UNCANNY, SPOOKY, CREEPY TALES

JUNE

Ghost STORIES

A MACFADDEN PUBLICATION

PRICE UNITED STATES 25¢ CANADA 30¢

Jealous Ghost

THE HAND
by
THEODORE DREISER

A Crystal Gazer's Crime

The Room of Yellow Shadows

Vol. 6 *JUNE, 1929* *No. 6*

Contents

Published Monthly by THE CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLISHING CORPORATION, Washington and South Aves., Dunellen, N. J.
Editorial and General Offices, Macfadden Building, 1926 Broadway, N. Y.
Charles Mendel, *President* William Thompson, *Secretary*
M. L. Wilson, Jr., *Advertising Manager*, Graybar Building, 420 Lexington Ave. New York, N. Y.
Entered as second class matter April 30th, 1926, at the Post Office at Dunellen, N. J., under the act of March 3rd, 1879. Additional entry at New York, N. Y.

Price 25c a copy in U. S.—30c in Canada. Subscription price $2.50 a year in the United States and its possessions; also Cuba, Mexico and Panama. All other countries including Canada $4.00 per year.
Chicago Office: 168 North Michigan Blvd., C. H. Shattuck, Manager.
London Agents: Atlas Publishing & Distributing Co., Ltd., 18 Bride Lane, London, E. C.

PRINTED BY THE ART COLOR PRINTING CO., DUNELLEN, N. J., U. S. A.

Young Man Play Fair With Yourself

Learn the Truth About the Sex Question

AT last the truth is written. The great mysteries of sexology torn aside. And now for the first time you can get the real truth about the sex question.

This is an age of plain thinking and frank speech. No longer can a big, vital problem like the sex question be hidden away as a thing to be ashamed of. People are demanding the truth about these things.

And so Bernarr Macfadden has lifted the veil. He has told the truth about mankind's most vital problem in a frank, straight-from-the-shoulder style that will appeal to every man who reads his remarkable book.

Manhood and Marriage is a fearless, ringing challenge to prudery and ignorance. It contains the fruits of Bernarr Macfadden's lifelong study of one of the biggest problems confronting the young manhood of the world.

He has had to surmount extraordinary difficulties in the preparation of the book. But the truth is mighty! It can neither be ignored nor suppressed. There was overwhelming need and demand for a fearless, plain-speaking book on sexology. The wall of ignorance that was wrecking millions of lives must be broken down.

The book was written, published and placed on sale. Today in tens of thousands of homes this great work is one of the chief factors in promoting health, strength and happiness.

Life's Handbook

Manhood and Marriage enters the sanctuary of the most secret phases of your inner life. It grips you with suggestions that are personal and confidential. It furnishes definite and practical information on vital subjects, pure in themselves, which are frequently surrounded with vulgar mystery.

The problems of man frequently assume tremendous importance. They thus become a source of worries that ultimately assume a tragical nature. And the need for the answer to the query "What shall I do?" often grasps the victim with terrifying intensity.

It is well, therefore, that conditions and problems of this sort should be clearly and emphatically presented. For the outcome may mean success or failure, health or disease, or even life or death. Both single and married men needed to know the facts, so Bernarr Macfadden spent more than a quarter century compiling the authentic information given you in this book.

Send No Money

This big book is so powerful, so crammed full of facts hitherto neglected by old-fashioned sex hygiene that we sincerely believe it should be in the hands of every man. Therefore, we do not hesitate to send it to you upon approval. Yet you need send no money now—just fill out the coupon and mail it today. When the postman delivers the book to you, pay him the regular price $3.00 plus the few cents delivery charges. Take five days to examine it thoroughly. If, at the end of that time, you do not agree that Manhood and Marriage is worth much more than its cost, return it to us and your $3.00 will be refunded.

READ

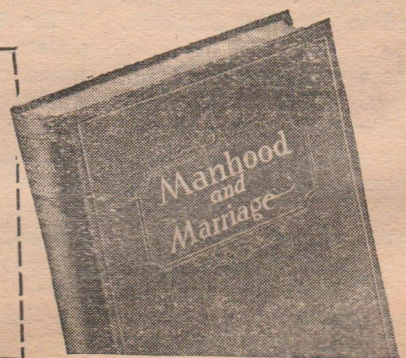
these Chapter Headings

Macfadden Publications, Inc., Desk G.S.-6 22
Macfadden Building, 1926 Broadway, New York City

You may send me a copy of Manhood and Marriage plainly wrapped and I will pay the postman $3.00 plus delivery charges when the book is delivered. It is understood that if I am not entirely satisfied with this book I will return it in perfect condition within five days and my $3.00 will be refunded without question.

If you care to send cash with order your money will of course be immediately refunded should the book not meet with your full approval. We pay postage on all cash orders.

