minutes."

She washed out the syringe at the hand basin and filled it with the clear liquid from the other phial.

"Four minutes."

Clearly, ever so clearly, her words dropped into the stillness, flogging the man with the lash of fear. From the look in the man's eyes she knew that she had won.

"Valente . . . he would kill me . . . he is a devil, that one," the man moaned.

"Better possible death later than certain death now," Vivian Legrand pressed on relentlessly. "He need never know. He will not know."

She held the syringe over the wash basin, her thumb on the plunger.

"When the time is up I shall empty the syringe into the basin."

"The antidote, the antidote," the man pleaded. "Give me the antidote! I'll talk." His face was shrunken and drawn with fear, his breath coming in little panting gasps. "Give me the antidote, for God's sake."

"Talk," Vivian Legrand said relentlessly.

In a tumble of words, their flight winged by the death that hovered over him, the story was poured out. The Signora Tomasino formerly kept a small shop in Marseille, a fence for thieves. Then one day her daughter, Camilla, caught the eye of Paul Sammard, a private banker. He was pouring out money on Camilla like water.

And, true to her type, the old woman was bleeding her daughter, in order to have funds which to gamble at the tables. Raoul Valente had been watching the old woman, hoping to stumble onto something that would give him a chance to share in the funds that the old woman wasted so liberally. That was why he, Delgado, had been watching her night after night.

Vivian Legrand nodded. She had learned the link in the chain that she wanted to know.

"Quick, the antidote. For God's sake!" gasped the man. Beads of sweat were on his face.

Vivian Legrand's answer was to cross to the basin and empty the syringe into it.

The man's eyes followed her, and as he grasped the significance of the movement, a bubbling scream of horror and despair rose to his lips.

"You fool," Vivian Legrand said scornfully to the huddled figure on the chair, "did you think that I would let you live to tell Raoul Valente that we are on the trail of the same fox? There was no antidote. That was only water in that other phial."

She turned to Wylie.

"It will only take about five minutes more," she said calmly. "I told him fifteen, but it actually takes twenty minutes. There are chains in the cellar. When it is over, fasten the chains to

him and throw him over the cliff. The water is deep there."

Turning on her heel she walked out of the room as another despairing, bubbling scream rose from the foam-flecked lips of the dying man.

II

VIVIAN LEGRAND and Wylie had come to Monte Carlo as the guests of the reigning Rajah of Salingar. Making his acquaintance in the Far East in a scheme in which she had been the lure, they had become friends with him, and had used the Rajah's official standing and his yacht as a front to defy the English Secret Service.

Vivian Legrand herself had blackmailed Sir Mark Caywood, chief of the Secret Service in the Far East, of three thousands pounds for the return of an important document that had been stolen. Following that, she had kidnapped a political prisoner who held the key to a political secret and sold him to Sir Mark for a staggering sum. The Rajah, altogether unsuspecting of the real character of his lovely guest and her companion, had turned the yacht's nose toward Monte Carlo.

Some ten days before he had been called to Paris on business, and Vivian, ever alert for an opportunity to line her pockets, had become more and more interested in the old woman, Signora Tomasino, whom she saw in the Casino nearly every night. It had not been long before she was aware that others, too, were interested in the *signora*. Wylie had shadowed her to the squalid house where she lived several times, and each time he had noticed that the same man who had been watching her in the Casino had followed her home also.

It had not taken them long to find

that there was no wealthy Tomasio family with an elderly member addicted to gambling. Checking up on her through casual conversation with Casino attendants, Vivian Legrand found that the old woman had been losing large sums of money for several months. But try as they might, they could not determine the source of her wealth.

Then she had hit upon the expedient of extorting the information from the man who had been shadowing her. And now she had the thread in her hands. She knew, of course, who Sammard was—the junior partner of the private banking house of Courtois, Sammard et Cie., one of the most prominent on the Riviera.

But Sammard himself had never been considered a particularly wealthy man, and it would take a wealthy man to furnish the funds that the old woman squandered at the Casino. He was a partner in the business because of the fact that his late wife had been the daughter of Courtois, founder of the banking firm. Vivian Legrand was still turning the puzzle over in her mind when Adrian Wylie came into the room.

Wylie's brain was stuffed with every kind of ancient, medieval and modern lore. He never stopped reading and he never forgot anything. A scholar by inclination, he was only a professional crook and swindler in order to obtain money. And he could not have continued to be a successful crook had it not been for his association with the girl who sat before him.

"Well, we've got the trail of the fox at last," Wylie said with satisfaction, "and dead men tell no tales."

Vivian Legrand nodded, her thoughts still fixed upon the puzzle that confronted her. The man's fate

troubled her no more than the fate of the cat she had hurled so callously against the stone fireplace. That was like her. Through the whole course of her career as the world's most successful blackmailer, she permitted nothing in the way of scruples to stand in her way. She swept a man's life as ruthlessly, as surely, as she would his career, or his reputation.

"This thing is bigger than I thought," she said slowly. "My first thought was that the old woman was blackmailing someone. But that's out. Now, how does Camilla get the money she gives her mother, plus the greater sums she squanders on herself? From Sammard, undoubtedly. And where does Sammard get it? He has not a great fortune. Most of his money came to him from his wife."

In the back of her eyes a light flamed and went out again. Wylie saw it, recognized it. He said once that it was the warning signal that came into her eyes when her mind was clicking. It was a little flicker of triumph that she could not control.

"There is only one place that Sammard can get that money," she told Wylie. "He is robbing the bank of which he is a partner, or he is robbing Courtois, or else he is robbing those who trust the banking house with their deposits. Doc, it's a perfect setup for us."

"Suppose he is?" Wylie asked. "We've no proof that we could hold over his head. If he is clever enough to rob his bank without being suspected, he is clever enough to cover it up deeply enough so that we could never discover it."

"Courtois, the partner of Sammard, is a man of the old school," Vivian said thoughtfully. "He would do anything to keep the name of Courtois from being smirched by scandal. Yes,

Doc, the setup is quite perfect for us."

"You can't blackmail old Courtois because of his partner's thievery," Wylie expostulated. "He would simply make good the losses and kick Samnard out."

"Exactly," Vivian Legrand said triumphantly. "So we'll have to work through the girl, Camilla. She's no fool. She knows something is up." She turned toward the door. "Now listen!" And into Wylie's ears she poured a plan that made him gasp with admiration.

III

VIVIAN LEGRAND stopped her car a few doors from the house she intended to break into, dismissed it and walked. Though her scheme was wild enough, she could think of no other way to put her plan into effect.

The building she sought had five stories and contained ten apartments, two on each floor, with a big entrance lobby always open. Rather than be seen using the elevator she mounted the stairs to the third floor. The hall was deserted.

She rang the bell of one of the apartments, although she was certain that the apartment was empty. There was no reply. She tried the door. It was secured by a lock which she could not break open without making a noise.

She moved down the hall to the back door, which gave inward like the front. This door had a different lock. An old-fashioned one. Taking out the slender rod of thin steel which Wylie had given her, she forced it slowly back of the weather strip on a level with the lock. The rod scraped on metal. She worked it up and down, slowly pressing inward. Bit by bit the sloping tongue of the lock was forced back into its

sheath, until the blade slipped through. A twist of the door handle and she was looking into a large kitchen.

A moment later she was inside the apartment with the door closed and locked as she had found it.

On quick, light feet she searched the place. The drawing room had windows



DOC WYLIE

on the street. Off this led an inner room, a bedroom.

Tense and alert she searched the drawers of the dresser, trained fingers leaving everything as they found it. The desk held nothing of interest. She cast about to look elsewhere.

Suddenly the front door slammed.

She stood motionless a moment, as sounds came from the drawing room that told that the newcomer was moving about. Then they ceased. Silently she tiptoed to the portière that masked the door to the drawing room and peered through.

The room was empty.

Her eyes were still searching the room when there came a slight sound behind her. She whirled.

In the kitchen doorway stood Camilla, a revolver in her hand covering Vivian Legrand, the light from the window revealing her coils of glistening black hair, eyes like dark pools, white teeth and olive tinted skin. Standing there with her gun trained on Vivian, Camilla had all of the strained nonchalance of a woman who has unexpectedly walked into a cage of tigers.

"Put your hands up," she said in crisp French. "Do not move, or I shall shoot."

"Don't be a fool," Vivian Legrand answered arrogantly. She went on harshly.

"If you start anything I shall be compelled to arrest you—and I prefer not to."

A slight movement of the summer muff she carried disclosed the fact that her own gun, hidden in its depths, was covering the girl.

The whole thing was, plainly, not what the girl had expected. As for Vivian Legrand, her exquisite face betrayed no more than a slight smile: no sign of astonishment, no flutter of panic.

"Arrest me?" faltered the girl.

"Yes," Vivian Legrand told her quietly. "I am of the police. But I am not here officially. If I were, I would be compelled to arrest you. I am betraying my duty because of your mother."

"My mother?" the girl queried.

"Yes, the Signora Tomasino. Once, many years ago she did me a service. A very great service. And I have come to return that service by aiding her daughter."

The girl sat down slowly. She was still trembling, and for a moment the two women eyed one another after the manner of strange cats. But, despite

the girl's evident fear, Vivian Legrand was conscious of her appraising look, a look that swept Vivian from the casque of flaming red hair to the hem of the sports dress she wore.

"How can you aid me?" the girl asked finally. "I have done nothing that the police could be interested in."

"Except receive stolen goods," Vivian Legrand snapped. "That is why I am here—to warn you. If you are wise, you will leave Monte Carlo. If you stay you will be arrested, tried and sent to prison with your lover."

"You mean—" faltered the girl completely unnerved by the fact that this woman seemed to know everything.

"Exactly," Vivian Legrand told her. "Paul Sammard, junior partner of the banking firm of Courtois, Sammard et Cie. The police know that he is your lover. They know that for months he has been robbing his bank of huge sums of money to squander on you. What they do not know, because I have been faithless to my duty and have not reported it, is that a large part of this money you have passed on to your mother. It was when I learned that she was your mother that I determined to try and save you, if I could."

For a moment the girl was silent, dubious. Then she said in a tremulous voice:

"But what shall I do?"

"Leave Monte Carlo," Vivian told her instantly. "Not today, or tonight, but before Monday morning. Because then the police will swoop down upon the bank. Sammard and his thievery will be discovered. If you are still here you will be arrested, also."

She moved toward the door.

"Just one thing more. On no condition tell Sammard of the warning that I have given you. There is still a

great deal of money in the vaults of the bank that he has not stolen. If he knew he was suspected he would take all of the money and flee. So you must not warn him."

Without another word she slipped out of the door and closed it behind her.

There was a satisfied smile on Vivian Legrand's face as she rang for the elevator. The jaws of the trap were closing.

IV

FOR two days, scarcely a move of Sammard's had been missed by Vivian Legrand's agents. They had been close on his heels when he entered his bank the morning before. They had shadowed him when he left the bank for lunch. They knew that Camilla had repeated Vivian Legrand's conversation to him, as she had intended. They surmised, if they did not know, the contents of the bulging dispatch case that had accompanied him when he left the bank that evening.

Wylie himself had been at Sammard's elbow when he had purchased a compartment for Italy for Saturday night, and tonight's move was entirely expected.

Vivian Legrand and Wylie had been waiting in a car drawn up on the further side of the street when Sammard emerged from the girl's apartment, still carrying the briefcase, and got into a waiting car.

All her life Vivian Legrand was guided by what Wylie maintains was a rare sense of intuition. Something made her perfectly confident of Sammard. He had committed himself too deeply, she told her companion, to remain in Monte Carlo. He had known that the time would eventually come when he would have to flee, and he

would never take a chance on the police finding any of his stolen loot in his possession by a surprise raid. He would hide it somewhere. But where? That was what she intended to find out that night, for upon that hung the success or failure of her scheme.

Sammard's car moved off down the street. She followed. As the two cars reached less congested streets on the outskirts of the city, Wylie, who was driving, had to fall further back to keep from being noticed, but managed to always keep the taillight in sight.

Then Sammard's car made a sudden left turn. For an instant its headlights shone along a side road. Then they vanished.

The end of the chase was at hand. Sammard's car had turned into a large cemetery that lay on the slopes between the mountains and the sea.

Stopping their car, Vivian and Wylie crept through the unguarded gates of the cemetery on foot and stole down the roadway until they could see Sammard.

They watched cautiously as he removed a wreath of flowers that lay beside a headstone, burrowed in the heaped up earth that covered the grave, and deposited in the hollow of a number of packages from the dispatch case he carried.

He was burying the money he had stolen from his banking firm in his wife's grave.

Silently the two watched until Sammard straightened up and glanced about furtively. They stole down the road toward their car.

There was only one road that Sammard could use to get back to town. Down this road Wylie drove their car. Just past an intersection he stopped, turned the car so that the headlights illuminated the road. They waited until

they saw the lights of a car approaching. Vivian Legrand stepped into the glare of the headlights from their own car, and waved a handkerchief.

The car came to a halt a few feet from them. Sammard stepped out.

To him Vivian told her story. She was an American heiress, traveling with her guardian. Their car had broken down. Would he be kind enough to give her a lift into town, so that she could send back assistance to her guardian, who would in the meanwhile remain with their broken-down car?

Sammard agreed readily. Not once did suspicion enter his mind that the whole thing was a plant.

VIVIAN LEGRAND lay back in the seat of Sammard's open car, a short cape of fur flung over her shoulders, talking lightly to the banker. They had covered half the distance back to Monte Carlo before she sprang her second trap.

"I wonder," she said hesitantly, in her low, throbbing voice, "if you are sufficiently familiar with Monte Carlo to recommend me to a banking house with international connections?"

"But naturally," Sammard answered with a smile. "I myself am of the firm of Courtois, Sammard et Cie. We are fully equipped to handle any kind of banking business that *mademoiselle* might care to entrust to us."

Vivian Legrand expressed her delight at finding a banker, and before she left him at her hotel had made an appointment to meet Sammard the following morning at his bank to deposit a large sum of money with his firm.

Despite Sammard's effort at polite unconcern as he made the appointment, she caught the tension in the banker's manner. It was eloquent of the fact

that already he saw this American woman's funds in his hands. The fish had seen the bait, and Vivian Legrand felt sure that he would swallow the hook.

Soon after she left the banker, Wylie picked her up. They went to the cemetery, where they unearthed the money that Sammard had buried.

The next morning Vivian Legrand and Wylie appeared at the banking house of Courtois, Sammard et Cie. They were immediately ushered into the office of the junior partner. Vivian was polished, poised . . . emotionally untouched, hiding beneath her exotic polished beauty and suave manner the smoldering purpose that was fast sending her to the pinnacle of her particular field of crime.

Wylie, too, seemed the efficient, intelligent man of business as he sat there, leaning forward slightly, his hands crossed over the crook of his stick.

Within half an hour the two of them had left the bank again with a receipt signed by both Sammard and his white-haired partner for 300,000 pre-war francs—worth more than \$60,000. Most of this was the result of their criminal operations in the Far East. But, unknown to Sammard, some 75,000 francs of this sum was his own stolen money, unearthed from his wife's grave.

That was Thursday morning. That afternoon Sammard instructed his secretary that he would be out of town for several days on business, and left a note for his father-in-law, Courtois, saying that he was leaving for Paris to be gone several days.

When he left the bank late that afternoon the 300,000 francs of Vivian Legrand left with him in the dispatch case. From that moment on he was

never out of sight of a member of the Legrand gang. When he left Camilla's apartment, Vivian and Wylie again trailed him toward the cemetery.

She was taking no chances. There was the possibility of a breakdown; the possibility that they might not reach the spot in time, and she had no desire to see her 300,000 francs vanish into Italy with an absconding banker.

Earlier in the night she had planted a confederate in a car a little beyond the gates of the cemetery, with instructions to follow Sammard quietly when he arrived.

They were not far behind Sammard's car when he turned into the cemetery, as he had done the night before. Further on, beneath a tree, was the dark bulk of the car where the confederate was hidden.

The car seemed very silent as they approached it. And then Wylie says that he knew Vivian's intuition was working, that intuition that many times over was to warn her that danger was near long before the shadow of it had fallen across her path. For she broke into a little run.

There was nobody in the driver's seat of the car when they reached it. But the slant of the moon's dim rays through the opposite window showed them the interior of the car. Half on the floor and half on the seat lay the driver, blood slowly oozing from a wound on the back of his head. It was obvious that the man had been watching the approaching car through the rear window of his own, when he was struck down.

V

"TROUBLE," Vivian Legrand whispered to Wylie. "Someone ahead of us. Valente, probably. He may have been following

Sammard on the chance that he could pick up something."

They shut the door of the car softly started toward the gates of the cemetery. The road was dusty and soft. Their feet made no sound.

Crouching as they moved from one patch of darkness to another, they advanced close to the grave of Sammard's wife.

The snap of a twig not far ahead brought them to a sudden halt in the shadow. All at once there was a rush of feet. Sammard dashed past them, running at full speed, the bulging dispatch case in his arms. Close on his heels came a little knot of men.

Ahead of the running figure of Sammard a man leaped from the shadows into the road. A dagger of orange flame stabbed the darkness and a scream of pain came from Sammard. He took one or two stumbling steps, and crumpled up in the roadway, dropping the dispatch case. Instantly the man who had fired pounced on it. Another instant and the little knot of running men had joined him.

Almost immediately Vivian Legrand darted out, followed by Wylie. In her hand she carried the gun that never left her. Wylie, too, had his automatic.

The men were too engrossed in the dispatch case to notice the movement in the darkness. At the last instant one of them gave a surprised grunt and half turned. Wylie shot. Without a groan the man slumped and fell sprawling almost across the body of the banker.

"Drop your guns!" Wylie ordered sharply. "You haven't a chance."

For an astonished moment the group of men stood frozen, crowded together. Seeing them clearly for the first time, Vivian Legrand knew that her first thought had been right. She was dealing with Valente and his gang.

One man at the edge of the group suddenly darted for the nearest clump of bushes. Before he had taken two steps she fired and dropped him on his face.

"There are plenty more where that came from," she told them crisply. "If you want bullets, I'll give them to you. I will, if you don't drop those guns."

There was only a moment's hesitation. Then four guns dropped to the roadway.

"That's better," snapped Wylie. "Now step forward into the moonlight. Line up and let's have a look at you. Do as you're told, you scum. There—hold it."

"Throw that dispatch case toward me," Vivian Legrand ordered the man who held it.

The man tossed it toward her formless shape in the shadows.

"Thank you," she said sweetly. "Now the guns. Toss them this way also." She waited until the man had gathered up the discarded guns and thrown them in her direction, then spoke again.

"Now listen! You, Raoul Valente—step out from the others."

One of the men stepped forward unwillingly.

"You have a reputation as a knife-thrower," Vivian Legrand told him smoothly. "Take that knife from beneath your armpit and throw it over your shoulders as far as you can into the bushes."

Valente reached inside his shirt, drew out the long knife, raised his hand to toss it over his shoulder—and suddenly hurled it at her shadowy figure.

It thudded into the trunk of a tree against which she had been standing a moment before. With the gliding ease of a cat she had moved at the first flexing of his arm to throw, and almost

as the knife thudded into the tree she fired. A snarl of rage or pain came from Valente as the bullet smashed through his right wrist.

"You won't throw a knife for a long time, my friend," she mocked him.

She stooped, picked up the dispatch case and melted into the shadows with Wylie.

VI

JUST a few moments after the doors of Courtois, Samnard et Cie. opened the next morning Vivian Legrand and Wylie presented themselves. M. Samnard, they were told, was out of town, and would not return; but Monsieur Courtois, the senior partner, would see them.

Vivian and Wylie exchanged glances in which there was something of relief. Samnard's body had not yet been discovered, so that factor would not complicate matters.

"I regret exceedingly," Vivian Legrand told Courtois, when he appeared, "that we must alter our plans. But I have just received a cablegram from New York and must sail at once."

The cablegram she extended was faked, of course, but so genuine did it appear that even an employee of the cable company would have been deceived. Then Vivian Legrand extended her receipt for 300,000 francs.

"In view of our sudden departure," she said smilingly, "I shall have to withdraw my funds."

They waited in tense anxiety as Courtois himself went to the vaults to obtain their money.

Within a few minutes Courtois returned, white-faced, grim.

"I regret," he said curtly, "that there will be a delay. There has been an accident—a robbery."

"Robbery!" Vivian Legrand said

sharply. "But why should a robbery concern us? Am I to understand that Courtois, Sammard et Cie. is unable to pay its honest debts?"

"For the moment, *mademoiselle*, I fear that it is impossible," retorted the old Frenchman.

"I do not believe it," Vivian Legrand told him crisply. "My money was deposited here only yesterday. Today you tell me that you are unable to pay. You are attempting to trick me."