Name .....
(Print name and address)
Street .....
City ..... State .....
Canadian and foreign orders cash in advance.



Captain Marrand was watching, his face gray with fear

My Friend in the Next World

When his harmless escapade ended in disaster, this lonely boy faced a wrecked life—without a living soul to help him. But in his agony he called the name of his dead comrade—and astonishing events followed

By JOHN C. FLETCHER
as told to
Harold Standish Corbin

"UTTER damned nonsense," cried my Uncle Raynor testily. "Old wives' tales, I tell you. I won't listen to it!"

"Why?" mused Captain Marrand. "You didn't say it was nonsense when you searched for that strange apparition frightening the natives in the Philippines—and couldn't find it. I tell you, Raynor, there *is* something to it. We're only at the edge of understanding the two personalities inhabiting each of us—the Conscious and the Unconscious Self."

"Utter damned rot!" snorted my uncle, conceding not one point and angrily stamping about the room. "Nothing beyond the grave. Asinine of you, Marrand. Blankness. Oblivion. Only women and children believe otherwise."

"I'm not so sure," replied Captain Marrand gravely.

"You're insane!" snapped Uncle Raynor. "I'll not talk with you. Sergeant!" He turned to Sergeant McComb. "Taps!"

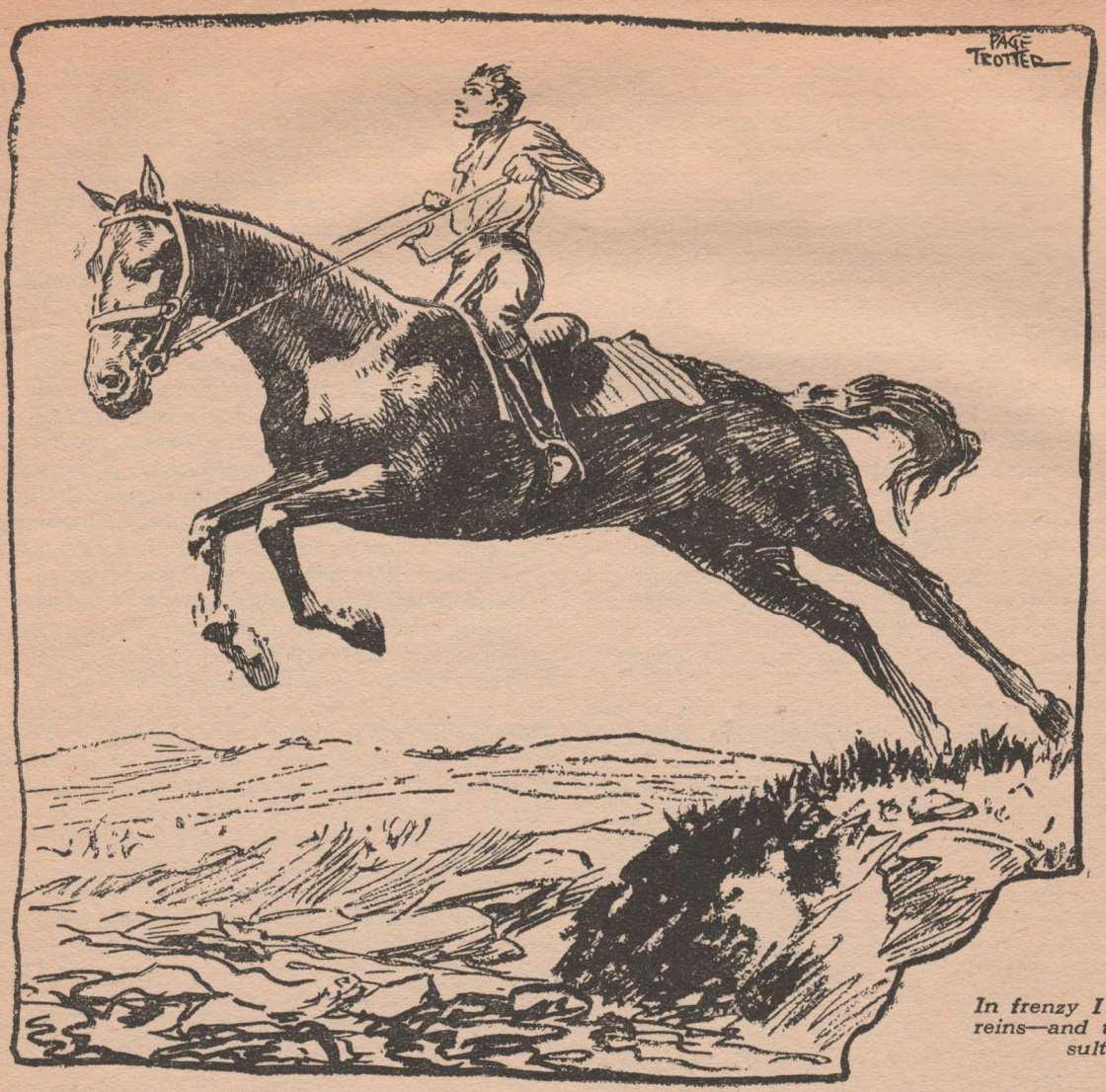
A queer household in which I as a youngster lived, you see. My only living relative, Raynor Roberts, a retired Colonel of Artillery, proved a martinet if there ever was one. Unmarried, dour, taciturn, he would have no women about him except the servants. Women were weaklings, he said.