"Believe me, *mademoiselle*," the man said, "if you will but give me time—"

"I must leave Monte Carlo today," she put in sharply. "I cannot give you time. If you cannot produce my money, it can mean but one thing—that your banking house has failed."

"Today," said the old man curtly, "the robbers have left hardly sufficient cash in the vaults to transact the day's business. Tomorrow, when I call in my loans—"

"Then there is nothing to do," Vivian Legrand interrupted, "save consult my lawyer and see if he can save something from the ruins."

"If you make public the fact that the bank has been robbed, we will be ruined," the old banker said.

"But you are ruined."

"I can make good my losses if I am given time. I have a large private fortune. I can borrow. If you will only give me time, no one will lose a penny."

"I cannot wait," Vivian Legrand told him. "If you are in a position to pay me, I will keep silent about the robbery. Otherwise not."

For the first time Wylie spoke.

"I am not familiar with the laws of Monaco," he said smoothly, "but it seems to me that that is compounding a felony. In America or England it would be. And that places us, of course, in a rather dangerous position." Before the banker could speak he went on. "Naturally, if we are being placed in a dangerous position because we are willing to save a fine old banking house from ruin, that matter should be taken into consideration."

"Naturally," Vivian Legrand said. "I am sure that you appreciate that fact, do you not? We have on deposit here the sum of 300,000 francs. Now, your reputation in Monte Carlo banking circles is good. Your credit is excellent. We will wait here, while you approach your colleagues. If you are able to borrow 350,000 francs, we will keep silent about the condition of your bank. But if—"

"But you have on deposit here only 300,000 francs!" the banker snapped.

I KNOW," Vivian Legrand told him, "but under the circumstances, the extra 50,000 francs can be considered as a bonus. Surely it is worth the extra 50,000 to you to stave off ruin. If not—"

The old man sat perfectly still. He looked for mercy in Vivian Legrand's eyes. There was none.

"Very well," he said, grimly. "To save the name of Courtois from disgrace, I will even pay a—er—bonus. Will you wait here until my return, please?"

He was gone for more than an hour. When he returned he placed in Vivian Legrand's hands 350,000 francs.

Vivian Legrand fights the chief of the Turkish underworld. Watch for "The Episode of the Levantine Monster." Coming soon!

The Griffin's Gambit

By J. Allan Dunn



A Legless Figure of Horror Climbs into a Locked House to Start a Game of Death That Brings Manning and the Griffin Face to Face

A Novelette

CHAPTER I

The Griffin's Key

THE long black car slid along the country road. The purring of the engine was inaudible. The moon was shining, though it was low in the heavens, and no lights showed in or about the big sedan. It glided with the somber, sinister aspect of a hearse.

The light showed her a horrible face, beaked like an eagle

Trees lined the road, which was a branch from a main highway. It possessed no lighting, either for traffic control or general purposes. It ran for about two miles before it linked with another highway, and in that distance there were but four houses, well apart; comfortable country residences without especial pretense to display or size.

The car came to a noiseless halt where the shadow was thick. Across the road from it ran a high hedge of osage orange, thorny and impenetrable, backed by wire fencing that was invisible from the road. There was an entry gate of ornamental iron, swung

between two pillars of cemented field-stone, topped by electric lanterns that had been switched off.

One figure remained at the wheel of the car, seated as rigidly as an automaton. A door opened, and two weird figures descended. One was dwarfish, not more than four feet in height. It was dressed like a man, but it appeared like a deformed ape. It had no legs, but it moved with astounding agility, the trunk swung between the arms.

The other figure was almost as mysterious. It was tall and lean, wrapped in a black mantle of ankle length. On the head was a high-crowned, wide-brimmed sombrero. This man looked like some tragic figure of mediæval Spanish romance. The collar of the cape was turned up, his features were not to be seen in the light. What was to be glimpsed of the face appeared ghastly and unnatural.

No words passed between them. What was to be done seemed to have been planned to the minutest detail.

The legless creature climbed one of the stone pillars as nimbly as a chimpanzee, hoisting its bulk with the strength of its arms, hand-over-hand, with fingers that gripped the crevices securely.

It was a fearful sight to see this object swarming up the wall to the lantern cage. It squatted there, like a gargoyle, motionless.

A dog came bounding and barking across the lawn. It was not yet enraged, its voice was a first warning, rather a general alarm. Its nostrils twitched to catch the strange scent that had roused it to duty.

The legless freak tossed a juicy fragment of meat. Here was a more inviting odor. The dog gulped it down. A sound, half groan, half howl, as the pellet inside the meat dissolved, and

the deadly poison paralyzed lungs and heart, died away as the unlucky brute fell on its side, twitching, gasping, limp.

In the darkness the human gargoyle chuckled noiselessly. It was deaf and dumb. Such deeds as this amused it. Then it lowered itself inside the garden. No lights appeared. There was no disturbance.

Balanced on its torso, the freak juggled with the lock of the gate. It was not elaborate. The gate opened, and the cloaked figure passed in like a shadow, sinister and silent.

THE two strode across the velvet lawn, one on legs, the other on its arms. Still they moved with the fell and absolute precision of those who have spied out the land. Their evil purpose was manifest in their appearance, their approach, the silent hour, when vitality is low in sleeping folk, and courage has retreated.

A veranda ran about the building, once a Colonial farmhouse. The cloaked man stood between bush-cypresses, hidden, as the living gargoyle hitched itself up a post. The freak disappeared, entered a window opened to the night, festooned with clambering roses.

Swinging between softly planted palms, it passed through the sleeping chamber. It glanced at the fine four-poster bed where a woman lay, and almost halted. But the will of the cloaked man, who was its master, drove it on to open the unlocked door, to propel itself down the stairs.

The house had an odor of serenity, almost of sanctity. It believed itself secure. But this whimsy of a pernicious Nature left a taint behind it of perversion, almost of obscenity.

The front door opened. The freak

made a hissing sound. The cloaked man passed through the door, ascended the stairs.

On the landing a faint nightlight burned on a small stand. The cloaked man gestured, ordering his slave to descend. Now a high-bridged nose showed, like a hook in shape. There was a glint of infinitely evil eyes, flickering like the licking flames of hell. They seemed to glow through a scabrous mask, as a leper's orbs might shine. The man's skin was dull gold, curiously wrinkled about features that looked like those of a long-mummied Pharaoh, resurrected from a sarcophagus.

The legless thing hopped down the stairs, awkward now, like a toad. It went out into the night, out to the car, where it took its place on the rear seat, without a sign from the chauffeur.

The moon sank slowly. The landscape lay dark, windless and inanimate. The woman awoke. She slept soundly, as a rule, without dreams; sane and healthy. She was a psychiatrist, without illusion, her life dedicated to those whose minds were too often filled with fear. Fear that she often banished, mental ghosts she laid.

But now fear gripped her.

Two green eyes stared at her. They were centered with black pupils. They did not move. Back of them, she felt a horrible, inflexible malevolence.

Her heart contracted. She was not sure if the vision were real, or conjured out of unsound sleep, by nerves that for the first time in her sound life had betrayed her.

The malignant orbs disappeared. They had focused upon her from battery-lit lenses in a contrivance suspended from the cloaked man's neck, like binoculars.

Now, in the dark, his own hidden

eyes gloating like a ghoul's, the cloaked man shifted the green lenses.

The woman was brave, too brave. She had no weapon, no way of summoning help from servants who were faithful, yet might not be too ready to respond. But there was a reading lamp clamped to the head of the bed. She reached for it, fumbling and stealthy, still half-tranced by slumber.

The light showed her a horrible face, beaked like an eagle. It seemed to have a leprous skin, like that of a shedding snake, dully gold.

Her voice died in her throat as she roused, and tried to raise herself. The leprous face twitched to a derisive grin. A hideous chuckle was the last thing she heard as hands like talons clutched her throat, pressing, with deadly thumb-thrusts, upon her jugular vein and vagus nerve. Air and blood cut off, she thrashed like a landed salmon, subsiding with gasps as her lungs failed her.

Th green lights played again upon her distorted face, lips twisted in the sardonic smile of death.

The chuckle sounded again.

The man leaned forward. He drew a small silver box from an inner pocket, took out of it a scarlet label, a small oval of stiff paper he licked beneath his skin-tight mask.

He affixed it to her forehead.

Then he glided from the room, down the stairs. The door clicked, with its automatic lock of false safety.

The car moved down the road into the farther highway.

There its lights went on, and it gathered speed, rushing through the night, with many other cars carrying men and women. Most of them were, or had been, pleasure bent.

But none experienced greater delight than the mad monster who sat with the

freak Al beside him. The Griffin had made his first move, his gambit, in his latest game, the sport in which his perverted nature delighted; the murder of the worthy.

"We'll see what our friend Manning makes of *this* opening," he murmured. Al could not hear. The chauffeur, driving like an automaton, heard nothing.

He was not only servant, but slave to his master, who held him in unrighteous thrall, as the Griffin held all who served him, fearful of his power, his knowledge of their hidden lives.

CHAPTER II

The Voice of Evil

The lifeless, strangled body of Martha Everest, eminent psychiatrist, was found this morning by her personal maid when she brought her dead mistress her usual tray of tea and toast and orange juice.

On the brow of her mistress was the crimson insignia of the homicidal madman known as the Griffin; a red cartouche embossed with the design of an heraldic griffin, rampant, showing the upper half of the mythical monster, half-lion and half-eagle.

The maid, Susan Robinson, who has been in the service of Dr. Everest for many years, retained her senses long enough to call the police. They arrived to find the rest of the household unconscious of the tragedy, and the maid in a profound swoon.

Aroused, she stated, and the two other servants of the household corroborated her story, that there had been no alarm in the night. The doors of the house were found locked, the entrance gate fastened. A Belgian police dog was discovered poisoned, apparently by cyanide.

There were faint tracks on the lawn, but dew had plainly fallen later. The police . . .

reading, that the Griffin had struck again. Without warning. Then the mocking voice spoke to him, with its inevitable, faint accompaniment of eerie, barbaric music.

"My dear Manning, you will have learned by now that I have made my opening move in a fresh game, and established my gambit. I attended to this matter with my own hands. It seemed to me quite a personal matter, and I must admit that I got distinct exhilaration out of it."

The voice paused, as if hoping to draw some retort, some expression, from Manning. But Manning did not answer. He was pledged to destroy the Griffin. Manning had caught him once, and the law had judged him insane, placing him in Dannemora, where his fiendish ingenuity devised means of escape.

"That vaporizing harridan, Martha Everest, had the temerity to refer to me as an outstanding example of dementia præcox. I sealed her lips and brain forever. She was a strong-minded woman, but I almost spoiled my own purpose. I almost frightened her to death before I strangled her. There have been times when I should like to strangle you, Manning, but I have thought of many other more ingenious ways of disposing of you. You were born under a lucky star, but some day the signs will properly assemble, and you will cease to bother me—though, mostly, you have amused me."

There had been times when Manning had actually lifted a chalice of death to his lips, others when he escaped by the breadth of a hair. It would always be so until he annihilated the Griffin or the Griffin played an unbeatable gambit and swept Manning from the board.

"I am reverting to previous methods in my next move, Manning," continued

MANNING, at breakfast, tossed aside his paper as the telephone sounded. With its first tinkle he knew, aside from what he had been

the Griffin. "You will hear from me within twenty-four hours. I shall send you the name of my next candidate for elimination, also the date of his demise."

Then came the taunting laugh, tainted with madness, tinged with infinite malevolence, laughter that would



MANNING

fit well in the horror-haunted halls of hell itself.

The laughter blended with the exotic music, died away.

Gordon Manning, ex-Major of Military Intelligence in the World War; adventurer, explorer and also counsellor-at-law, though he never appeared to plead a case, had been commissioned by both city and state to uncover and annihilate the Griffin.

But he did not now bestir himself to aid in the search for the murderer of the woman. He knew that once the Griffin had struck—given a clean getaway—he would not be traced by any ordinary methods. The police would do their best.

Manning was gradually gathering a force of undercover agents to offset the Griffin's slaves. Manning's recruits knew no age limit. He chose them for

their aptitude. They included boys and men in all walks of life, one or two girls, and one woman. Not all of them knew to what end they worked, or even that they did police work.

A lot of them seemed slender threads to weave a net about such a monster, but Manning was the weaver. Slowly, but he hoped surely, Manning's agents worked to the final end of discovering the Griffin's lair.

Manning adopted the method of the honey-hunter, who, capturing a bee, let it fly and marked its direct flight to the hive. The ultimate crossing of the angles would locate the hidden spot, where the Griffin had regathered his forces since his escape from Danemora.

So far, Manning had gathered odds and ends of information that seemed to show that the Griffin's powerful car invariably headed towards a destination not far from New York. Such a car was fairly conspicuous, but not unmistakable. No doubt he shifted his license numbers, but there was a limit to that dodge.

Also, Manning had spotted a few of the men who had worked with the Griffin in the execution of his crimes. He might have discarded them, and they were watched, but Manning watched them also.

So now Manning waited to hear from these agents of his. In the hours before the message of impending doom arrived he meant to store up energy. He did not dismiss the matter from his mind entirely. That was a nervous impossibility. The Griffin's evil impulses broke through any attempt at assuming a genuine serenity.

Manning had breakfasted in dressing gown above his pajamas.

But he did light a Burmese cheroot

and selected a volume from the handy shelves of the library.

The book was an early edition of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." He rifled the pages to the place where Christian encountered the "foul fiend, Apollyon."

"So he went on, and Apollyon met him. Now the monster was hideous to behold: he was clothed with scales like a fish, and they are his pride; he had wings like a dragon, and feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was the mouth of a lion . . . Then Apollyon straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way, and said, I am void of fear in this matter. Prepare thyself to die; for I swear by this infernal den that thou shalt go no further; here will I spill thy soul."

Manning did not liken himself to the redoubtable "Pilgrim," but he fancied that the Griffin might be comparing himself to Apollyon. And Apollyon finally got the worst of it.

That chuckle was not so confident in the late afternoon. He had a certain book in his hand when the Griffin's expected message was delivered. That might have been coincidence, but it was somewhat uncanny. In the light of what happened, Manning began to wonder about the intimate knowledge the Griffin revealed of his private life—if it were privy against the power of that perverted genius.

The message came at dusk, normally enough delivered. Manning considered the uniformed messenger boy genuine, though he would check up on that without hope of learning much. To trace the Griffin by such clues was about as useful as trying to trace the course of a fish in the water.

The letter, with its envelope, was on the familiar heavy hand-made gray paper, the bold writing in purple ink. Its general style was the grandiloquent

and autocratic manner the Griffin always affected. But the form of address had varied. The epistle was headed with the name of the Griffin's next victim.

It was a name that Manning knew well. A man he knew, respected, and admired; with whom he had actually adventured along wild trails.

Bayard Harding.

In "Who's Who," Harding was set down as a zoölogist, but he was also an explorer and anthropologist of note.

His latest dictum had stirred not only the scientific, but the world at large. The gorilla, claimed Harding, had almost given up entirely its habit of living in the trees. Its nests were now made upon the ground. It no longer traveled by swinging through the boughs. Its arms were shortening, legs lengthening, and it maintained an upright position as its natural gait.

Soon, very soon, as science measures time, the gorilla would begin to follow the course of natural evolution, it would become a kind of man.

This statement of Harding's had provoked anger in some quarters. But the Griffin appeared to be more virulent than any other critic. To the Griffin, star-gazer, necromancer, caster of horoscopes, and ardent believer in zodiacal influence; Harding was a blasphemmer, seeking to asperse the principle of astrology, to mock at the signs of the heavens. Therefore, Bayard Harding was to be eliminated.

The Griffin wrote:

This man, seeking notoriety, would pretend that the positions of the heavenly bodies and their courses through the starry universe are linked up with the destinies of brutes. He offends the gods and I, their appointed arbiter and agent, shall destroy him.

The date, my dear Manning, shall be on the seventeenth of this month. That

give you time to prepare your important defenses. Nothing on earth may save him.

I am also granting you a pawn. Here is a hint for you. If you ever read the *Analects of Lao Tsze* you may remember the following:

"To know the habits of your friend is not always wise, lest that make you despise him. To know the habits of your enemy enables you to defeat him, even to easily compass his death against all opposition."

I know some of your habits, Manning, as well as those of Bayard Harding. Beware your own destruction.

There was no signature, only the heraldic device of a demi-griffin, rampant, showing the eagle beak and wings, the lion's mane and claws.

Manning set down the letter, looked at the book he had been reading when the telephone had tinkled, and brought to him the premonitory thrill of evil and peril.

It was a small volume, beautifully printed and bound in vellum. The title was deeply stamped in gold: "*Analects of Lao Tsze*."

There was small doubt that the Griffin did not boast when he said he knew some of Manning's habits, little question that Manning was being spied upon. Yet he would have risked his life upon the integrity of his two Japanese servitors. Soon, that was going to be proven.

As for the Griffin, despite his phrases, Manning knew that his main grievance lay in the suggestion that he, the chosen of the gods, an immortal of a thousand reincarnations, should be compared, however remotely, with an ape. That, and the fact that he was insanely jealous of anyone, or anything connected with progressive achievement.

Harding had to be seen, and warned. Manning knew how his friend would take it, victor over scores of desperate

risks against savage men and beasts, and the forces of nature. None the less, Manning believed that he could persuade Harding to let him take every precaution that would not insult Harding's manhood.

He could not get a man like Bayard Harding to hide himself, to surrender his ordinary affairs. And the Griffin, when he killed, had penetrated even to the most modern of vaults and claimed his victim.

The clue was in that pawn the Griffin condescended to give his opponent, it lay in the "*Analects of Lao Tsze*." Through some habit of Harding's that might also be a habit of Manning's, the fatal blow would materialize. And a man's habits were legion.

There was the commissioner of police to be informed, but not the press. Time enough for criticism if the Griffin's gambit won the game.

CHAPTER III

The Poison Is Tested

THE GRIFFIN, in his long robe of sable silk, embroidered with cabalistic symbols in gold, descended by the concealed elevator from his private chamber to the cellars where he had set up his laboratories.

His face was masked with the clinging stuff that looked like goldbeaters' skin, half screening, half revealing his saturnine features. He looked like a pharaoh risen from his sarcophagus.

Al, the legless, deaf and dumb freak, ambled after him, like a familiar spirit. He knew to what such a visit tended, the rudimentary soul in him delighted in the horrors he would witness.

As they left the chamber it was redolent of burned amber, of hasheesh-tinged tobacco, filled with faint strains of strange music.

A man in denim overalls, whose face was bloodless, like something that had grown in a dungeon, a man with the cranium of a genius, but whose eyes were dull with despair, was waiting for his master. He had no name, only a number stenciled on the overalls.

"I am conducting an experiment," said the Griffin. "It is a dangerous one, Number Twenty-Four. I wish you to stand by, to use every effort to resuscitate any one who may be affected. You are to do your utmost. I wish you to gather your apparatus and your materials in readiness."

The voice of Twenty-Four was hollow as an echo in a tomb.

"I must ask the nature of the experiment," he said. "At least, what I must expect to combat."

"Asphyxiation covers it, broadly. *This* will be the agent."

The Griffin gave the ex-physician a slip of paper on which chemical symbols had been set down by another unnamed slave, once a famous chemist, whose disappearance had never been solved, though it was accounted for officially by the sudden death of his unfaithful mistress. The Griffin had offered him a haven.

Number Twenty-Four glanced at the paper.

"This is an intensely toxic, volatile and rapid poison, classed as protoplasmic," he said. "Employed in this form, which should prove difficult, I doubt if the victim could be resuscitated."

"Nevertheless, you will do your best," the Griffin told him, his tones like sharp steel, rasping on sharp steel. "Your mention of poison and victim is untimely, Twenty-Four. I do not know that an accident may happen. If it should, tell me your treatment."

"To wash out the stomach, using

oxidizing agents, such as hydrogen peroxide, potassium permanganate, injections of methylene blue. The absorption of the poison will be terribly swift, however, and all antidotes may be ineffective."

"Go on," said the Griffin. His voice had softened now, but it was none the



THE GRIFFIN

less suggestive. It suggested an inner chuckle. "What else?"

"Possibly hypodermic or intravenous injections of sodium thiosulphate. If I only knew how the poison would be administered . . ."

"Ah," said the Griffin, rubbing his palms together, "that is my secret, entirely my own idea, Twenty-Four; as to how, in the course of the experiment, it might be administered. Try all these things. If you are successful you will be rewarded. I will see that you are able to communicate with your family. There will be a monetary consideration. Kindly hurry."

Twenty-Four wondered wherein his success would lie. In resuscitation, or in failure. As for his reward, if he was

given it, it would be like Dead Sea fruit, ashes in his mouth.

"I am in hell," he muttered as he went back to his special cubicle, "and the Devil is my master."

It was an hour later when he was again summoned, to find a man stretched upon the floor, naked, his body blotched red and purple. He showed no sign of life.

"Less than two minutes have passed," said the Griffin. "Get busy."

Half an hour later, haggard, wet with sweat, Number Twenty-Four gave his decision, not knowing how it would be received.

"There is no hope, there never was," he announced. "In that form there is no chance of revival. The man is dead, has been dead since I came in. His blood is jellied in his veins, his lungs, and in his arteries. I tell you, he is dead. And he does not look like an experimental chemist to me. His fingers are spatulate, roughened, they are not even stained with acid . . ."

His voice rose, cracked, became hysterical.

The Griffin's eyes surveyed him through the slits in his mask.

"Your personal comments were not asked," he said. "I fear this exhibition forfeits your reward, Twenty-Four. Al, see that he goes back to his place."

The Griffin spoke the words that Al could not hear but had learned to lip-read.

Twenty-Four shrank from this human gargoyle, skipping toward him, with his muscular arms for rope. He went out weeping and unnerved.

The Griffin looked at the dead man on the floor. A vigorous, but pleasant type, not long a serf in this inferno. Chosen by the Griffin, as a vivisectionist would select a rabbit or a monkey.

A crude person, promised sanctuary

by an agent of the Monster. Now he had proved his utility.

"Excellent," said the Griffin with a chuckle. "It could not be better. I promised you release if you proved worthy, Number Forty-One. You were worth more to me dead than alive, and you have your release from hunger, thirst, from all appetites of the flesh. A healthy moron, serving my purpose. For I seek to destroy the bodies of my enemies, to send them to the grave. For you, Forty-One, there is an empty space in my private cemetery. You will be fertilizer for the weeds."

WHEN the Griffin spoke of his private cemetery he was somewhat arrogant. The old, remote Colonial estate he had acquired possessed a graveyard, and a vault to hold the bones of the owners and those who served them faithfully.

Most of those bones had long since moldered into dust. The headstones leaned, the caskets yawned in the vault. And their vacancies were occasionally filled by the Griffin.

It was Number Seventeen, the chemist, who profited most by the Griffin's latest experiment. The man's soul had long ago been eaten out. To him remained his skill, and his delight in liquor, in well-spiced meals. Such matters were denied him save at rare intervals. This was one of them.

He was served food that warmed his stomach, liquor that flamed in his brain. For him, it was nepenthe. He had no doubt of the sinister intent of the Griffin. He even admired the madness that had suggested a method unknown to crime. Always a cynic, Seventeen came closest to understanding and appreciating the Griffin.

Seventeen had long ago bartered his soul. He doubted if the Griffin had ever

had one. If it were not for the precision of his chemistry he might have subscribed to the idea that the Griffin was a fiend in human shape. Nor did he care, as he guzzled his curry, drank his burgundy and the brandy that the well-satisfied Griffin supplied.

In his own chamber, tended by Al, the freak, the Griffin supped less heartily, but as an epicure. After his meal Al brought him his water pipe, and he sat in the throne chair behind his carven desk, inscrutable behind his leprous mask, while the bubbles formed in the rosewater and the fumes of the drug mounted to his brain.

Al squatted in his appointed spot, upon a cushion, worshipful. The eerie music vibrated, barbarous, voluptuous.

Now and then the Griffin chuckled.

CHAPTER IV

The Hours of Doom

"HOW long have you had this man, where did you get him from?" Manning asked his friend, Bayard Harding.

"About three months. I got him from the Élite Agency, the best in the city. I lost Itabe on my last trip. Enteric fever. But this chap has excellent references. He was with Furnell for six years. Furnell didn't want to take him to Anticosti. The chap's got poor lungs. But he's top-chop as a servant."

"Call Furnell?" asked Manning.

"Yes. He was just leaving. Gave Ali a first-class recommend. Commended him to me, and all that. Don't worry about Ali, Manning."

Manning was not especially worrying about Ali. The man seemed all right, but he was an Oriental, no doubt partly Arab, hailing from the Philippines. The day was the seventeenth, and

Manning had taken over, greatly to Harding's amusement.

"Give Ali the day off," he said. "Tell him he won't be needed, any excuse you feel like. But I am telling you, Harding, that you taste nothing, eat nothing, drink nothing, that I do not prepare for you. I have brought in tooth paste and soap, with all other supplies. I know you like my cheroots, but for today you will smoke the regalias I just bought on the avenue."

"Stretching it a bit, when it comes to soap and tooth paste, aren't you, old chap? I hope you've included some Scotch."

"I've got the Scotch. As for the tooth paste, the Griffin tried that once. I have never known him to duplicate his methods, but I am taking no chances. Let Ali stay away until this evening. He need never know we cooked our own meals. We'll clean up. That is, I will."

"Have your own way," said Harding cheerily. "The Griffin is a crank. He can't beat the pair of us. You can be chief cook and bottle-washer, if you insist upon it. You're sleeping here, I suppose?"

Harding took it lightly. He was a big man, healthy and well-built. He was talking with Manning in the library, that was also a sort of trophy room, with many curios, strange weapons, modern guns, and mounted heads of rare specimens Harding had shot.

In one corner there was a mounted forest gorilla. It was a fine specimen of taxidermy, showing the "Old Man" upright, arms extended, as if drumming on its barrel-chest. It stood only four inches below six feet. The ferocious countenance, with its open jaws, was a fearsome thing to look at, even now.

Harding saw Manning glance at it.

"The Griffin didn't fancy being called a cousin of that, eh? I wonder how he'd like to have faced it, alive? I didn't want to kill the beggar. I had all the specimens I wanted. I was only studying their habits, but I suppose he thought I was too nose-y. He charged—and he didn't die easily."

Manning was not to be diverted so easily from the matter in hand. He knew Harding was utterly fearless, but that did not armor him against the Griffin. The Griffin's subtle attacks were infinitely more dangerous than a charging male gorilla.

"I'm sleeping here tonight," he said. "In your room. Rather, you can sleep, I'll stay up. An hour from now you enter the time-zone of peril. Tomorrow, at midnight, it will have ended. If you are safe, then I can go home with a light heart."

"The Griffin does not repeat an attack. If it goes wrong, he blames it on the sidereal almanac, or some shifting of the ecliptic that has made him mis-cast your horoscope. You may be sure he did that with you, and believes that the next twenty-four hours after midnight are unfavorable to you, that you are under the malign influence of the stars, of which he is the appointed agent."

"Bilge," said Harding. "Let's see that Scotch."

Manning had not yet unpacked the supplies he had brought, but he now produced whisky and club soda. Ali brought glasses and ice in cubes. Manning regarded the ice a bit dubiously. But he was sure of one thing. Even if the Griffin had somehow contrived to tamper with the cubes, he could also contrive to be certain that Harding did not die, outside of the time he had set. That would be a matter of pride with him.

"Mind if I take seltzer instead?" asked Harding. "I make my own. The club soda is a bit sharp for my taste. It spoils the Scotch, to my mind."

The siphon was empty. Harding unscrewed the top, removed the glass tube, and filled the wired container to the red line with water he drew from a tap in a lavatory that opened off the library.

He took a sparklet from a carton and tossed it to Manning. It was made of metal, the carbonic acid gas inside it hermetically sealed.

"You couldn't tamper with that," said Harding. He set the little cylinder in the charger, screwed it down to the pin, shaking the syphon until the water bubbled with the released gas.

Manning tried it instead of opening up his own soda, and agreed with Harding that it blended well with the whisky. It was still well before twelve, and he gave Harding a cheroot.

"You can have the day off, tomorrow, Ali," Harding told the man when he came to see if there were any more chores. "In fact, you can have tonight off as well. Mr. Manning and I are going to be busy on private matters. You need not come in until nine o'clock tomorrow night."

Ali salaamed and thanked the *tuan*. He seemed pleased with his unexpected leave. They heard the outer door close. Manning, going over the apartment later, found Ali had departed.

They had plenty to talk over together on subjects of mutual interest and knowledge. Harding finally turned in and slept, while Manning watched.

HE had been watching Harding's habits, but they did not seem unusual. He noticed, however, that the zoölogist did not brush his teeth before turning in. The next morn-

ing Manning presented him with a new tooth brush, sealed almost as hermetically in cellophane as the sparklets were in their metal containers.

Harding chaffed about it all. The day passed without anything out of the way occurring, or being suggested. Manning's meals were simple but appetizing.

He and Harding cleaned up all traces of their culinary work. It did not so much matter about Ali knowing, save that he would not feel it became the dignity of the *tuans* to act as servants.

"Spoil his holiday for him," said Harding. "I've got a notion to change into lighter things, have a shower. It's a warm night. How about you?"

"I'll change after twelve o'clock," Manning answered. As the fateful minutes became more and more limited his responsibility and watchfulness increased.

It was like the monster to plan his murderous coups so that the victim might begin to relax, or else—according to his temperament—become strained to the breaking point.

While Harding took his shower and changed into his lounging pajamas, Manning again made his rounds. There had been certain deliveries made. Manning had taken them in and promptly tabooed them. A clock struck nine.

There was the click of a key in the latch and Ali entered, respectful, smiling, and sober.

He went to his room to shift into his service coat. Manning went to Harding's bedroom found Harding cool and comfortable in his loose togs and straw slippers.

"Ali's back," he said. "Better tell him you won't want him again tonight. We'll serve ourselves with what we want in the way of ice and glasses."

"You're not suspecting him because he's a Malay?" asked Harding with a laugh.

"I'd suspect him if he were the Prophet Mohammed, and could prove it," said Manning grimly. "We've got about a hundred and seventy minutes to go, and I'm not going to ease up until they are over."

"There's another bottle of that Mountain Dew left. Let's go into the library and finish it," suggested Harding. "Might take that grim look off your phiz."

Next he took up the ice cubes and got rid of them in the lavatory. He emptied the ewer and squirted out the contents of the siphon.

Harding shrugged his shoulders, but he knew Manning too well not to realize that he would not waste time on dramatic effect. The cubes had been all right the night before—but that was before midnight. They were in the danger zone now.

Ali's room was next to the kitchen. The door closed too tightly to show any light, but Manning heard the thin wailing of an Oriental fiddle. He let the tap run, after he had carefully wiped the orifice; he filled up a tray for fresh cubes, after he had cleaned it. He was leaving nothing to chance.

He set the switch for quick refrigeration, staying there, with one eye on Ali's door. It was not that he suspected Ali, but all things. Eternal vigilance might be the price of his friend's life. Even then . . .

Against the thin tones of Ali's fiddle, Manning heard Harding strumming an African marimba, with a good sense of rhythm. It was an eerie sort of accompaniment to the drama that might be unfolding its grisly plot at that very moment. The strumming stopped. Manning took out the partially congealed

cubes. He did not like to leave Harding alone too long.

He shook up a fresh siphon.

It was nine twenty-five by the electric clock, with its scampering second hand marking the march into eternity.

Manning poured the Scotch for himself, after Harding. Both added ice. Harding squirted in the seltzer water, that fizzed coldly and cheerfully.

"Here's to the next to die," he quoted jestingly.

MANNING'S jungle-trained ear noticed something. Harding, raising his glass, missed it. Ali had stopped playing. It was a trifle, but the difference between life and death.

Harding had taken a long swig of his highball, expecting Manning was doing the same thing.

Suddenly he rose, strangling, stiffening, clutching at the air with hands that grew rigid. Harding dropped before Manning could reach him. Tiny bubbles of thick froth gathered at his lips, his eyes rolled up. His face was livid, then gray, splotted with crimson. He rattled in his throat, clawing at the rug; horrible, gasping for breath.

The Griffin had struck, almost at the eleventh hour.

But for the grace of the gods, Manning felt he would be lying there beside his friend.

The "Analects of Lao Tsze." The habits of your friends and enemies!

Ali had not tampered with the Scotch whisky. It was the seltzer that Harding preferred. But how?

Manning flung open the window. It was his full belief that Harding could not be recalled to life. He could summon medical aid—but there was also the necessity of seizing Ali!

Ali, with his fiddle, who had somehow poisoned the seltzer.

Manning made a dash for the door, entered the main corridor of the apartment, and saw Ali gliding for the entrance. Ali turned and a long knife flashed in his hand.

Manning tackled him bare-handed.

Ali had changed the carton of sparklets in the library. One of the Griffin's slaves in his infernal laboratories had charged them with some fatal gas, and Ali had bided his time. Manning meant to capture him alive.

He locked his left wrist below that of Ali, his forearm thrust through the bend of Ali's arm as he elbowed it back.

His right hand grasped the right wrist of Ali. The fingers of his left hand vised his own right wrist as he faced his opponent. It was a jujutsu armlock with terrific pressure applied to force Ali to let go of the knife or have his wrist dislocated.

Ali countered, falling on his stiffened left arm. He flung his legs about Manning's in a scissors throw, one leg above and one below Manning's knees, destroying his balance.

But Manning fell sideways, his weight lunging into Ali's crotch, both hands free again. Ali squirmed, seeking his knife as Manning went for his gun.

He struck with the muzzle at Ali's skull, and Ali's blade thrust upwards. It entered Manning's forearm; it grated on the bone. In the agony of the nerve shock Manning pulled trigger. The report of the gun thundered in the passage and Ali collapsed, a bullet between his eyes, ranging upward.

There would be no confession from Ali, even if one could ever have been wrung from him.

Manning was bleeding, too. Blood dripped from his arm as he called police headquarters, giving his name.

Every aid that the Griffin had tested on the unfortunate human guinea pig

failed to resuscitate Bayard Harding.

The medical examiner bound up Manning's wound. Ali's steel had not been poisoned. The hurt was not dangerous.

"Nothing could have been done," the examiner said. "I'll take the siphon along. I see you didn't take your own drink, Manning. I'm taking that, too. You had a narrow escape."

Manning looked sadly upon the face of his friend. If his own death had saved Harding, had compassed that of the Griffin, he would have been content, he thought.

But the monster had scored again.

CHAPTER V

Face to Face

IT was close to dawn when Manning let himself into his own house at Pelham Manor. He switched on a light and wearily went into his own library. His wound throbbed, but more poignant than that was the burden of defeat that clutched at his heart.

His favorite armchair invited him. It was by the side of the hearth, partly facing a lacquered cabinet that stood on high legs. Its paneled doors showed two scowling figures of Chinese gods.

He touched a switch and a shaded light went on beside his chair.

It was occupied by a shape of mystery, shrouded in a cloak.

It was the Griffin—here in Manning's own house! It meant that death must have come to Manning's faithful servitors, that death awaited him.

The Griffin chuckled.

"Face to face at last, Manning. I have been waiting for you. I won the game tonight, but I am tired of you as an opponent. I prepare to clear the board."

Manning's weariness fled. He jerked

his gun and fired pointblank at the mocking monster. He knew the slug went true, aimed at the Griffin's heart. He saw the Griffin stagger from the impact, heard his jeering laugh.

The Griffin's knees struck the seat of the big chair and he fell into it. But he was filled with unholy glee. He was not wounded. Bruised, perhaps, beneath a steel vest.

Before Manning could pull trigger again, this time to send a bullet through that leprous mask, the doors of the lacquered cabinet swung silently apart and an apelike thing propelled itself through the air.

The arms of Al went about him. The fingers of Al clamped on Manning's throat with prodigious fury.

His wind was shut off. Hot flames seemed to fill his skull. His bulging eyes saw the Griffin, sitting forward like a devil in hell, watching a soul tortured to death, the mask wrinkled in his fiendish grin.

But this was Manning's house. He had built it, had planned it. The Griffin had his devices—and Manning was not destitute of some of his own.

He rolled over on the floor to the baseboard, hurled himself against it with the last remnant of his strength.

It gave way, swinging on spring hinges. This opening was not of wood, but steel. It gave into a narrow closet that opened on another room.

Al was scraped from Manning's back. A shrill contact alarm rang out as the panel snapped back and an automatic plunger held it fast.

Manning lay there, panting, choking, safe enough.

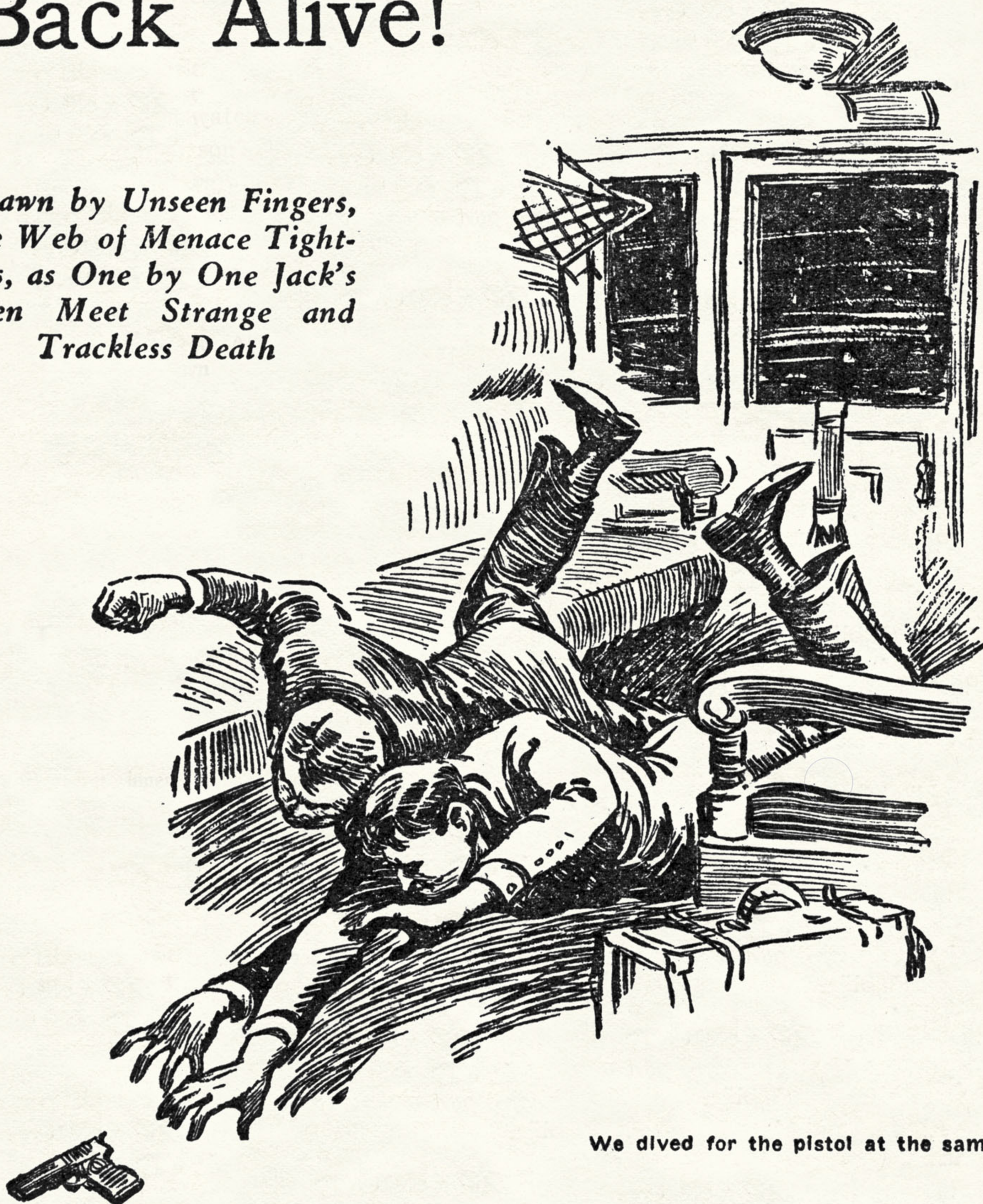
The alarm rang on.

It sounded at the nearest police station. But when the radio patrol cars arrived, the Griffin and his freak had vanished.

Bring Him Back Alive!

By Donald Ross

Drawn by Unseen Fingers, the Web of Menace Tightens, as One by One Jack's Men Meet Strange and Trackless Death



We dived for the pistol at the same time

DON'T MISS THIS STORY—BEGIN HERE

WHEN Jack Laurence went to England, it was on a strange assignment. His orders were: "Find the man who calls himself Sir Ronald Enescro. Get him—and bring him back alive!"

Enescro, wanted for starting Red riots in the United States, was a neighbor of Arthur Ainsworth, a classmate of Jack's,

and at Ainsworth's suggestion Laurence went down there for a week-end.