Royalties from patents on big guns allowed him to keep up Fairleigh Hall, the ancestral home in Princess Anne County, Virginia, where we lived, with more than the usual pretense. But the place was run strictly on a military routine, and this irked me. Uncle Raynor may have loved me in a way, but he had little sympathy or understanding for a boy of sixteen. In his eyes I was only an overgrown awkward nuisance, too noisy, irresponsible and incorrigible—an object for strict military discipline. He could never realize that I needed counsel and help, rather than floggings.

Captain Marrand, also a bachelor, was a cavalryman and, therefore, forever contemptible in the eyes of my uncle. He came to live with us when a bad heart forced him to give up the rigorous life of a soldier, and cheated him of the promotion to a higher rank which he should have had. However, a strange and unaccountable friendship existed between these men, whose natures were so different. Marrand possessed a delicacy of thought and ideal exactly the opposite of Uncle Raynor's hard, militant temperament. He understood my wild, boyish yearnings and gave me the love and sympathy I sought.

The Colonel sent me away to school shortly after I was sixteen. I was glad to leave the old estate, even though I would miss its vast fields, the woods along the creek, the stables and the dogs. I loved every one of the dogs. They set up a mournful howling when I got ready to leave.

But I did not remain away long. As I look back, I feel a throb of pity for Uncle Raynor. Yet how could I know the head master of the school would take offense at what we did? To my comrades and me the bust of Shakespeare was much more lifelike with the coating of black paint we gave his beard, and the battered top-hat we placed upon his thoughtful brow. That being a climax to a series of boyish pranks, five of us were dismissed from the school.



In frenzy I jerked the reins—and tragedy resulted

Back at Fairleigh I faced the wrath of my uncle, and trembled as it broke.

"Out of sight, sir! Bread and water for two weeks. Confined to barracks for a month. Sergeant! Take him away!"

And Sergeant McComb, that gray, ruddy-faced old Army man who had been with the Colonel through many campaigns and in a hundred distant places, led me upstairs to my prison, teasing me a bit, trying to make my punishment seem lighter.

For days I was locked in a room over the broad verandah on the second floor. From its narrow window the creek called me, the woods whispered to me to come and roam among them, the dogs bayed out in the kennels, inviting me for a romp, and I could hear the horses stamping faintly as though entreating me to visit them and rub their velvet noses. These horses were another of my grievances. My uncle kept a stable full but he never would let me ride.

"What! Spoil a good hunter just to please a harum-scarum baggage not worth his weight in whips?" he would storm. "What for? In heaven's name, why can't you behave yourself and exercise an atom of common sense within that thick skull of yours?"

So he would talk to me and I passed the point of writhing inwardly and openly hated him. And all this while, my beloved friend and counsellor, Captain Marrand, fought his weakening heart, uncomplaining, like a good soldier, but knowing that he fought a losing battle and that some day he must capitulate, bowing to the enemy, retreating into the Twilight upon which he loved to speculate and which became to him more realistic as the days swept by.

And then there came the incident of the horse, Commander, and the strange events that followed it.

Commander was my uncle's favorite hunter, and as pretty as a picture. An Arab strain in him, I think, crossed, perhaps, with a Morgan. Anyway, he was a beauty—dark bay, almost like black velvet, powerful and fleet.

A frosty October morning, shortly after my dismissal from school and while I still was "confined to barracks," brought the hunt. I was awakened shortly after daylight by the clear call of the hunting bugle. Instantly I was out of bed and at the window, gazing down into the driveway below. Confusion and noise reigned there. Guests were gathering from all the countryside—fine ladies in their riding habits, some astride and some gripping side-saddles with shapely knees—lovely ladies all, whom I wanted to run out to, to talk with, and admire. I watched the men assisting the ladies to dismount and escorting them to our great living room for a coffee royal, if they desired, or a bite to eat to "stay their stomachs" before the hunt and the later victorious return to the tremendous breakfast our negro servants even now were preparing in the kitchen just beyond.