Ray Bronson, an American jewel thief, made Laurence a strange proposition. Enescro, he said, had stolen one of the famous gems of history—the diamond called the Moon of Monabar. Bronson proposed that he accompany Laurence as his valet, steal the diamond and sell it back to the

This story began in DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY for February 9

British government. Laurence at the same time, by exposing Enescro as a bona fide criminal, would smooth the path for a quick extradition.

Even before they arrived at Oswald Abbey, Ainsworth's estate, tragedy had struck. Upstairs lay the body of the village constable, mysteriously garrotted. And that very night the assassins struck again. For as Sir Ronald, over for a visit, was leaving, a turbaned shape, knife in hand, crept over the wall. Jack managed to frighten the intruder away and save the life of the man he was trailing.

The next morning he was told curtly by his host that he was no longer welcome. In spite of the protestations of Theodora, Ainsworth's sister, Jack was ejected and returned to London.

What was the reason for this sudden change of front? It could mean but one thing—Enescro had been informed of Jack's real mission in England.

Quickly disaster struck again. An immigration officer called to deport Jack as an undesirable alien. Furious, he overpowered the man and escaped, with Scotland Yard on his tracks. While fleeing he met Sadie, a coochie dancer, who offered him a way out. Ignominious as it was, he took it—and became the wild man in a little sideshow. Blacked up, he evaded pursuit and meanwhile watched for a chance to resume his fight against his unseen and powerful foes.

The opportunity came sooner than he had expected. It started on the night that Theodora, unknowing of his identity, visited the show. A cigarette tossed into his cage started a blaze and panic, and Jack rescued the girl after her escort had deserted her. Inasmuch as he was now sought by the police as a witness as well as wanted for assaulting the immigration officer, Jack decided to break off with Sadie, to save the girl from possible arrest.

Bronson at the same time gave him news which made quick action imperative. Theodore was engaged to Sir Ronald Enescro. Jack persuaded the girl to meet him in a downtown restaurant, but she remained deaf to any suggestions that Enescro was a crook. And as Jack left her he was seized by Scotland Yard men and taken to the Foreign Office for questioning.

Here he received a welcome surprise.

Jack learned that his mission was known to them, at least in part. While they deplored the means he had taken, and while he was technically liable to arrest at any time, they gave him unofficially to know that they wished his mission success. And he stepped out of the office a free man—and with a free rein to track down the man who was trying to ruin America—Sir Ronald Enescro.

CHAPTER XXI—(Continued)

Freedom

I WENT to the Ivanhoe and rented a room. In my mood I had no wish to return to Bronson's hide out and I thought of Sadie. Sadie would be worrying about me. I was now in a position to repay the good little creature for her kindness to me.

I was within a quarter of a mile of the lodging house in Bloomsbury where I had lived as Mr. Follingsby, the African Wild Man. And although I knew that officers, in all probability, were still watching the house, I went there boldly and let myself in with the latchkey which I had neglected to leave behind me the night before.

I encountered nobody in the hallway and I went up to our rooms with a light step. I was feeling very tender and very grateful to Sadie. I could see her eyes sparkle when I told her the good news. It would be hard to make her take money, all the same I intended to give her a couple of hundred pounds. She'd have to take it.

The door of my room was ajar. I entered it. It didn't look as seedy as it had the night before—because I didn't have to live there any more. The connecting door between my room and Sadie's was open. I looked in. Empty. And there was an air of un-occupancy. Her gewgaws were missing from the bureau top. With much uneasiness I looked into the closet. Her

clothes were gone and so were her suitcases.

They couldn't have placed the poor dame under arrest. They had nothing against her except that the Wild Man was supposed to be her husband.

I went downstairs and pounded on the wall until the landlady came up from the basement.

"Where's Mrs. Follingsby?" I demanded anxiously.

"Law, sakes alive, it's Mr. Follingsby!" she exclaimed. "I say, young man, you'd better clear h'out. The Bobbies were lookin' for you at seven o'clock this mornin'."

"Did they arrest her?"

"No, they didn't. They axed her questions and went away. Bout nine she comes down carrying her bags and says good-by, but she don't leave no address, she don't. I thought she must be going to meet you somewhere."

"So she's gone," I said mournfully.

"And as nice a bit of a woman as ever lived in my house," said the landlady, her arms on her hips. "Too good for you, no doubt."

"No doubt," I agreed. "If she sends you her address, don't mislay it. I'll be back."

I went out of the house much perplexed. This time I looked around for police watchers but there was nobody in sight. If a man had been placed here to keep an eye on Sadie he would have followed her to her present destination. Otherwise I'd probably have been taken in charge.

CHAPTER XXII

A Devon Cottage

HALF an hour later I entered the house in St. John's Wood. The manservant who admitted me said that Mr. Bronson had not yet re-

turned. He suggested lunch and I ate mechanically.

The afternoon dragged miserably. Not being able to stand the gloom, I went to dinner in an Italian place on Oxford Street. I had a pint of wine with my food and enjoyed both.

At nine o'clock I was back in St. John's Wood and at ten Ray put in an appearance.

"Have a nice quiet day?" he inquired with an exasperating grin.

"So, so. Ray, Sadie has disappeared."

"I tell him to lay low," observed Ray reproachfully. "And the sap sticks his neck out. Why ain't you in jail already?"

I grinned. "I went to the Bloomsbury lodging house—I forgot they might be watching it."

"Detective," he sneered. "Best man on Tom Keefe's staff. Heaven help him."

"Oh, dry up."

"Suppose they trailed you here. Then Scotland Yard gets a chance to give me the works. Oi, what a fumbler."

"I know when I'm shadowed and I wasn't. I'm worried about Sadie. She hasn't a cent."

Ray shook his finger at me. "Didn't I say I'd look out for her?"

"Do you know where she is?" I demanded eagerly.

He chuckled. "Sure," he said. "You and her is going to set up house-keeping again."

"Eh? We certainly are not."

Ray stood over me. "You're taking orders from me, see? If I wash my hands of you like I ought to, you'd land in the hoosegow in a couple of hours, you punk sleuth." His tone changed. "You want to get the goods on Enescro, don't you?"

"Well, yes." I was about to blurt out my interview at the Foreign Office and its glorious result, but if Ray thought he had me under his thumb it might be a good idea to let him continue to think so. He wasn't so well informed as I thought he was.

"An American couple named Mr. and Mrs. Stevens have rented a cottage in the country," he said with a grin. "Mrs. Stevens went down today and moved in and her husband—that's you—goes down tomorrow."

"Look here—" I blustered. "I've a job to do. I'm not going to hide in the country. Besides passing Sadie off as my wife is objectionable to me—"

"It ain't as if you hadn't done it—" he said with biting irony.

"That was because of a horrible situation—"

"Things are just as bad for you now, only they're worse," he retorted. "And let me tell you where this cottage is. Within a mile of Dunhold Castle." He laughed out loud and went over and sat down and lighted a cigar.

MY astonishment was worth the laugh, I suppose.

"I been working on this for three months, Jack," he said. "I got everything figured out, like I always do when I take on a trick personally. I know how to get into the castle and I got a pretty good notion where to look when I get inside. The reason I wanted to get down to Ainsworth's with you was to poke around and find a house to rent that I could make my headquarters. If I had to put a couple of strangers in as tenants they might be stool pigeons for all I know. You and Sadie are what the doctor ordered."

I was furious. "You profess to like the girl. She's as honest as you're

crooked," I cried. "I won't be a party to a dirty trick like this. Accessory before the fact—"

"I told you Enescro won't let out a yip."

"Not if you get the jewel. But if you fail, he'll jail you and everybody connected with it."

"When the job is pulled off Sadie will be in France," he declared, "and she can go to New York on a French boat with a bagful of dough."

"All right, but I'm known in that neighborhood."

"You turn up at night disguised. You ain't going to call on the Ainsworth's, are you?"

"No-o."

"Come up to my rooms. I got something to show you."

He led the way to his chamber, which was on the front of the house. It was furnished almost like a woman's; pink drapes, lace spread, pink sashes on the bureau and what not.

Ray motioned to a pink overstuffed chair and I sat down in it.

"I got your word that you let me get away with the Moon of Monabar and I do what I can to help you locate Enescro's private records."

"Yes," I agreed.

"Your word is good. Now, Jack, I know more about the inside of Enescro's castle than he does. The earldom of Dunhold is quite extinct. The title passed out fifty years ago. The last earl left his family records to the British Museum. They'll show you anything they got, almost, at the Museum—books and papers I mean, not jewels. I been working there for weeks. I'm a Russian archaeologist named Professor Ivan Stepovski with documents to prove it.

"Well, I find in the Dunhold

archives a chart of a tunnel leading out of the castle. It's half a mile long and exits in a cave. In the old days, if an enemy besieged the castle and things looked bad, the earl and his family went out through the tunnel and made a getaway."



RAY BRONSON

"Fairy tale."

"Oh, yeh? I've been in it. I found the cave and went right through the tunnel—it's intact, being made of masonry—and I found it runs stack up against the iron door that leads into the crypts."

"But it's blocked up—"

"I don't think so. A little dynamite will do the trick. And it's so far underground that the explosion can't be heard. I'll bet you a million to a nickel that Enescro never heard of this tunnel. I'll bet the people who sold it to him never heard of it."

"Well, when you're in the crypts, you'll find all exits to the upper part of the house blocked up."

Ray laughed. "Once inside the tunnel door you go up a staircase that leads you right up to a space behind the fireplace in the earl's bedchamber. An iron lever moves the fireplace and there you are. Of course, Enescro may not be using that chamber, but we're inside, ain't we?"

I BEGAN to get excited.

"You've certainly come a long way," I admitted.

"So a few more days of being Sadie's husband won't hurt you."

I laughed. "If she doesn't object."

"Sadie hates to be alone," he said with a grin. "And she likes me, Jack. A swell little doll, she is."

"Why don't you marry the girl?"

"I might," he said. "I'm fed up with gold diggers and trimmers. And I'm not jealous of you because you're stuck on the Ainsworth girl."

"Ray, she mustn't marry Enescro. He's a convicted Mexican murderer—"

"You ain't told me that. Can you prove it?"

"I think so, if I can get his fingerprints. I'm taking this crazy chance because there's no time to lose. It's not only my duty to my government but I've got to save Theodora."

"O.K. Don't break down and cry."

I swore at him and he laughed. "Tomorrow night at six you go down to Rippingham—that's the railroad station—by train. You ask a cabman to take you to the Hathaway Cottage your wife has rented. You're Mr. Stevens, you tell him. You got on a black wig and a stain on your face; at that you won't be as black as you were in the sideshow. You pad yourself a little to look fat. It will be dark and that's the description he'll give of you if things go wrong. You take a couple of suitcases—you're moving in.

If you don't get pinched at the London railroad station—it's a cinch they won't recognize you, you're set. You and Sadie keep under cover. The following night about midnight I show up—"

"I thought you said tomorrow night—"

"Because he's not going to Paris until the next day, that's why."

"Suppose we get inside the castle," I said thoughtfully. "How do you know where he keeps his jewels?"

"I know."

"Where?"

"That's my business. I've told you all I'm telling. I'm changing into dress clothes and going to a night club, where I'm going to meet a rajah. What do you think of that?"

"I'd hate to tell you," I said laughing.

"And you go to bed. You're a fugitive from justice."

I took this accusation nonchalantly as well I might.

"Good night," I said. "Good hunting."

"And you duck in here all day tomorrow."

"Yes, boss."

WHEN I woke the following morning Ray was gone. I breakfasted leisurely, read the *Times* eagerly in search of items which might concern me. There was nothing published about John Laurence wanted for assault upon an immigration official. There was an item to the effect that one of those persons taken to the hospital from the fire at Robbin's had died, but no mention of the African Wild Man. I turned to the social notes and found a paragraph which stated that Sir Ronald Enescro had entertained his fiancée, Miss Theodora Ainsworth, and her brother, Arthur Ainsworth, at

a play at the Haymarket and supper at the Metropole. That made me gnash my teeth.

About noon I violated Ray's prohibition about going out and visited my bank. I cashed a check for two hundred pounds without question, though I noticed that the teller gazed at me curiously. No doubt my account had been impounded—my name had been connected with the attack on Inspector Gaddish—so the bank people wondered why the account had been freed and why I wasn't behind stone walls.

After that I lunched at a chophouse on the Strand, went to a film theatre and about four o'clock returned to the house. Ray turned up in high spirits for dinner.

"How was the rajah?" I inquired.

He grinned. Ready to pay on the dotted line. He's been worried because he's had a tip that some other Indian ruler is trying to get hold of the Moon of Monobar. He says his enemy knows that Enescro has it. That explains the murder of that hick cop and the Indian that threw the knife at Enescro's when we were at Ainsworth.

"If I knew what I know now, I'd have let him hit him," I said viciously.

"And where would I be if that brown devil had croaked him?" asked Ray with heat.

"I wasn't considering your interests."

"You never do. If Enescro died, the executors would step in. When they come across the diamond, they'd turn it over to the rajah without getting a penny, on account of it was stolen goods."

I laughed. "Then I was aiding your interests when I warned Enescro."

"I'll say you was. Let's be fixing you up for your trip."

We went up to his room, where he

produced a stain for my face and hands and a black wig which fitted neatly. Having brown eyes they went rather better with dark hair and skin than with my natural light complexion. I padded my stomach considerably and after a study of myself in the mirror decided that nobody who had seen me at Ainsworth's would recognize me in a dim light—I might even pass muster in a strong one.

"Weren't you taking a chance, Ray?" I asked, "in placing Sadie in charge of your headquarters in Devon?"

He shook his head. "The police had no trailers on her. And I know she's on the level. I took less chance than letting in some English frail who might be known to the police. I got a car outside and we'll make sure nobody follows us from the house. You got to run the gauntlet by yourself at the station but you'll get by all right."

We left Ray's car up near Euston and took a taxi to Waterloo Station. He didn't get out of the cab but shook hands warmly before I stepped out.

"Look for me about eleven tomorrow night," he said. "And tell Sadie I'm for her a hundred per cent."

CHAPTER XXIII

The Man in the Compartment

I LEFT him casually. I had no premonitions and neither did Ray, apparently. He was a criminal but he had a good heart. Cursed with physical weakness and an ugly face, it gratified him to prove that his wits were sharper than those of the forces of law and order.

He waved to me from the cab and I waved back, gave my bag to a porter and followed him into the station. The

train was a local, the old-fashioned compartment type with no corridor, and travelers were locked in during the journey. At that hour there was little travel and my porter found me an empty third class compartment.

I had plenty of time to consider the situation ahead of me and I was uneasy. Sadie was decent—our association was entirely business—on my side—at least; but I didn't like the idea of posing as her husband for the second time. The nearness of her cottage to Oswald Manor alarmed me. Theodora was already aware of my previous friendship with the cooch dancer and even if Theodora was engaged to Enescro, I hadn't given up hope. Only, when that engagement was broken, I didn't want another suspicious situation to turn her against me.

Ray's plan to enter the castle was a desperate one. Despite his craft we stood an even chance of falling into Enescro's hands or those of his trusted servants. If I were caught robbing a British home, the Foreign Office wouldn't come to my rescue a second time.

To my annoyance, a guard unlocked my compartment, a porter entered with a satchel and another passenger followed him.

In America one doesn't think of resenting the arrival of other passengers in a Pullman, but in England having a compartment to one's self seems important. I shot an angry glance at the intruder. I looked at him, slunk back in my corner and fixed my eyes on the floor.

MY traveling companion was Peter Logan, the English red, the one man in England who had plenty of reason to know what Jack Laurence looked like.

I had supposed that he had visited Enescro, had been provided with the sinews of war and was back in America by this time with another fake passport. It had been my intention to warn our immigration men and have him picked up at the pier but events had moved too fast for me.

Logan was a heavy-set bulldog type. He had spent so much time in America that he could talk our slang as fluently as a native. He was brawny, broad shouldered and skilled in a lot of trades. He could handle a job on a steel frame building, get coal out of a mine and load cargo on a ship with equal facility. His method was to join a work gang and spread sedition. He was a member of a dozen unions under various names. I had been the first to expose him.

He sank into the opposite corner, gazing at me with the suspicion of one English traveler toward another tenant of a compartment. The train started with a jerk. He put his big feet upon the opposite bench, pulled out a corn-cob pipe and tossed me a question.

"Mind if I smoke?" he demanded.

"Not at all," I said in a husky tone. He lighted his pipe. It was not yet dark and I stared out of the window steadily.

Logan, of course, was going to Dunhold Castle. Enescro was supposed to start for Paris tonight, but a man of his wealth did not depend upon train and plane schedules. He'd leave when he liked in a private plane. The mere presence of this rascal at Dunhold was evidence enough that Enescro was responsible for the outrages fomented by Logan in America—if I needed any evidence. A slow rage was burning inside of me, Logan's presence in the compartment being the match which lighted it.

I resembled in no respect the man he had known in San Francisco. Just the same, Logan and I had wheeled boxes and bales aboard ships together, we had fought with our naked fists—I had beaten him by superior skill; he was the stronger. I had had him deported; I was his mortal enemy. And there is a sixth sense that warns one of a hostile presence.

Logan took his feet down from the opposite seat. He edged nearer. I grew tense. This scoundrel mustn't be allowed to interfere with my plans. I watched him out of the corner of my eye. The puffs of smoke were coming too rapidly from his mouth. Suddenly he emptied out the contents of his pipe upon the carpet and stepped upon the sparks.

"Blasted rotten tobacco," he said aloud. "More like hay, it is."

He tapped the side of the pipe against one of his boots, causing it to empty completely, and then thrust his hand into his pocket for his tobacco pouch.

It came out but the pouch wasn't in it. His hand held a black automatic. His eyeballs gleamed viciously. On his face was a look of malignancy.

"Up with them," he snarled. "Got you, you blank blank blank—"

I LIFTED my hands resignedly. I should have known that emptying the pipe was a ruse—when his hand went to his pocket, I should have jumped him. But I wasn't sure he had recognized me; I had reposed too much confidence in the absurd disguise.

Logan was enjoying his triumph. His mouth stretched from ear to ear, his big yellow teeth were like those of a wolf.

"This will be a bit of good news for somebody," observed my enemy.

"You're out of your depth, Mr. Laurence. You should have stayed in America, where you could whistle and get the cops to save yer dirty neck. You thought you could sneak over here and pull something off, eh? Say, the dumbest English constable is smarter than you are. Thought you could mix with the gentry, you Yankee bum. Say, I knew you was here a couple of days after you landed. Well, say yer prayers, you dirty spy—I'm going to blow the top of yer head off and how do you like that?"

"You're a fool if you do," I said as calmly as possible under the circumstances. "This is England, Logan, where a murderer is convicted and hung in a jiffy. We're on a railroad train, locked in a compartment. You can't make a getaway, Logan. And you like being alive."

"Says you. Well, I've jumped off freight trains in America that were going faster than this. And my beauty, here, don't make much noise. After I've finished you, I'll go out through the window and land on my feet. And there ain't anybody going to miss you, Laurence. Say, when the word gets around in certain quarters about what happened to you, there'll be a celebration, a big drunk."

I saw by his eyes that our conversation was over. He was only three feet away. If I moved a bullet would drill me. And if I didn't it would do the same. I confess I breathed a prayer. I'm not one who doesn't believe that Providence doesn't help a man. And I didn't intend to die with my arms above my head. I tensed for a spring.

Suddenly I was thrown back against the cushions and Logan, who was riding opposite, was flung against the back of my seat. The air brakes had been jammed on.

The top of Logan's head struck against the cushioned seat-back within two feet of me. He had landed on his knees on the floor. And my hands fastened round the back of his neck and my fingers closed on his throat with an iron grip. He rose, lifting me with him. He attempted to twist about but I was able to prevent that. He thrust his right hand, holding the gun, back to fire into my groin, but my knee came up with as much force as possible and struck the hilt of the automatic. The weapon slipped out of his hand.

He reached with his left for the bell. I dragged him away. He brought up his left leg and kicked viciously against my left shin. I thought he had broken it but clung on like grim death.

As suddenly as it had stopped the train started and the shock sent me flying backwards. My fingers involuntarily loosened and he tore himself free.

Simultaneously we dived for the pistol which lay on the floor of the compartment, three feet distant. The sides of our heads came together with a crash which made me groggy and he fared even worse. By a fraction of a second I beat him to the gun, evaded his clutching hand and leaped back upon my haunches. Swearing like a longshoreman, swaying drunkenly, he got upon his feet and plunged at me, his big hands outstretched like the claws of a cannibal crab.

I raised the automatic and let him have it; right between the eyes the bullet went. He fell forward, stretching his length between the seats. I dropped on the cushions, weak with reaction.

THE train was rumbling and roaring along, traveling now about thirty miles an hour. Logan was down and I was in the situation which

I had predicted that he would be in. I rolled him over. He was as dead as a dodo. And they'd hang me for murder as quick as they would hang him. No chance for a plea of self defense. No witnesses. I'd have to go through the window and jump from the moving train as Logan had intended to do. I thrust the automatic into my pocket and my eyes fell upon my suitcase. It must go with me. If they found it they'd have a valuable clue.

I picked it up and moved toward the window. In English railway carriages of this sort there are small windows beside each seat and a large window in the door, the pane of which drops into the doorframe. This leaves a space, through which the passenger hands luggage to the waiting porter before the guard unlocks the door and releases the inmates of the compartment. There was plenty of room to crawl through. Along the length of the carriage was a running-board like that on the old-fashioned open trolley car in America.

It was dark now, thank God. I'd been en route more than an hour. I leaned out of the window. If I could lower the suitcase to the running board I could jump off with it; I'd lose it if I tossed it off the train before I jumped. And this was my opportunity, while the train was going slow. The embankment was low and there was a field just beyond.

Suddenly the train swung round a curve and a short distance ahead were the lights of a station. Too late. Before I could get on the running-board and jump we would be stopped at a station platform.

I looked wildly round for something to throw over the body but there was nothing. With much creaking the train stopped at the station.

In my life I never went through the agony of the next few minutes. I saw passengers waiting on the platform. I saw guards jumping on the running-board of the carriage up ahead. I leaned out the window, blocking a view inside. A guard was coming along



JACK LAURENCE

the side of our carriage, unlocking doors. One passenger entered two compartments ahead. A tall Englishman was striding directly toward my compartment, followed by a porter laden with baggage, and the guard was moving toward this compartment. He reached me. He had his key outstretched.

"Got room in there, sir?" he enquired cheerfully.

My hand had gone into my pocket and came out with a bank note.

"No," I said and thrust it into his hand.

"Very good, sir," he remarked with a grin and went on to the next compartment, which he opened. The traveler was ushered into it with his luggage. I was shaking with anxiety and icy beads of sweat were rolling down my forehead. Why is it that sweat

coming from the body is sometimes cold as ice? I'll ask a doctor sometime.

CHAPTER XXIV

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens

I HEARD a shout up ahead. The engine whistle blew. With maddening sluggishness the train began to move. Saved—for the moment.

Slowly we pulled out of the station. We rumbled at low speed through a straggling village. In a moment we were in open country. I couldn't risk another experience like that. If the jump were certain to kill me, I'd jump. I decided to place my bag on the seat within reach of the window, which was more sensible than my other plan, then I crawled through, teetered dangerously and got a foot upon the running-board. I reached in for my bag. I felt the train increasing speed—at the moment it was doing less than twenty miles an hour. Without a glance at the terrain I jumped. As I jumped I let go the bag.

There was a drop of only three feet to a gently sloping earth embankment. As I fell I let every muscle relax—one learns to do that on the football field. By the way, a football player running at top speed often goes for a short distance at a rate of fifteen or eighteen miles an hour and gets his feet knocked out from under him and doesn't get hurt. I landed in a heap, turned three or four somersaults and alighted in a ditch—bruised, but without a sprain or a broken bone. I lay there for a few seconds while the long train rolled past; then I hunted for my bag, found it twenty feet away. I went away from that vicinity at top speed across the fields.

At the next station the body would be found, no doubt. And they would

wire back. The guard at the town we had just left would remember the man who had tipped him not to enter that compartment; as my only loose bill had been a five pound note, the size of the tip would be suspicious.

In ten minutes, or half an hour, the bloodhounds of the law would be on my trail. Chances of making Rippingham were bad. I'd better return to London and start back from there.

I turned toward the lights of the town only a quarter of a mile away. I must risk renting a car to take me to London. The driver, of course, would later report taking a man answering the guard's description to London; but in a few minutes after leaving his car I would be a light complexioned man again. If I disposed of my wig and washed off the stain here it wouldn't be so good, since anybody leaving the place shortly after the departure of that train would be sought for.

I walked rapidly into town and in a few minutes came upon a public house as the saloons are euphonistically called. It was when I saw three cars standing at the curb outside the pub that I had a good idea. I stepped up to a Sunbeam roadster and inspected it. Unlocked. The good trusting English have no fear of their cars being stolen. There was a tight moment when I was getting into the car and starting it's engine, but nobody came out of the pub. In a few seconds I was under way.

I KNEW that London was in a northerly direction and that the Kings Highway probably ran more or less parallel with the railroad tracks. I came upon it as I emerged from the town and then I let the machine show its stuff. It was a good, stout little car, though I had to go into second to climb slight inclines.

Once I lost my way but found it again after five or six minutes. An hour and a half after I leaped from the railroad train I crossed the Waterloo Bridge. On the far side of the bridge I discreetly abandoned the borrowed car and took a bus to St. John's Road. Ray's manservant looked surprised to see me and was a trifle dubious until I identified myself. Mr. Bronson was not at home, he informed me; but he made no objection to my making use of the room I had been occupying.

In half an hour I left the house, minus the black wig and brown stain. I went directly to a garage and rented a car and chauffeur to take me to Rippingham. The dark person to whom Ray had wished Godspeed was now being sought for murder, but Jack Laurence, in his own garb, had nothing to fear from the London police.

About ten my hired car pulled up in Rippingham. It was a sedan and I kept in the shadow of the back seat when the driver asked at a gas station the way to the Hathaway Cottage. While Ray had had his reasons for sending me down there in disguise by train, I didn't consider them as important as the necessity of causing the complete disappearance of the dark man who had committed a crime on that train.

While I'm not a cold-blooded person, I had no qualms of conscience regarding the death of Peter Logan. I had put out of the way a dangerous enemy of my government and had acted entirely in self defense. It had been my life or his—and it had turned out to be his life. From what I had learned of Peter Logan, he lacked a single redeeming feature and I was glad I had killed him. Incidentally, it made my job less difficult.

Naturally I had left no explanation for Ray of my return and departure, since I could not very well tell his servant that I had committed a murder nor could I make such a statement in writing. I told the servant to tell Mr. Bronson that I'd see him at a time and place agreed upon. I figured Ray wouldn't keep a man who wasn't devoted to him and assumed that he was aware his master's affairs were crooked, so I let him think what he liked about the business of my disguise.

The black wig I threw out of the car as we were crossing a bridge. When Ray read of the death of Peter Logan in a compartment of a train going to Rippingham, I felt sure he would couple that with my unexpected return to his house and arrive at a correct conclusion. I knew he would cover for me.

It seemed most fortunate that I had been in disguise when it had been necessary for me to commit a crime, since the police, having a description of the criminal, might look for a dark man masquerading as a blond but would not suspect a man who was naturally light complexioned.

On the other hand, I thought it likely that Enescro would suspect who had put an end to Peter Logan, as he must have learned already that the scheme to deport me had been squelched by the Foreign Office. So Enescro must not see John Laurence in the neighborhood of his Castle.

HALF a mile beyond the village, the car stopped before a small English cottage. There were no lights visible and I told the driver to wait while I walked up a winding path and knocked on the door.

At once a light went on, the door opened and Sadie stood in the door-

frame, smiling like a basket of chips.

"Darling," she cried and flung herself into my arms.

"Taxi man within hearing," I whispered. "I'll send him away."

I escaped from her embrace and went back and paid the fellow off.

"Heard some Amuricans had rented the Hathaway Cottage," he remarked. "Thankee, sir."

"Gosh, I'm glad to see you, Jack," said Sadie. "You look fine. Your hair is growing out again and everything. Say, Ray's a prince, ain't he?"

"Not a bad little coot."

She turned on the light in the living room which was plainly but adequately furnished and threw herself on a sofa and grinned at me in her cute way.

"Well, here we are again," she declared. "Why not get married and have done with it."

"For one reason, you're already married—"

"I'm willing to overlook that."

"And for another, we're not in love."

She laughed cynically. "Few married people are. However, I think I'll marry Ray. He won't mind if I'm a bigamist."

"You're an unscrupulous little rascal. Mean to say you're falling in love with Ray?"

Sadie chuckled. "With that face of his? However, a girl can't have everything. Cecil was a handsome bloke. Ray tells me he's rolling in greenbacks, and even if the American dollar ain't what it used to be, I could use a few bales of it."

I lighted a cigarette. "Let's be serious, kid. Any callers?"

"The land agent, funny old codger. Wanted to know if I was comfortable and tried to hold my hand."

"How did he make out?"

"Oh, I slapped his face and told him I was a respectable married woman so he apologized. What's the game, Jack?"

"Whatever Ray told you."

"Huh. Do you know what I think? I think Ray's a crook."

I laughed and said nothing.

"H'E'S pretty decent but he's up to something shady just the same. What doing in this neck of the woods, Jack?"

"Nothing that concerns you, Sadie."

She stuck out her little pointed tongue at me.

"If you're going to be like that," she complained. "It's good to see you, though. I've worried like the deuce. I'm surprised you're not in jail with all they've got against you."

I grinned. I've wiggled out of the big charge. It seems my deportation order was illegal so I had a right to resist arrest."

She sat up abruptly and smiled with delight.

"Why, that's swell—but why are we hiding here?"

"Sadie," I said. "Ray and I are friends but we're playing different games. You're right in thinking his purpose is criminal but I'm not a crook. Ray doesn't know that the police don't want me any more—on the immigration matter." I remembered they must be looking for me now on a much more serious charge.

"I'm coöperating with him to a certain extent—for my own absolutely legitimate purposes."

She nodded. "O.K. I'm with you."

"I thought you would be," I told her. "My bank account is free and I drew some money today."

She clapped her hands gleefully. "Then we eat."

"More than that. You're going back to New York."

She hesitated. "I don't think I want to go just now."

"You're going. Tomorrow night you're pulling out—as soon as Ray arrives. You're going to France and home on a French boat. I don't know what he's going to pay you, but I'm giving you this."

I drew out a roll of bills and laid two hundred pounds on her lap.

Sadie's eyes distended at sight of the big bank notes. Her lips moved. Suddenly she burst into tears and threw herself face down on the sofa.

"You're the swellest little pal in the world," I told her. I patted her on the head.

She looked up. "I don't want to be a pal, Jack."

"Sadie, I'm in love with another girl. You know that."

She sat up and wiped her eyes. "Sure I know it. Anyway, I won't take your money."

"I'm rich, Sadie. I mean I have enough so I can spare a thousand dollars. You've earned it, so don't protest any more. Take your money."

"O.K." she said with a sigh. "What's the idea of getting me out of here tomorrow night?"

"Well, in case our project fails we don't want you to get into trouble."

"I'm sticking," she said passionately.

I shook my head. "You're doing what you're told."

"But suppose something happens to you and Ray?"

"We can take care of ourselves. You're leaving."

"We'll see," she said rebelliously.

"What are the sleeping arrangements? I'm pretty tired, Sadie. I've had a sort of trying day."

"There's a bed upstairs and this sofa. I'll sleep here."

"Nope. Go upstairs. I'll camp down here."

She laughed. "Anyway, I gave you your choice. Jack, it's nice to be with you again."



"SADIE"

"Good night, youngster. Your luck is about to turn."

"It's about time. Good night."

CHAPTER XXV

Two Women

WHEN I awoke it was broad daylight—the morning was well advanced, judging by the brightness of the sunlight. Voice awoke me. Female voices. I rolled off the sofa and looked out the window and immediately jumped back.

Sadie, her arms full of flowers, stood on the grass about thirty feet away, smiling up at a young woman on a gray mare. Although her head was turned away from me, I recognized the horse-woman instantly. It was Theodora Ainsworth.

"I like the cottage very much, thank you," said Sadie.

"I'm glad," replied Theodora. "I heard an American couple had rented the cottage and, being very American myself, I thought the right thing to do was to come over and bid you welcome to Devon and get acquainted."

She swung off her horse as she spoke.

"Do you live near?" asked Sadie.

"At Oswald Manor, a few miles east. My brother is Arthur Ainsworth—" She hesitated. "There is something familiar about your appearance," she declared. Have we met, I wonder?"

"In New York, maybe—" replied Sadie guardedly.

"No, more recently—oh, it's probably a chance resemblance."

"Lots of people look like other people."

"Of course they do. It's really very charming," she sighed. "One could be happy in a cottage like this with the right person."

"You said something, Miss Ainsworth. Won't you come inside?"

The scatterbrain had forgotten that I was sleeping on the sofa. I snatched up my clothes and made a dash for the staircase—just in time. The little idiot opened the door and led Sir Ronald Enescro's fiancée into the living room.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "I forgot—my husband was asleep. Well, he's not here. Please sit down. I'll roll up those sheets."

"Oh, don't bother. Is your husband a New Yorker?"

"Well, that is—oh, sure he is."

"I know you're busy so I won't intrude. How would you like to have tea with me some afternoon? There is a dear little inn in the village and I'll call for you in my car—Oh!"

I was listening in anguish at the head of the stairs. Despite Sadie's indiscre-

tion it looked as everything would come out all right but the way Theodora cried "Oh!" told me differently.

What I didn't know was that my wallet was lying on a table right under her eyes and my initials J. L. gleamed at her in gold letters.

"I know where I saw you," cried Theodora shrilly. "How could I ever forget! You're the woman who did the stomach dance at that horrible place in Bright City. How dare you come into a decent neighborhood? I'll speak to Sir Ronald unless you pack and leave at once."

"My husband will have something to say about that," cried Sadie belligerently. "Jack, you come down here this minute."

"Then he's here. I thought so," exclaimed Theodora loudly. "Well, suppose you do come downstairs, Mr. Laurence."

I HAD struggled into my clothes. I was trapped. I wished the earth would open and swallow me up; but it didn't, so I walked slowly downstairs.

Theodora was gazing at me with blazing eyes. Sadie had her arms on her hips and seemed about to open up with a choice combination of New York backstage vituperation and Billingsgate.

"How do you do, Miss Ainsworth," I said painfully.

Theodora lifted a polished riding boot and stamped on the floor.

"Of all the brazen, shameless, disgusting exhibitions," she stormed. "How dare you bring your cooch-dancing mistress into a respectable village? How dare you set up house-keeping next door to my brother's home? Oh, I couldn't believe you were what Arthur said. And as for you—"

I stepped between her and Sadie.

"Just a minute," I said sternly. "Confine your observations to me, please—"

"Let her talk," implored Sadie, "And when she gets through I'll tell her a few things—"

"I never wish to see you again as long as I live," cried Theodora. Her cheeks were crimson, her eyes were flashing, she looked perfectly magnificent. "Out of my way!"

"You should have let her burn to death," shouted Sadie, beside herself.

Theodora started, turned pale and her eyes filled with tears.

"I—I forgot—" she murmured. "I am grateful. I've already told you. But I can't stomach a situation like this."

"Go to the devil," screamed Sadie as the door slammed on Theodora's abrupt departure.

"Shut up. I've got to stop her. She'll queer everything. You stay here."

As I pulled open the door Theodora was mounting her horse.

"Wait, Theodora," I shouted. She was in the saddle. I rushed up and grasped the bridle.

Theodora lifted her riding crop.

"Let go," she cried furiously.

"You have got to listen to me."

Swish. The whip fell upon my shoulder smartly. I grasped her wrist, pulled her off her horse and set her on the ground.

"Think what you like," I said grimly. "There is too much at stake to permit you to ruin everything. I want to tell you—"

"I won't listen."

She covered both ears. Sadie appeared in the doorway.

"Go inside, Sadie," I commanded. "This is private business."

Sadie stepped back and closed the door.

"You're an engaged woman. Why should you break into a rage because a man you've no use for appears to be living loosely?" I asked sternly.

Theodora looked up at me with



THEODORA AINSWORTH

brimming eyes. "Because I thought you were decent. I half believed what you said to me at the Regent Palace."

"THEODORA, I'm risking everything by giving you my confidence. I'm in the service of the United States."

"Bah!" replied Theodora.

"Whisper it to a soul and you'll do your country a great injury," I said gravely.

She met my eyes. Hers were full of wonder.

"Your horse will stand. Come here with me." I led her, unresisting, to a bench just inside the garden wall. From it was a lovely view of green fields, low hills and the gray towers of Dunhold in the middle distance.

"I suppose she's a Secret Service woman," said Theodora scornfully, but she seated herself on the bench.

"Your brother was right in his statement that I have no money," I told her. "I'm spending government money on a government mission." This was not strictly accurate but Theodora was not likely to understand the difference between the Secret Service and the Security Service, which performed public work with private funds.

"She's a low, underbred creature," persisted Theodora.

"And I'm not living in sin with her despite appearances," I said sharply. "Shall I continue or not?"

"Go on," she answered meekly.

I studied her. Two beautiful front teeth were biting her ripe under lip.

"My business is in this vicinity," I told her. "That's why your brother had a tip to chase me away. That's why I was ordered deported."

"You insinuated that Sir Ronald—"

"Maybe you misunderstood me. Anyway the British Foreign Office, which knows and sympathizes with my mission, quashed the order for my arrest—the deportation order was illegal."

The girl suddenly flashed me a smile.

"Then those horrid things you said that morning at breakfast at the manor—you didn't mean them?"

I laughed. "My sentiments and yours are identical."

"Well!" she exclaimed and drew a long breath.

"MY business being in this vicinity—"

"That's why you accepted my brother's invitation," she exclaimed. "You tried to make me think I had something to do with it."

"If you weren't engaged, I'd assure you it did."

"What interest has the United States in a quiet corner of Devon?"

"I can't tell you that yet. Since I couldn't stay at Oswald Manor and had to be down here, one of my—ahem—associates, suggested that Mrs. Follingsby call herself Stevens and take a cottage for herself and—er—husband. She came day before yesterday and I arrived last night."

Theodora smiled broadly. "And you slept on the sofa. Well, I'll believe that. Those sheets had been slept in."

I breathed a sigh of relief. "Thanks. From this corner of Devon hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of damage has been done to America. In a few days, perhaps, I'll tell you how."

"You are very suave," she observed. "I almost believe you."

"I want certain people to think I am a fugitive from English justice. The police have been called off my case but no official notice has been given. My presence here mustn't be known. If you think I merit some light favor on account of Bright City—"

"Jack," she said earnestly. "I want to believe you. I'll keep my mouth shut."

"You won't mention to your brother or to Sir Ronald—"

"Look here, do you suspect my brother of doing anything wrong?"

"Honestly I don't."

"Sir Ronald?"

"Have I got to answer?"

She looked thoughtful. "No," she said slowly.

"Thanks. Theodora, I don't think you're going to marry Sir Ronald?"

"Indeed? And why not?"

"Because you're going to marry me." I said earnestly.

Theodora blushed furiously. "You are preposterous. I'm going."

"And you'll forget you recognized me and the alleged Mrs. Stevens?"

She nodded and rose.

"Jack," she said. "Are you fool enough not to know the girl is in love with you?"

"I hope not."

"At this minute she's probably insane with jealousy because we're talking together."

"She knows it's business."

Theodora laughed mirthlessly. "I promise you my neutrality. Look out she doesn't betray you."

"She's leaving tonight for America. She came down to rent the place and thus avoid gossip."

"Well, I'm glad. Good-by, Jack. So you're a secret service man."

"Something like that."

"It's nice you're not a rich expatriate. Is this job of yours very dangerous?"

"Well, a little."

"That means a lot. Take care of yourself."

She looked so kind I almost lost my head. She turned quickly, however, and walked back to her mare. She placed a little boot in my hand and I lifted her to the saddle. With a lovely smile she rode down the path.

I went back into the house. Sadie was most ostentatiously fixing up the living room.

"Well," she commented. "I see you softsoaped her, the way you do everybody else."

"I got her to promise not to tell anybody that I'm here. How did you know she was the girl I carried out of the burning building?"

"You said she was a girl you used to know and the way you said it was so goofy that I knew you were in love with her. And you showed in every way that you were nuts about her when she was bawling you out."

"Well, I might as well admit it," I answered with a dubious glance at her.

Sadie laughed unpleasantly. "She made a fool of herself, too. Well I hope you'll be very happy."

"Unfortunately she's engaged to a very rich man whom she loves."

"Poof," replied Sadie. "Anyway, Jack, I knew I'd never get you. We're not the same breed of cats."

"I'm very fond of you, Sadie."

"Oh, sure. What's the program?"

"You do the marketing. I lie low. Ray'll show up this evening. By the way, will you please buy the London papers when you go down to the village."

"I'd give anything for a gander at the New York *News*. These rags over here haven't anything in them."

"I expect to find some very interesting reading," I said dryly.

CHAPTER XXVI

Wanted for Murder

AFTER Sadie had given me coffee and eggs, she took the market basket which was an item in the furnishings of the house and set forth cheerfully for the village, half a mile distant. When she was out of the way I wandered forth on business of my own. I wanted to locate the cave which Ray had stated to be the exit from the castle tunnel.

Between my cottage and Enescro's castle was a low range of hills—hardly hills, as the towers of the castle were visible beyond them. Actually they were grassy knolls. The ground between was pasture land. There were gardens surrounding the cottages and I could see women busy at work. Some of these peered at me curiously as I passed but they gave me no concern. I was the husband of the American woman who had moved into Hathaway Cottage the previous day. I met a man

in the narrow lane which I was following who bowed and smiled and said, "Good morning, Mr. Stevens."

By and by I came into a trifle of woods and presently was close to the row of knolls. They might contain Roman ruins for all I knew or cared and apparently nobody in that section had bothered to open them up to find out.

There were sharp brambles hereabouts; I had to pick my way with care. It was only by accident that I finally located an opening considerably larger than a fox hole but so small as not to be apt to awaken interest.

As there seemed to be nobody in the vicinity, I wormed my way into the hole. Worming is the word, since I had to crawl in on my belly.

It was pitch dark in there but I ascertained by feeling about that it was actually a cave. The ceiling lifted beyond the reach of my hand but I bumped my head against it when I tried to stand upright. I bent double and moved forward but within thirty feet I ran into a blank wall. It was an earth wall and obviously the back of the cave. I felt all over it and had come to the conclusion that it was the wrong cave when my heel rang on metal. I stooped. The earth was loose where I had been standing. I scraped it away and touched iron. The tunnel entrance. Ray must have uncovered it and then pushed the earth back over it. But he hadn't done a thorough job, since my shoe had hit an uncovered bit of it.

Satisfied, I crawled out of the cave, brushed myself off and strolled back toward the cottage. Of course Ray would have led me directly to it and I ran a chance of being observed in my daylight search for it, but I'm as curious as the next man and I didn't

know but that Ray had been fooling me for purposes of his own.

When I returned to the cottage, Sadie was singing in the kitchen as she prepared lunch. A copy of the *Telegraph* lay on the table and I pounced upon it.

There was a two-inch item on the third page. The body of an unknown man had been found in a third class compartment at the station of Anselm in Devon when the London train had pulled in there at nine-five. He had been shot, but the revolver or pistol which had killed him had not been found. The police had reported important circumstances to Scotland Yard. That was all but it was enough.

WHILE I usually played the hunter, not the hunted, I felt reasonably certain that Scotland Yard would be unable to trace me from the railroad compartment to this quiet corner of Devon. They would find the stolen car and conclude that the killer, after jumping off the train, had used it for conveyance to London. I felt sure I had covered my tracks in London.

During the rest of the day I did not venture outside the cottage. Sadie did the housework and prepared the meals and we spent the evening like a conventional married couple, playing rummy. It got to be ten, eleven, and midnight and Ray did not come. At one A.M. I sent Sadie upstairs to bed. At four I fell asleep in my chair. When I woke it was broad daylight. Cocks were crowing lustily in the vicinity. I went to my bed on the sofa and slept for several hours longer, being sure that Ray wouldn't show himself during the daylight hours.

Sadie, bustling about in the kitchen and grumbling aloud about the lack of

modern conveniences, woke me up. It was ten o'clock.

"Now what's become of that little monkey?" she demanded.

"Something turned up which prevented him from coming."

"Why didn't he send us word?"

"He had his reasons. He'll be on hand tonight."

"Well, I wish I knew what it's all about."

"Better you don't."

"Come and get your ham and eggs."

"Buy some novels at the village when you go shopping," I requested.

"And the London papers, of course."

"Okay, big boy."

When she returned with the newspapers and three or four lurid looking English mystery books on top of her groceries and provisions, I swooped on the papers. For once there was something interesting on the front page. Sir Ronald Enescro's private plane, returning the previous evening from Paris, had made a poor landing and overturned. One Joseph Hawkins, the pilot, had been badly injured but Sir Ronald had escaped with a shaking up. A broken landing wheel had been responsible for the accident.

BEING naturally interested in the hunt for the murderer of Peter Logan, I turned to the news pages and a heading leaped up at me.

Light was shed upon the mysterious murder of Raymond Bronson, American, who was found dead in his bed at his home on Lancy Street, St. John's Wood, early yesterday morning, by the statement of Cuthbert Hobbs, his manservant.

Questioned by Inspector Good of Scotland Yard, Hobbs stated that as he was returning from a tobacconist's night before last he saw a turbanned man in European clothes loitering in the vicinity of number 22 Lancy Street, where the late Mr. Bronson resided.

As Bronson was found dead in his bed at eight yesterday morning by Hobbs, who was bringing his coffee, and as death was adjudged by the police physicians to have been by garroting, this seems most significant. There was a red line around his neck which indicated that a cord had been used.

I dropped the paper, shocked and sorrowful. This was why Ray hadn't kept his appointment. He had been dead, murdered, strangled. Poor little Ray! Shrewd, crafty, a genius in his line, he had met death in his sleep. Motive, some weird Asiatic grudge. Perhaps the Rajah who had entertained him so royally the night before had ordered his removal. My lower lip trembled. Tears filled my eyes. Ray might have been a thief; he might have a hundred crimes on his soul but he had been a good friend of mine. He had a streak of decency a yard wide.

I wiped my eyes and picked up the paper. There was more. Much more. And of grave concern to me.

CONCLUDE THIS STORY NEXT WEEK.



BLUFF

By Barent van Waldron



The girl stiffened, hand on the counter

*Every Day is Pay Day, and
You Never Have to Work,
When You're Peddling
Nifty Nolan's Brand of
Bluff*

"NIFTY" NOLAN was a specialist in dollar-extraction. He hadn't earned a legitimate dollar in his thirty-two years.

It was true that some of his earlier schemes had failed in a monetary way. One failure netted five years in the Big House, but had taught him an invaluable lesson, namely, that he must specialize. And since working out this new idea for "clipping the Big Ones," Nifty had enjoyed life immensely.

His cold, cautious eyes surveyed the hotel lobby with contempt. Of all these people, he alone had discovered the way to make money easily, safely, and pleasantly. Didn't his perfectly-tailored clothes be-speak a satisfactory and enviable financial status? It wasn't everybody who could afford a hundred dollar suit, sixteen dollar bowler, and other togs of similar quality. You had to be smart these days, plenty smart, and look the part.

"Here's your order, sir," said a bell-hop, coming up at his elbow.

Nifty regarded the trade-name on the small package. "Put it in my mail box, son. I'll get it later."

The bell-hop handed over the return

change, out of which he was most liberally tipped.

Now for the big play. And the clerk was a girl, too. Probably a simple-minded thing, like all girl clerks, he thought. This would be easy.

Moving like something well-oiled and balanced, Nifty stepped out of the hotel and drifted with the current of noonday lunch seekers. One block over to Dearborn Street he turned into a high-class candy store for the kill.

The clerk, one of those tall young women with a carefully-cultivated complexion and dark, splendid eyes, glided behind the counter.

"May I help you, sir?"

Nifty chuckled inwardly. She was going to help him, all right. She wouldn't look so damn capable when he got through with her. None of them did.

He pointed to the showcase. "A pound of those walnut creams, please."

It was with inward satisfaction that he watched three other customers enter the store. Witnesses made it all the more legitimate and dramatic. On this scheme people always played right into his hand. People were such fools.

"Was there anything else?"

"No," he replied, carefully selecting a one dollar bill from his expensive-looking wallet. Here was a fine point of technique which he had developed to perfection. Much depended on this.

Placing the bill in her hand, he waited until she rang the cash register. Then, quickly:

"What are those dark candies—right there?"

Her gaze followed his extended finger. "Those are bittersweets—"

"No," Nifty corrected her. "Right next to the bittersweets."

"Oh—those are Fruit Royals. Would you care for—"

"How much are they?" he asked as she was about to drop the change into his hand. Then, as though quite undecided, he moved away, making her hold the change. His loud voice had attracted slight attention from the other customers who, out of ordinary curiosity, had looked at the candy in question.

She was about to reply, when Nifty spoke up quickly: "Oh, never mind. I have enough, I guess." Now for the grand coup! He extended a careless hand for the change, somewhat as though money handling bored him.

"Eighty — ninety — one dollar. Thank—"

"Oh—I say—" he broke in softly, politely, "that was a ten I gave you."

THE girl froze, hand extended. "I beg your pardon?"

Nifty coughed. "I say—that was a ten dollar bill I gave you. Not a one."

High color suffused her cheeks. "Why, sir, I'm sure that was a one." But uncertainty clouded her tone. She wasn't sure.

"Will you kindly look?" suggested Nifty, flashing her a look of irritation. "You may have been mistaken."

The register clanged. Her expert fingers sheaved out the one dollar bills, and then her full, red mouth drew into a pleasant, but very firm little line.

"I didn't make a mistake, sir. This is a chain store and we are required to place the money in the till first—"

"It makes little difference to me what kind of a store it is," Nifty snapped, his eyes growing hard. "I gave you a ten dollar bill! I was just going to the bank—here—I had five tens in my wallet. There are four!"

This always got them started; he knew from experience. She was al-

ready getting puzzled. Soon she wouldn't know a ten from that yellow taffy there.

"But I'm positive that you gave me a one dol—"

"This arguing gets us nowhere. Where is your store manager?"

His last remark had gone like an arrow straight to the mark. He knew these girls are required to make up any register shortage from their own pay envelopes. They always hated to bring in the boss, a move which might result in losing their job. Good enough for her, he thought. She looked like a high-hat dame anyway.

The argument had awakened the curiosity of the other customers, who were now watching with eager interest.

"What seems to be the trouble, please?" A brusque little man with scanty black hair and a sharp-featured, thin face had pushed through the circle of people.

The situation was explained.

"But Mr. Perth," said the girl in defense, "I tilled the bill, counted my change, and then closed the register."

The manager turned to Nifty: "This thing never happens in our stores. We have a system—"

"System be hanged!" retorted Nifty with impatience. "You also have poor help! I asked the price of some candy while she was making change. Perhaps she hasn't the mental ability to think of two things at once!"

"I remember that," added one of the customers. "I was going to buy some of the same kind."

Much to Nifty's enjoyment, the girl bit her lower lip. He had her confused now. Wait until she heard the next part. Just wait. Already he could see her expression turn to one of stark amazement.

"This girl has been with us four

years," the manager was explaining. "I'm very sorry, sir, but this has never happened before. We have no proof—"

"Wait—" Nifty replied, extracting a bank book from inside his expensive-looking overcoat. "I was just going to the bank—maybe I can tell the number of that ten dollar bill from my deposit slip—happened to mark the numbers, you know."

II

SEVERAL other customers had come into the store and, sensing the climax of a small drama taking place before them, crowded about Nifty, the master of ceremonies, who was secretly enjoying the show.

"Yes," he announced, after apparently checking the other bills in his wallet, "the number of that bill is—ah—G13633708A!"

With trembling fingers, the girl drew forth some tens and fives. Eagerly she scanned them with the manager.

"Oh!" Her eyes found the bill first. "But—" The words died in her throat.

"You were quite right, sir." The little manager was fussed and most humble. "I'm very sorry this has happened." Then turning to the girl: "Give the gentleman the other nine dollars." His voice was crisp. Mistakes couldn't happen like that in his store.

Nifty watched her carefully. She knew he was tricking her. She was no fool, that girl. That made it all the more interesting. Inwardly he was crowing like a rooster. Once more he had put it over and collected. Bluff! That's all it was, just bluff!

A customer spoke up: "You have to watch everything these days."

Nifty gave him a friendly nod. It was funny.

The manager was speaking to the girl in low tones. Probably going to can her. Well, it was too bad. Suddenly the little man turned, shoved a credit slip across the counter.

"Merely as a matter of form, would you sign this—stating that this was your ten dollar bill?"

Nifty hesitated.

"Why," he retorted coldly, "should I sign this? I have three or four witnesses, right here. That's enough."

The little manager turned to the customers:

"Would you be willing to swear in court that this bill belongs to this man on the evidence presented here?"

They all agreed. It was an obvious case. One man was a lawyer.

"Well, then kindly stand just where you are. This—" he indicated a short-barreled object in his hand, "is a .38 automatic. It's pretty messy when it shoots. Don't move. The girl is going for a cop."

"But, I say—" began Nifty, apprehension of disaster creeping upon him.

"You can say it in court," said the little manager in tones of chilled steel. "That bill you gave us so much trouble over is counterfeit!"

There was an audible sucking-in of breath. Then silence.

COUNTERFEIT? An overpowering weakness engulfed Nifty.

His heart threatened to pound right out through his ribs. Counterfeit? One chance in a million to run into it. He had hit that chance. Then full realization of his desperate situation rang clear as a bell in his brain. Good God! Passing counterfeit money was a federal charge. He was a third offender, too!

He glanced at the challenging gray eyes of the store manager, eyes that

had grown brittle as glass. The man would shoot. Nifty recognized a capable hand behind the gun. The thought filled him with nausea. He couldn't take a rap for the counterfeiting charge. But he would plead guilty of attempt to defraud. Undeniably, he was caught with the goods and seven or eight witnesses.

"There he is, officer."

The girl's voice brought Nifty back to earth and reality. He felt the cold steel snap on his wrist.

"Passing counterfeit, eh?" said the copper.

"No," whined the captive, his voice husky. "I didn't pass that bum bill."

"Well, then," retorted the girl, her dark eyes blazing, "how did it get in my cash register? I suppose somebody else brought it in."

"That's it!" He was panicky now. "I had the bell-hop come over to buy a pound of candy for me. He gave you a ten—the bad one was his."

"But you knew the serial number," the girl insisted. "Why?"

"I copied the number before I gave it to him—then he switched bills."

The manager chuckled dryly. "But you still knew the serial number. That counterfeit bill must have been yours."

Never in his life had Nifty met such a cold gaze. He had to admit his attempt at fraud or take a federal rap. Either way she had him stopped.

"Yes," he said, "I tried to defraud you—I was only bluffing."

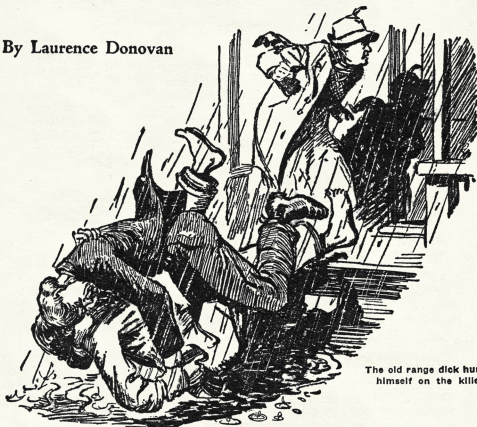
"Glory be!" exclaimed the cop. "Y'are pretty smart, miss, catchin' a bum bill at noon like this."

The girl laughed. "I thought he'd confess—if he was guilty. If he was innocent, he could prove that, too. That ten dollar bill is good, though. I was only bluffing."

The world stopped for Nifty Nolan.

Pa Howdy's Bad Man

By Laurence Donovan



The old range dick hurled himself on the killer

A Small Army of Men Surrounded That Cornered Killer—but It Was an Old Cow Country Sleuth Who Went in to Make the Capture

PA HOWDY skidded his small car to a stop at the insistent command of a waving flashlight. Through the intermittent sheets of windy rain he could make out three or four figures in the middle of the highway.

"Must be a tarnal washout or a wreck or somethin'," he growled as the man with the flashlight strode toward the car.

"An' rain or no rain, you would celebrate your birthday by seein' Tia Juana, which wa'ant nothin' much anyhow," grumbled Ma Howdy, hunching

her plump figure to a less uncomfortable position. "Seems like, seein' you've turned seventy at last, you'd be gettin' a lick o' sense."

"Aw, you been jawin' at me all the way from San Diego," said Pa Howdy. "Dang it, Ma! Looks like a posse! Maybe there's been a holdup!"

Excitement permeated the retired range detective's last words. Though he was seventy, as Ma Howdy had said, after forty years of riding for the Western Montana Cattleman's Association, the old cow dick's nostrils

were quivering. He could always smell the smoke of action when there was any hint of crime about.

The headlight beams picked out a silvery shield on a visored cap. "Chief of Police" were the words on the shield. Pa Howdy blinked his mild blue eyes in the ray of the flashlight. He saw a fat, scowling, worried face.

"You folks going right through to Los Angeles, mister?" questioned the chief, two or three other men with officers' caps and uniforms standing back of him.

"'Low that was the idea," replied Pa Howdy, "but we've had one danged blowout an' got a bum tire on front. Was figgerin' maybe we'd pull in outta this consarned rain at the first tourist cabins."

The chief's voice suddenly became guarded and full of mystery, though in the driving storm a shout couldn't have been heard more than a few yards.

"That's what I was afraid of. Well, you ain't stoppin' at the next one. It's a couple hundred yards up the highway, an' if we let you go through, you keep right on drivin' to the next camp. understand?"

Pa Howdy's swift scrutiny took in several motorcycles and an automobile pulled off to the side. A dim glow in the sheeted rain ahead indicated the tourist cabins at the outskirts of the small beach town. It was about midway between San Diego and Los Angeles.

Pa Howdy cleared his throat with a deep rumble. His horny knuckles suddenly cracked on the steering wheel. Ma Howdy recognized the symptoms and hunched him sharply with a cushioned elbow.

"Now, Pa," she whispered. "We'll drive right on."

"H'mm!" grunted Pa Howdy. "Mind tellin' what's the ruckus?"

The high guardian of the law in the small town appeared to have been only waiting for the chance. For some time he had been swelling with the importance of his position in an unexpected situation, even though he wasn't sure of his ability to cope with it.

"We've got this Mack Carson, the killer, bottled up in that camp," he confided hoarsely, close to Pa Howdy's ear. "Him an' his gun moll, his woman, you know. They're in one of the middle cabins with a machine gun an' a whole arsenal, ready to shoot their way out like he always does. You've heard of him, of course?"

What citizen who read the newspapers hadn't heard of Mack Carson? He was one of a score of outlaws here and there that different localities insisted in headlines had taken up the mantle of the dead Dillinger.

"Yeah, reckon I have," admitted Pa Howdy. "Seen' you've got 'im holed in, maybe me an' Ma could kinda stick around for the fireworks? You see I've—"

"No, sir!" interjected the chief. "We ain't takin' any risks of innocent bystanders gettin' shot up! You old folks wouldn't understand, but this guy Carson's liable to kill a dozen men before we get 'im! That's why we're holdin' off, waitin' for the sheriff's men with riot guns from Los Angeles! You see, mister, all of them cabins are made of flimsy wood an' they're about all full!

"If he cuts loose in there with that machine gun there'd be a lot of people killed! That's why we're guardin' the road until we get help! You wanta look out in this rain, or you'll run into them Los Angeles cars! They'll be coming fast."

SOMETHING strangely akin to a smile played across Pa Howdy's gaunt face, and there was a glint of humor in his mild eyes when the chief mentioned "old folks."

"H'mm!" he grunted. "Looks like you've got a dozen or more men right here, an' ain't some of them got shot-guns? You said there was just one bad man an' a puny woman?"

The town chief caught the irony in Pa Howdy's tone.

"Listen, you!" he rapped out angrily. "I ain't arguing! This Carson's killed a dozen men an' he always shoots his way out of jams! That puny woman is his gun moll, an' she's poison! You just drive right on past there! I've got a couple of men up the highway watching the road the other way! Now get goin'!"

"Land sakes," murmured Ma Howdy, her usually placid features clouded. "Do as the man says."

The old range dick pulled a plug of tobacco from an inner pocket, bit off a chunk and started chewing it.

"Reckon you wouldn't consider an offer to loop an' tie this feller for you?" he queried calmly. "I've took in one or two bad ones in my time, mister, an' seein' this bad man don't seem to know you've got 'im treed, it 'pears to me it might be a one man job. Leastwise, the bigger the posse you got, the more liable there is to be promiscuous shootin' an'—"

"Say, mister!" snapped the chief. "You've never seen the kind of a bad man this Carson is! You was born before the days of real murder with machine gun choppers! If you ever took in a bad man anywhere, he wasn't the kind could wipe out half a dozen men before you could get to him! Now, move along!"

The blue eye under Pa Howdy's

bushy white brow next to Ma Howdy closed in a slow wink.

"Nope," he said rather dolefully. "Reckon you're right, chief. Them bad men I was mentionin' didn't have to tote sausage grinders to hit something with. Some of them though managed kind of accidentally to pick off about six men outta a posse with maybe only six shots outta a triggerless forty-five. Well, we'll be drivin' along, chief. How far up the road d'you s'pose them Los Angeles cars would be?"

The chief said: "You'll meet them cars in maybe fifteen or twenty minutes. I phoned for them as soon as Charlie, the lunchstand man down the road, identified this Carson and his moll from a newspaper picture. We had a man crawl up through the rain, an' he thinks the girl an' Carson's taking turns sittin' up with the chopper handy. So we ain't any chance of surprisin' them. They've got their big blue sedan right in front ready for a quick getaway."

Pa Howdy eased the little car into gear. He took in the shivering policemen in their soaked uniforms, including a mudcaked figure who had evidently done the crawling to spy into the bad man's cabin. A lanky, bare-headed young man who wasn't an officer was, from his continual strutting up and down in the rain, the lunchstand man who was known as Charlie. Charlie seemed to be enjoying his position of notoriety, in spite of the dashing rain.

Pa Howdy drove away from the group, easing the little car around a curve in the highway. A glance through the rear window showed the dumpy chief of police still standing in the middle of the road with his flashlight. Then the bend hid the group.

A short distance ahead the lights of

the tourist camp danced in the sheets of rain on the greasy road. Pa Howdy's foot came off the accelerator and the car drifted.

"Reckon it's my birthday, ain't it, Ma?" he ventured experimentally. "I've got an idea an'—"

"Pa Howdy, you keep on goin'!" snapped ma. "I never seen a man



PA HOWDY

that'd always be pokin' into trouble that ain't no business of his like you do!"

"Ma, if they get a big posse an' bust in there, maybe they'll be a lot of people hurt an'—"

Plop! Hiss! The bum front tire entered into the argument by skidding the little car across the wet concrete toward the ditch. Pa Howdy missed turning over by a narrow margin.

"That settles it," murmured the old range dick. "Now, Ma, you listen. We can save all them folks from gettin' hurt; anyway, a man's got a right to celebrate his own birthday. What d'you think of this idea, Ma?"

II

THE little car with a loudly bumping front wheel slid crazily through the rain across the enclosure formed by flimsy tourist

cabins arranged in the shape of a horseshoe. Small lights gleamed on three cabin porches. The rain now was a typical wet season downpour, falling in sheets.

"Now, Ma," hissed Pa Howdy. "You remember when the ruckus starts you make a jump an' get yourself hid behind the car. You're always a mite too reckless an' I ain't wantin' you should be gettin' hurt."

Ma Howdy murmured a reply that might have been assent. Her own eyes matched Pa Howdy's in their glint of excitement. The truth was, the plump little woman from the Montana range had always enjoyed the spice of danger. She was only some sixty odd and considered herself still quite a youngish woman.

Pa Howdy's keen old eyes had taken in the porches of every cabin. There was no sign of anyone stirring. Even the cabin with its sign, "Manager" was in darkness. The little car, handicapped by its flat front tire, pulled obstinately sideways in the gravel.

One of the three porch lights was that of a cabin in the exact middle of the horseshoe. Its beam fell mistily on a shiny blue sedan. The little square cabin itself was dark inside. The old range dick could only venture a guess as to how the spying policeman had been so sure the killer, Carson, and his "gun moll" were taking turns at standing guard. He judged though that would be only sense.

When he was still several yards from the blue sedan Pa Howdy suddenly stepped on the gas. The abused little car responded with a skidding leap forward. With a tinny crash the front fenders of the two cars came together. Pa Howdy snapped off the ignition.

"Well, in all my born days I've

never seen an awkwarder man!" cried Ma Howdy. "You'd think you was blind as a bat, runnin' smack dab into somebody's car! For land sakes, can't you look where you're goin'?"

Her voice was shrill and penetrating. It was raised to a high pitch.

"Aw, shut up!" snapped Pa Howdy with loud emphasis. "If we'd drove on into town instead o' me listenin' to you an' stoppin' in a danged tourist camp it wouldn't a happened! Now we gotta get out in all this farnal rain!"

"Well, don't be sittin' there like a bump on a log, Pa! I can't get out on this side! You'd think a man your age would know a little somethin'! I'm soaked through an' through! Lemme out an' I'll get up on that porch in the dry! You go hunt up the manager!"

Pa Howdy squeezed from under the wheel, letting his Stetson hat slide off into the mud. He uttered a loud oath, retrieving it and holding it in his hands as the slapping rain plastered strands of thick gray hair over his forehead.

"Reckon the manager couldn't help hearin' you!" he shouted in an angry voice. "Lookit that hat, willya? That's what comes of listenin' to a crazy woman! We could a been in that town by this time! Now I have to be payin' damages, dang the luck! C'mon, up on this porch! That manager'll be comin' out in a minute, an' I ain't wantin' to get any wetter!"

Though Pa Howdy's back was squarely to the door of the cabin at the moment, the tail of a keen eye took in the slow opening of the door onto the lighted porch a bare half inch. The old range dick had Ma Howdy by the arm, seemed to be almost forcibly dragging her up on the porch out of the soaking rain.

His long gray hair blew about his ears and his customarily erect, square

shoulders were hunched into the droop of old age.

Ma Howdy was retorting hotly to his latest words, hotly and with plenty of volume.

"How I've ever put up with you all these years I don't know! You'd better wake up the man an' see how much your careless drivin' is goin' to cost us this time! Seems like we never get enough saved to take a trip anywhere 'less you—"

"Aw, stop jawin' at me!" interrupted Pa Howdy. "Wake the man up? You've been hollerin' loud enough to wake the dead!" The cabin door slowly opened a foot or more, revealing a thin, hard face with beady eyes and a figure clad partly in pajamas and partly in hastily pulled on trousers. The man in the door slipped something he had been holding in his hand into one of his pockets.

"MA HOWDY turned, as if seeing him for the first time.

"Oh, I'm sorry, mister," she began. "I was just tellin' Pa—"

"Keep still, will ya!" rapped Pa Howdy. "Seein' she's waked you up, mister, maybe you'd better come out an' see if we scarred up your automobile much! I didn't mean to, but we skidded in the mud an' I'm willin' to pay what—"

The man in the door interrupted the flow with a low, sharp oath. Then apparently he had a quick thought of putting a soft pedal on the commotion. After all, it was usually some dumb blunder that started a jam. Best to get rid of these two loud-mouthed hicks as quickly and as quietly as possible. A hard smile slanted across his mouth.

"Listen, you two," he said "Quiet down, will you? My—I've got a sick wife an' she's tryin' to get some rest.

All you do is back that bus of yours outta the way, an' we'll talk about the damage in the morning. Now go over to the manager's office and get yourself a cabin of your own to do your shouting in."

"But, mister," said Pa Howdy, swiping the gray hair from his gaunt face with a bony hand and peering up at the man from his stoop-shoulder posture, "'low you'd best have a look an' see if I bent the wheel axle, 'cause if I—"

"What?" rapped the man in the door. "You think you busted a wheel? Why you—"

He stepped onto the porch in his bare feet. Pa Howdy's eyes flicked a signal to Ma. It meant, get out of the way. As she caught it, the old range dick's lanky body straightened as if it had been coiled on steel springs. The hard heel of an oldtime boot ground down upon the instep of Mack Carson's bare foot. A knotted fist of the general size and shape of a small, knobby ham lashed up on its lean, long arm.

Carson's hitherto perfect nose merged squashily with his thin cheeks. His wild oath of surprise was smashed into his loosened teeth by the range dick's other fist before he could set himself. But though he staggered, the wall of the porch kept him on his feet and one hand dived into the pocket of his trousers.

"Get outta the way, Ma!" yelled Pa Howdy, as he hurled himself on the killer, wrapping a rawhide arm around his neck and fastening his long fingers around the outlaw's gun wrist. But he had no time to see if Ma Howdy heeded his warning, for Carson was young and tough and his knee snapped up into the range dick's stomach with sickening force.

Pa Howdy's brain whirled dizzily for a moment, but his grip was set and as he staggered he pulled the killer with him. Their feet slipped from the edge of the porch and they rolled into the mud. Carson was fighting desperately to free the automatic pistol in his pocket and he pushed the advantage of having his knee grinding into the older man's stomach muscles.

"Rita!" he shouted. "Grab the chopper! It's a frame! Let 'm have it an' jump for the car!"

Pa Howdy was turned over, his body in the mud with Carson's weight on the punishing knee. Despite his strength he was sick, and the killer was slowly but surely pulling free with the hand gripping the gun. Even then, he thought of Ma Howdy, and managed breath enough to shout, "Run, Ma. Get away! Run!"

Ma Howdy didn't run. She had not left the porch. A light in the cabin had snapped on. Under it a slender girl with rouged, sunken cheeks was standing. Her eyes, feverishly bright, were swollen and red with panicky tears.

Ma Howdy's plump figure filled the narrow space of the doorway. The girl cried, "Mack! I'll get 'em! Oh, I can't—"

She had sunk on the bed, shivering. Beside it was the slim, black snout of the murderous chopper. Her slim arms were jerking nervously and her fingers with the carmined nails were twitching. Ma Howdy stood very still, smiling placidly.

"Don't do it, child," she said gently. "It wouldn't be worth much to be killin' an old woman like me. It's too late, you see."

"Oh!" screamed the girl. "You haven't any business in—"

Ma Howdy walked toward her slowly, her broad, kindly smile unchanged.

With a strangled sob the girl swayed toward the machine gun. She faltered forward, hesitated, and plunged toward the boards.

Ma Howdy was quick then, catching her in her arms.

"I couldn't, oh, I couldn't do that," sobbed the girl. "You look like—oh, hell!" she finished with a scream.

Ma Howdy heard Pa Howdy repeat his warning for her to run. She pushed the girl onto the bed and picked up the heavy machine gun.

OUTSIDE, Pa Howdy felt his fingers slowly slipping off the wrist of the hand holding the deadly gun. His arm had remained wrapped around the killer's neck. His own head was jammed back into the mud and the weight of the outlaw's knee seemed driving his stomach flat against his spine.

Ma Howdy, on the cabin porch, gave a little scream. Unable to see her, the old range dick remembered the girl. A killer's moll, alone with Ma! He fought off the nausea of the knee in his stomach. With a sighing groan he suddenly relaxed his long, rawhide body. His arm loosened around the killer's neck and his hand ceased its effort to prevent the drawing of the pistol from the other man's pocket.

Carson snarled an oath of triumph, whipping out the gun. He started to jam it into Pa Howdy's neck, glanced around and changed his mind. Lights had snapped on in three or four cabins, but there was no evidence of coppers in the vicinity.

Carson whirled the gun butt first in his hand and snapped his arm upward. Ma Howdy let out another little scream. The machine gun hung loosely in her pudgy hands. Pa Howdy's limp inertia vanished in a bowl-like arching

of his backbone. As his hard knees struck Carson in the rear, tipping him, one bony fist flailed over with the swift movement of a rattler striking.

Pa Howdy was seventy, but behind that blow was all the seasoned strength of his hard riding range years. The impact under Carson's ear on the hinge of his jaw lifted his knee clear from the old dick's stomach. His blow with the butt of the pistol came down, but Pa Howdy's head wasn't there. Hand and rod struck in the mud.

Before the killer could reverse the gun, fingers of steel had again clamped on his wrist. Pa Howdy's left shoulder heaved with a twisting movement and there was a sharp crack of breaking bone. Carson yelled a wild oath that died with the solid drive of the old range dick's fist under his chin.

Pa Howdy shifted the unconscious outlaw over on his face. The man's breath bubbled in a pool. The machine gun clanked onto the floor of the cabin porch and Ma Howdy turned and went inside.

Feeling as if his lanky body had been broken in the middle, Pa Howdy slid through the rain to the little car. When he came back he was holding an old-fashioned pair of steel handcuffs. He slapped mixed mud and water into Carson's face. When the bandit killer came out of his punch-drunken dream he was being hoisted to his feet.

"Reckon you'd be a better dry gulcher than a man to man scrapper," smiled Pa Howdy grimly. "If you hadn't wasted time fishin' for your hardware you might have had the best of it. C'mon, there's a kinda bashful posse waitin' for you 'long down the trail."

The feared killer staggered drunkenly. Through one closing eye he glanced at Pa Howdy. The rain beat on the old

range dick's head, matting his gray hair on his gaunt cheeks. Carson swore heavily.

"One damn hick!" he groaned. "Just one old damn hick!"

He limped as his soft bare feet bore down on the sharp gravel. But he went toward the highway with his one unbroken wrist firmly attached to Pa Howdy's bony one by a link of steel. The killer's own automatic pistol winked at him balefully from the old dick's free hand.

As they turned their backs on the tourist cabin, Pa Howdy heard Ma Howdy's low, soothing voice. A girl was sobbing convulsively.

III

DEPUTY SHERIFF JONES jammed on the brakes of the squad car with a sudden force that skidded it dangerously toward the ditch. As it halted, half a dozen men armed with sawed-off riot guns poured out into the rain. Two other cars likewise stopped. Two machine guns, four men balancing tear gas bombs, and a few others carrying rifles unloaded into the highway.

The cars had arrived without benefit of wailing sirens, having been warned of the situation by the beach town chief of police. The fattish chief came plodding up the road, trailed by a mud-plastered first lieutenant, an open-mouthed lunchstand man and others of his force.

Between these armies, Pa Howdy stood in the highway. He pulled out a plug of tobacco, bit off a ragged corner and chewed it reflectively. In pajama coat and trousers, bare feet glistening on the concrete, Mack Carson started swearing lustily.

Pa Howdy set an oldtime boot on the outlaw's bare toes and the oaths

died out. In a minute the old-fashioned handcuffs were back in Pa Howdy's pockets and Carson was shackled between two deputies.

"I oughta pinch you for interferin' with the law!" sputtered the town chief. "I tol' yuh to keep on goin'! Maybe you think you'll grab off the twelve thousan' reward they've posted for this guy!"

"Hey!" said lunchstand Charlie. "Me an' him splits it! I seen him, didn't I?"

"I'd say the old codger's got it coming," decided Deputy Jones. "What are we standing here in the rain for? Didn't you say this guy had his gun moll along? We want her."

With a short oath the town chief barked an order. Grabbing a shotgun from one of his men, he heroically headed the charge into the enclosure of the tourist cabins.

"Don't take any chances on that dame!" he shouted. "She's poison, an' a third of the reward's up for her!"

"Hey!" yelled lunchstand Charlie. "I get half! I seen her, didn't I?"

The raiding force spread out warily. The chief shouted a warning to awakened, curious occupants of the cabins to get back inside. The door of the killer's cabin yawned open. It was dark inside, but the porch light still burned. The chief and his men scooted behind the little car and the blue sedan.

"Come on out!" yelled the chief. "We've got you covered an' we'll cut you to pieces! Hi! Where's some of them gas bombs!"

There was a rustling movement inside the dark cabin. A slow step was heard. The police guns covered the dark doorway.

Ma Howdy's round, placid face appeared. Her gray hair was pulled down over one shoulder. The waist of her

dress was torn. She came onto the porch with a hesitating step.

"You're a mite too late," she said calmly. "The girl's gone. She acted like a wildcat, an' she went up that way."

A pudgy hand waved in the general direction of the bushy hillside above the tourist camp. It was a dark, desolate wilderness, leading to a bench of the mountains.

"I'd be a bit careful," said Ma Howdy. "She's got that big gun Pa always calls a sausage grinder."

Swearing under his breath, the town chief deployed his force with caution.

"C'mon, Pa!" called Ma Howdy. "You'll catch your death of cold standin' out in the rain without your hat!"

"Hey!" yelled lunchstand Charlie. "I get half the reward! Didn't I see 'em first?"

IV

THE little car came out of the town garage where its flat front tire had been changed. Pa Howdy steered carefully through a cheering group of spectators. Out on the highway, headed north to Los Angeles, he held down the speed.

Ma Howdy's plump elbow nudged his ribs sharply.

"Ain't you gettin' mighty careful all of a sudden?" she said. "Step on it, Pa. I want to get home to change these wet clothes before I catch pneumonia or something."

"You've been jawin' at me ever since we left San Diego," grunted Pa Howdy. "The road's slippery an' maybe I bent an axle."

Ma Howdy strained her short neck to look back through the rear window. The lights of a deputy sheriff's car was far in the rear.

"Pa," she murmured, "I think maybe that girl is hid under the rumble."

"What in time?" gasped Pa Howdy. "Y'mean to tell me— Ma, are you plumb crazy? Now we've gotta go back an' turn her over—"

"Pa, I wouldn't want to think of that scared kid in a jail, would you?" murmured Ma Howdy. "She ain't much more'n a child, an' she had a mother once—said she looked something like me, Pa."

Pa Howdy jammed his foot on the accelerator until the little car swayed dangerously. He bit a piece off the plug of tobacco with a decisive snap of his teeth.

"H'mm!" he growled. "Reckon we'd better turn off to Alhambra. She could get a morning train to Salt Lake. Ma, I was wonderin' if I oughta take that reward money, seein' we don't need it. 'Low maybe a girl like that might see things some different if she had a good start."

"I was thinkin' of that, too, Pa. An' if she happened to be in Montana when we go back to the range I think it would help a lot."



The Criminologist Says

By Major C. E. Russell



Consulting Criminologist for the States of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut; former Provost Marshal on the confidential staff of General Pershing for special investigating—he will help you with your problems.

Case No. 5

For the past five years my daughter has been the confidential secretary to the presi-

dent of a large corporation. After she returned from her vacation last August there was a series of petty thefts in the girls' rest-room. Since there have been no new girls these thefts must have been committed by one of the present staff.

About three weeks ago one of the girls complained that her pay envelope had been taken from her locker. A search was immediately made. The missing money was found in my daughter's locker. My daughter denied the theft and she was upheld by her employer, the president. What can be done to prove her innocence?

Mrs. B. H. G.

Your daughter is either the victim of an unfortunate chain of circumstances or the victim of a deliberate attempt to discredit her so that she will be discharged.

If there is some girl in the office that your daughter can trust she should solicit her aid. This friend, by keeping her eyes and ears open, may eventually hear the one plotting your daughter's downfall start an underground propaganda to further her own scheme. It is sure to happen this way, unless the one responsible has been frightened off. I believe this whole affair may have been engineered by the girl who substituted for your daughter during her vacation. Watch her!

Case No. 6

In the house next to ours lives a family who have taken a fourteen-year-old girl out of an orphan asylum. Repeatedly we have heard this girl crying. In a talk with our daughter, this orphan told of terrible beatings with a rubber hose for minor offenses. The other night, I telephoned the police without giving my name, and they sent an officer up to investigate. I overheard this officer telling the man that if people would keep their noses out of other people's business, it would be better for all concerned. Inasmuch as this neighbor is a power politically and they own their own home and we own ours I do not

care to come out in the open, yet something must be done to put a stop to this abuse. What can I do without disclosing that I am the one complaining?

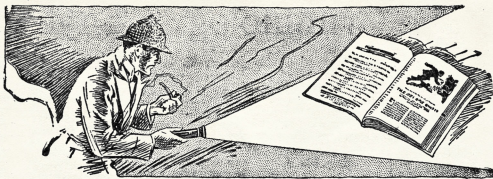
There are three courses open to you. If there is a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in your town you can complain to them. They will *not* violate your confidence by disclosing that you are the complainant in the case. They will investigate and remove the girl, if she is being abused. If there is no society like this you might enter a complaint with the head of the orphan asylum. If you do, ask that your name be *kept out of it*. If you feel that there is a possibility they might not respect your confidence—due to the political prominence of this neighbor—find out the girl's religion and take the affair up with the local pastor or priest of her faith.

YOU MAY WRITE US YOUR PROBLEMS. Letters will be answered at the discretion of Major Russell. If you so designate, your letter will not be reprinted here. In any case your letter will be held in strict confidence and no initials or identification will appear in this column. You must attach the coupon underneath, signed, and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. This service is free.

I want guidance in the matter I have outlined in the attached letter. This is not to be regarded as legal service or investigation service and I will not hold **DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY** or Major C. E. Russell responsible in any way.

Name.....

Address.....



Flashes From Readers

*Where Readers and Editors Get Together to Gossip
and Argue, and Everyone Speaks Up His Mind*

WILLIAM E. BENTON will let you in on the secrets of reading character from the face. In a series of articles that begins next week, he will give you all the information you need to make you an expert. **HOW YOU CAN READ FACES** is going to be the new title of Mr. Benton's department.

You'll be able to tell your friends things about themselves that will surprise them—often things they didn't know themselves, and yet that they'll finally admit are true. If you want to make the most of yourself and your friends learn Mr. Benton's system.

Anyone whose success depends upon dealing with other people—and whose doesn't?—can study this series of articles, save the magazines for reference, and easily acquire all the principles.

You'll have to remember far fewer rules than you'd need to play bridge, and use a lot less judgment than you'd need in poker. For if a man has a Roman nose, that means one definite thing. And it always means that same thing. And if you don't believe that people with Roman noses like to be boss—that they rule or ruin—take a look at your friends this week while

WHAT is *your* idea of the best story (fiction or true story, regardless of length) published in **DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY** since Jan. 1, 1934? For the twelve letters from readers which, in the opinion of **THE CRIME JURY**, give the best reasons why this or that story stands out above all others, we will award twelve full yearly subscriptions. We don't want mere praise; we are interested in finding out exactly what stories you liked best. We don't care about your literary style.

Was there some story printed in this magazine which stood out in your memory above all others? Write and tell us about that story. Tell us why you liked it, what there was about it which made it stick in your mind. It isn't necessary for you to have read every story in every issue. You will have just as good a chance to win one of those twelve subscriptions as someone who has read all the issues from cover to cover. But we must know *why* you liked your favorite story.

Letters selected by the editors will be published from week to week, but not all letters published will receive subscriptions.

Make your comments as brief or as lengthy as you wish. But put down all your reasons. Address your letter to **THE CRIME JURY, DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY**, 280 Broadway, New York City, so that it will reach us not later than March 9th, 1935.

you're waiting for Mr. Benton's first article. Don't miss the first, or any subsequent lesson of a practical, valuable series. The ability to read character is one of the greatest assets you can have.

TIE THIS OLD-TIMER!

DEAR EDITOR:

I have been aroused from an absolute silence by a letter published in issue dated December 8, 1934, from one of the "old-timers."

Now I wish to claim a record that can only be tied, not beaten. I have bought and still have each and every copy issued to date from the very first one on.

I have read each and every story published from one end to another and all the "Flashes from Readers."

From time to time I would find criticisms and objections to this or that author, character, story or set up, but always found that these were eliminated or corrected either with or without protests from readers.

I now have only two peevs. First. Why must illustrations of characters be repeated in each installment of the serial? *Jigger Masters'* face appears four different times in the four parts of "The Golden Magnet Murders." One picture of one character only in the story is enough for me.

Second. Why have your "Crime Jury"? How can this bunch do any better in the choice of stories than the editor, alone, without them has been doing? Just seems to be surplus baggage.

On the whole, each issue was a very big dime's worth and I got only quiet amusement from some of the criticisms and bouquets published over the years.

Still a faithful reader,

ANDREW KOZMA,
Mansfield, O.

THE FANGS OF THE RATTLER

DEAR EDITOR:

I have been reading DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY for more years than I can remember, in fact, it was called *Flynn's* for a long time after I read my first copy.

I am not a publicity seeker, although my vocation calls for plenty of ballyhoo, so have never before felt that a word or two from me would mean a change of policy or an improvement in the stories. Therefore I have never written.

Naturally, I have noticed a few mistakes, but they were of such character that they made no material difference in the story, so held my peace. But in Mr. Rud's story now running, "The Golden Magnet Murders," he has had a rattler-

snake bite the fair heroine, and the said rattler left fang marks but no venom, for, according to Mr. Rud, its poison sacs had been removed. To this I must rise and say "impossible."

I am an old time medicine faker who travels from city to city and hamlet to hamlet selling so-called snake oil. Although the liniment I sell contains no snake oil whatsoever, we leave the purchaser with the impression that it does.

Now to get back to the subject, I have handled hundreds of rattlers fixed so they were harmless and in their natural state, and never in a lifetime have I seen a rattler with poison sacs removed and with fangs intact. Always the fangs are broken off, not pulled, as this would make the snake slow and listless, and I don't believe that a rattler could have the poison sacs removed and live.

Now with Mr. Rud's experience he should know whereof he speaks, but I believe he is wrong.

The stories, as a whole, in D. F. W. top all others, in my opinion, and I read an average of six different mags a week. I have no favorite writers; in fact, I am very well pleased with the editor's selections, but felt duty-bound to set Mr. Rud right on his rattlers.

An ardent admirer,

JEFF FARMER,
Dresden, Tenn.

OBJECTS TO INCORRECT ENGLISH

DEAR SIR:

As an appreciative reader of DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY for more than ten years, I feel that I have a right to express some preference, and object to some stories.

Your *Fluffy McGoff* and *Hoh-hoh* stories, do not belong in a high class magazine like yours. I never read stories in incorrect English; they are stupid and tiresome. Some magazines do print that type of story; for that reason I never buy them. In recommending your magazine, DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY, to friends, I have always stressed the fact that it could be read safely even by young people, without fear of corrupting their language. I have no other complaint to make. The stories are all good with the exception of the ones mentioned.

My favorite author is Ed. Parrish Ware, but what has become of *Calhoun*? He seems like a very old friend.

Occasionally you let an adventure story creep in, but on the whole the magazine could not be better arranged.

I like Maj. Russell and K-4 very much indeed.

Yours for a Happy New Year and continued success.

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) E. P. BAXTER,
Chicago, Ill.

Solving Cipher Secrets

A cipher is secret writing. The way to solve ciphers is to experiment with substitute letters until real words begin to appear. In solving, notice the frequency of certain letters. For instance, the letters e, t, a, o, n, i, are the most used in our language. So if the puzzle maker has



M. E. OHAYER

used X to represent e, X will probably appear very frequently. Combinations of letters will also give you clues. Thus, the affixes -ing, -ion, -ally are frequent. Read the helpful hints at the beginning of this department each week. The first cryptogram each week is the easiest.

NO. X-11 by William C. Wallace, this week's special cipher, provides an exceptionally interesting problem for you to unravel! The combination "KNO₃" represents the key to this cipher, but the system employed and the method of applying the key you are to discover for yourselves! Answers to No. X-11 will not be counted in your solving scores, but let us know if you get it! The solution and full explanation will be given in two weeks.

No. X-11. By William C. Wallace.

ETAPTTMSR A M A O P A S,
PTTT IATIA PT AMASO, MT
P IUMAS TOMTAPTTMAS
TTTMA, OSPAMTM TTTSO-
TS MA IPASO. IUSA ESOS
MA MT STSA PT PA PAAM-
TSEAMT PAA ISORMTMAS.

Last week's Inner Circle cipher, No. 48 by The Captain, provided several avenues of approach. Thus symbol E occurred twice, both times preceding symbol P, with the repeated digraph EP suggesting *qu*; and so to LEPL. (-*qu*-), *aqua*; RLSLEPN (-*a-aqu*-), *macaque*; etc. Again, with the use of symbol N indicating *e*, RNQNN (-*e-ee*) tried as *mêlée* would check with QLRL (*l-m*-), *lama*; etc. Or the terminals XG- and -XGV could be used for entry; and so on.

The current cryptic division by Biff employs a 10-letter key word, numbered from 0 to 9. Look to the third subtraction for symbol T. Also, find C in $Y \times C = Y$, and reconstruct the second

multiplication. Comparison of F, DSFD, DSG, and SG will get you started with Bluebonnet's crypt. Follow up with SGFOD and SGO, supplying the letter for symbol O.

In Captain Kidd's contribution, the correct assumption for the three-letter word FRU will unlock FGPUFRUD. Next, CGA, CGAD, and CGADEUNV will drop into place, checking with XDU and XNN; and so on. Identify the endings -RDK, -GRHD, and -GBG in the construction of Messrs. Woerner and Carpenter, continuing with groups 4, 5, and 15.

Groups 11 and 13 should afford likely material in the message by F. J. S., duly noting the high frequency, doubling, and use in the final positions of symbol U. Spot your own clues in Copper's "isologic" Inner Circle cipher! A solution of the latter and the answers to Nos. 49-54, inclusive, will be given next week. Asterisks in Nos. 52 and 53 mark proper nouns.

No. 49—Cryptic Division. By Biff.

TCY) ASOPCH(ACA
R CTC

COIC
ORRY

RRIH
R CTC

10

No. 50—The Woman Pays. By Bluebonnet.

SG NFXG SGO F SGFOD AH DGBRGO—KYD ASG LFPR THO
PD RGFOEZ, FBR SHU! THO SG UFA DSG BGPNSKHOSHHR
KYDVSOG, FBR DSG SGFOD UFA DSFD HT F VHU!

No. 51—Systematic Assemblage. By Captain Kidd.

BRUO CGA XDU XNN YDGLUO, AH, HANN CGADEUNV
FGPUFRUD, VSOT CGAD YUXDSOPE, HSZL AH CGAD
VUUF, NSVF CGAD ZRSO, XOT NGGL CGAD FDGAYNUE
EKAXDU SO FRU VXZU!

No. 52—Foreign Spokesman. By Howard H. Woerner and C. L. Carpenter.

ROAST GHJRSBP KOHIL, OSMISGBG DHFSN TRFSOGRHD.
QCJATCU UWRGBNRDK CROP ESLWPO LRMISG QCTST
JHVLCDP. *XHWSVRCD FSDBORNHMIRGB SZLNCRDG
YSCB.

No. 53—Minister's Mandate. By F. J. S.

UOUARGZ DRKROVUH, TOFEUY UJFUHHQ YFUO. *HVD-
PUOVUF, BLXUHKRGZ, DROE, XGVSSX XGFSS, YUDHUUX
GBLVOVZQ YUAHUU VHHUOUKRGZ, XFHKVKBH PRGAX;
XNBHTYORQ ZUHEVGRZUX RLHFTZOQ!

No. 54—Eroticade. By Copper.

SWNZJ HWDFC WGFVP SWXZJ KNRVW QDJPC WVXHK
TWXJV. KNGZT HNWRP HWDZT LXFC, MBXZC WKFDM,
JXZMV LNWRX, QGZMB MXZJK, SVTDZ XQNGF.

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

43—Key: o 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 A M P H I T R Y O N

44—As I was coming down the stair, I met
a man who wasn't there. He wasn't there
again today—I wish to heck he'd go away!

45—Radio waves have the same velocity as
light, traveling about one hundred and eighty-
six thousand miles or three hundred million
meters per second.

46—Zealous typists cultivate ambidexterity
through writing quoted freak jocular words:
"Ship quickly by express twenty-five jugs of
red Amazon rum."

47—Unabridged dictionary includes extraor-
dinary orthographical oddities: iivi, piitis,
diiodide, skiing, Oii, genii, torii, liaison, divi-
divi.

48—Hindu infidel bheesty drenches sly
macaque with *aqua*. Didactical lama flytes
priest; hecatomb ensues. Zany frees xanthous
zebu, climaxing *mêlée*.

Enroll in our March Cipher Solvers' Club by
submitting one or more answers to this week's
puzzles Nos. 43-48. Address: M. E. Ohaver, DE-
TECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY, 280 Broadway, New
York, N. Y.

How Faces Reveal Character

By WILLIAM E. BENTON



RIGHT
or Conscious Side

THOMAS
TOUHY

This is the same man!

To see the actual face, fold
the page and bring the right
and left sides together



LEFT
or Subconscious Side

THOMAS TOUHY is one of the most dangerous criminals in the United States. He is a walking bomb. It is he who warned Federal agents in Chicago that he was carrying a large amount of nitroglycerine in his clothing, and that an attempt to arrest him would result in an explosion big enough to wreck a building.

He was the brains of the notorious Touhy kidnaping gang, and is an example of the criminal face that is the most dangerous of all, because to a casual glance it does not look crooked.

The right or conscious side of Touhy's face is keen-cut and good looking. Note, however, the bold, direct, and cruel eyes.

The key to his criminal nature is the marked duality of the face. Notice how different the right side is from the left.

That means that any characteristics found will be exemplified to a marked degree. Now look at the left side. The left eye and brow have the catlike up-slant that indicates cruelty. The nostrils are unusually wide open: the sign of a passionate and violent character. The large, full mouth shows strong appetites and little restraint. The left ear is outthrust. The jaw, despite its gentle curves, is of the determined and destructive type. All these stigmata mark Touhy as a dangerous criminal.

Next Week—How You Can Read Faces

Let William E. Benton Analyze Your Face

FILL out the coupon at the bottom of the page, and mail it to Mr. Benton. Enclose a photograph of yourself and ten cents.

Mr. Benton will tell you what your features reveal of your character. You have qualities and talents that you don't suspect. Your face is your fortune. What is your fortune? You may be following the wrong occupation. You may be in love with the wrong person. You can send in a coupon, with a photograph of anyone you wish. Enclose one dime with each coupon to cover mailing and handling costs.

Only photographs less than three by five inches in size can be returned.

MR. WILLIAM E. BENTON,
DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY,
280 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

Good for one analysis.
Expires 3-16-35.

I enclose a photograph that I want analyzed, and ten cents. Please write me what character this face reveals.

Name.....

Address.....

3-2-35

Next Week the Crime Jury Selects!—

The Vault of Death

A Novelette

By Erle Stanley Gardner

NO man could forget the shambles that greeted Ben Harper at the top of that steel-walled penthouse, where five frantic millionaires had raised a last terrified stand against the taunting, invisible thing that had sentenced them to inexorable death.

"Pay me two million dollars," their unseen enemy had said. "Now. Or within the hour one of you will die."

It was impossible, incredible to think that anyone could break through the steel cordon that protected the five money kings. Yet Death had struck on schedule, not once, but twice. And suddenly Ben Harper, the man who had never lost a case, "the man who couldn't forget," found himself plunged into a maelstrom of terror and mystery that deepened with the danger-laden minutes.

Here's an astounding, thrilling yarn from the pen of a favorite writer.

The Mute One

A Novelette

By Richard B. Sale

DAFFY DILL, the daring and wisecracking ornament of the New York press, thrust himself into a case filled with mystery and excitement when he boarded an incoming liner to interview the Snake Man. For four of the snakes were headless, and a diamond was missing, and these clues led Daffy into the Room of Purple Death! Don't miss it.

THE smashing conclusion of Donald Ross's great serial; THE LADY FROM HELL in the Episode of the Levantine Monster; how 'Frisco Jimmy learned the fiendish torture of the water-cross in the old Ohio State Prison; and other stories by Robert McBlair and John H. Knox.

DETECTIVE FICTION WEEKLY—March 9 Issue (Out February 27)

GO TO HIGH SCHOOL



IN BEDROOM SLIPPERS!

IF YOU feel the need of a high school education—regardless of your age—you can acquire it in the privacy of your own home after your day's work is done. Mail this coupon for information about our modern and widely recognized high school course. *Thousands of adults are studying it every night!*

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

"The Universal University" Box 2171-F, Scranton, Penna.

Without cost or obligation, please send me a copy of your booklet, "Who Wins and Why," and full particulars about the subject before which I have marked X:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>TECHNICAL AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Architect <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman <input type="checkbox"/> Building Estimating <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Millworking <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Draftsman <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting <input type="checkbox"/> Welding, Electric and Gas <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Shop Blueprints <input type="checkbox"/> Telegraph Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Work <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman <input type="checkbox"/> Machinist <input type="checkbox"/> Toolmaker <input type="checkbox"/> Development and Protection of New Products <input type="checkbox"/> Patternmaker <input type="checkbox"/> Heat Treatment of Metals <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge and Building Foreman <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Diesel Engineer <p>BUSINESS TRAINING COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Business Management <input type="checkbox"/> Office Management <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Management <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Management <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting and C.P.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching <input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeping <input type="checkbox"/> Secretarial Work <input type="checkbox"/> Cost Accountant <input type="checkbox"/> Salesmanship <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising <input type="checkbox"/> Service Station Salesmanship <input type="checkbox"/> Wallpaper Decorating <input type="checkbox"/> Salesmanship | <p>INDUSTRIAL COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Aviation Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Automobile Mechanic <input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing <input type="checkbox"/> Heating <input type="checkbox"/> Air Conditioning <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker <input type="checkbox"/> Steam Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Steam Electric Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping <input type="checkbox"/> Refrigeration <input type="checkbox"/> R. R. Locomotives <input type="checkbox"/> Air Brakes <input type="checkbox"/> R. R. Section Foreman <input type="checkbox"/> R. R. Bridge and Building Foreman <input type="checkbox"/> R. R. Signalman <input type="checkbox"/> Highway Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/> Coal Mining Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation <input type="checkbox"/> Boilermaker <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Woollen Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit Growing <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry Farming <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer <p>BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Business Correspondence <input type="checkbox"/> Lettering Show Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Signs <input type="checkbox"/> Stenography and Typing <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Service <input type="checkbox"/> Mail Carriers <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Grade School Subjects <input type="checkbox"/> High School Subjects <input type="checkbox"/> College Preparatory <input type="checkbox"/> First Year College <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrating <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Cartooning <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Lumber Dealer |
|---|--|

Name.....Age.....

Address.....

City.....State.....

Occupation.....

If you reside in Canada, send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada

JIMMIE DALE

*Comes Back
in a
Brand New
Story*

"The Missing Hour"

Latest Serial
by

FRANK L. PACKARD

COMING SOON!

in
Detective Fiction Weekly

ANNOUNCING AMAZING TYPEWRITER BARGAIN

BRAND NEW MODEL No. 5

REMINGTON
PORTABLE

10¢ A DAY
MONEY BACK GUARANTEE



10 DAY
FREE TRIAL
OFFER

FREE EASY HOME
TYPING COURSE

● Positively the greatest portable typewriter bargain ever offered! Now for the first time Remington, world-famous manufacturer, offers a NEW purchase plan... only 10¢ a day buys this latest model machine! Not a used or rebuilt typewriter. Not an incomplete machine. A beautiful brand new regulation Remington Portable. Standard 4-row keyboard; Standard width carriage; margin release on keyboard; back spacer; automatic ribbon reverse; *every essential feature found in standard typewriters!*

Money making opportunities always open

Hundreds of jobs are waiting for people who can type. A typewriter helps put your ideas on paper in logical, impressive form, helps you write clear, understandable sales reports, letters, articles, or stories. A Remington Portable has started many a young man and woman on the road to success.



A Gift for Every Member of the Family

If you want a gift for birthday, Christmas, or graduation... one that Father, Mother, Sister or Brother will use and appreciate for years to come... give a Remington Portable. It's the one gift that can be used with both pleasure and profit by every member of the family.

Standard 4-row keyboard; Standard width carriage; margin release on keyboard; back spacer; automatic ribbon reverse; *every essential feature found in standard typewriters!*

ACT...WHILE LOW PRICE
HOLDS GOOD!

New wage scales in our own factories, and in the factories of the companies which make our materials, point definitely to higher prices. Stocks of machines on hand make possible the present unbelievably low cash price on this machine. Everything points to higher prices. We cannot possibly guarantee this low price in the face of constantly rising costs in every one of our departments. So we say... "Act fast!"

10 DAY FREE TRIAL OFFER

You can try this machine for 10 days without risking one penny of your money. *Not even shipping charges.* Send for complete details on this most liberal offer. Get attractive new catalogue illustrating and describing the many Remington models available on unusually low terms. Clip coupon today!

EVERY ESSENTIAL FEATURE found in Standard Machines

Buying a typewriter isn't like buying a suit of clothes. Many Remington portables, seeing 10 years of hard service are still in active use. When you buy...buy a machine with every *standard* feature. The Remington No. 5 is the most compact and durable portable ever built...includes all essential standard typewriter features. This beautiful machine

represents the height of economy...unequalled economy in first cost...unequalled economy in service.

It is today the best value ever offered in typewriter history...and that statement comes from the company that has constantly *made* typewriter history. Buy now. It is a real bargain offer.

Specifications...

The Model 5 includes every essential feature found in standard typewriters. It has standard 4-row keyboard. Complete visibility. Standard width carriage for long envelopes. Carriage return lever of exceptional design for easy and rapid operation.

tion. Margin release on the keyboard. Automatic ribbon reverse. Backspacer. Two color ribbon shift. Variable line spacer. Adjustable margin stops. Auto set Paragraph Key (one of the most useful features found on any typewriter). Weight 11 lbs. 13 oz. Furnished with Pica or Elite type.

TYPING COURSE

When you get your new Remington No. 5, you will get with it... **ABSOLUTELY FREE**... a 19-page course in typing. It teaches the Touch System, speeds up work. It is simply written and well illustrated. Instructions are easy as A.B.C. Even a child can understand this method. A little study and the average person, child or grown-up, becomes fascinated. Follow this course during the 10-DAY FREE TRIAL OFFER that we give you on your typewriter. At the end of that time, you should be able to dash off letters faster than with pen and ink.

FREE



CARRYING CASE

With every Remington No. 5, a **FREE** carrying case sturdily built of 3-ply wood. Covered with heavy DuPont fabric. Top is removed in one motion, leaving machine firmly attached to base. Can be used anywhere... on knees, in chairs, on trains.

FREE



Remington Rand Inc., Dept. 145-3, Buffalo, N. Y.

Please tell me how I can buy a new Remington Portable typewriter for only 10¢ a day. Also enclose your new catalog.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

CLIP COUPON NOW

REMINGTON RAND INC., DEPT. 145-3, BUFFALO, N. Y.

-take it from me
Chesterfields are Milder

-take it from me
Chesterfields Taste Better