ALREADY Sergeant McComb had gone on ahead to release the fox, and the yelping dogs, nervous with excitement and catching a scent now and then of the prey, clamored and strained at their leashes, tonguing bell-like, eager to be away. The master of hounds, in his red coat and with the bugle occasionally to his lips, fascinated me. I thrilled with the glamour of it all. And I wanted to ride—ride at the head of the field, to be first in at the kill, whipping the dogs out of their snarling tangle, holding up the brush as my prize and then presenting it gallantly to the lady of my choice.

But there I was, locked in my room in disgrace, weary,

days of imprisonment and loneliness ahead of me still!

Captain Marrand came to me after the hunt had left, and attempted to console me. But it was difficult to do so. He seemed more than ever belonging to some other world, for his heart gave him new trouble and his face, pain-racked and worn, told only too well, had I cared to observe it, that I would be missing my friend in a little while.

But I was too intent on the distant notes of the bugle out there in the woods. The fox was circling now, the master calling the riders. The clamoring dogs had found the new scent. Out beyond the stables a mile from the house lay the fox's den. I knew where it was. The animal would circle back toward it, then branch away, circle again, scurrying through thickets, leaping the brook in order to throw the dogs off his trail.

So I paid little attention to what Marrand said to me, and after a while he left.

The picture of the hunt's return lingers with me to this day—my uncle at the head, the dogs tired and tongue-lolling, the guests disheveled from their ride but happy and hungry, the horses in a lather. I saw them all dismount in the driveway below and heard the gay laughter, the clinking of glasses, the clatter of great dishes of viands as the guests went in to breakfast.

I resolved firmly then and there that I would ride, despite my uncle's ban upon it, just as soon as my prison days were over.

The opportunity came shortly. Uncle was called to Washington to confer about some of his patents, and Sergeant McComb let me out of my prison just as soon as my uncle left. I needed no further inspiration. The way was clear.

Watching my chance, I went to the stables and looked over the horses. They were all excellent mounts, but none appealed to me so much as Commander, my uncle's favorite. None held his head so gallantly, none showed so much fire and spirit.

Not for a second did I think of the consequences of my action. Such is the way of youth. My uncle was away; I knew I could ride Commander, though I never had tried. Hadn't I seen my uncle sit him a hundred times, straight, easily, glued to the saddle? I could do it, too. Why not?

McComb would have scalped me, had he known. But he was busy elsewhere about the estate. Captain Marrand would have chuckled, and advised against it—but I did not ask his advice.

STEALTHILY I led Commander from the roomy box stall which he occupied. I got down Uncle Raynor's best saddle, strapped it on the horse, fitted the bit to his mouth. My knees weak with excitement lest somebody hear me, I led Commander to the door and leaped to his back.

Almost before I could gather the reins, he was off like a shot, flying hoofs drumming down the lane, the wind whistling past my face like the rush of an express train. McComb came running, waving his arms and crying out things I could not hear. I could not have stopped the animal had I wanted to. He was a magnificent meteor, spurning the earth with his hoofs, eyes blazing, tail aplomb. I clung to the saddle now, a bit frightened at the realization of what I had done.

At the end of the lane lay a quick turn to the highway. It was the custom for the hunt never to turn, but to leap the creek. Whoever failed to take this hazard at the start found himself not only disgraced but ignominiously out of the hunt.

Commander knew this—or sensed it. Here Uncle Raynor, leading the way and assuming the graces of an English country squire, never failed to raise one arm, call back to his guests and then sail majestically over the creek.

I could not have turned the horse away from that barrier, had I possessed the strength of Hercules. Bit in teeth, head thrust forward, eyes blazing, he gathered himself for the leap. For one brief second I thought of toppling off, taking my chances beneath his iron-shod hoofs. At that instant I caught sight of a familiar figure on the other side of the creek. Captain Marrand was watching, his face gray with fear.

Before I could make up my mind what to do, Commander was off the ground. A cry escaped my lips. I clung to the saddle.

Had I let the horse alone I am sure he would have gone over safely. But I had seen my uncle gather the reins and, by sheer will-power, almost lift the horse over the obstacle.

In a frenzy I jerked the reins—and tragedy resulted. In mid-air the horse's head snapped back. It threw him off his balance. Before I knew what had happened the great animal lost his poise and came crashing down, floundering in the mire and shallow water of the creek, kicking, neighing, a tangled mass of flying hoofs and heaving body.

I myself was flung twenty feet away, to smash into insensibility on the greensward beyond. For a second I saw the earth rising to meet me. Then it gathered itself into a cloud of blackness into which I seemed to sink a thousand miles.

WHEN I opened my eyes, I found Captain Marrand standing over me, the pallor on his face deepened, in his eyes a haunted look. He seemed more than ever the mystic—half earthly, half ethereal. He said no word but observed me meditatively as I lay on the frost-seared grass.

And over beyond him, as my gaze strayed away from his face, I saw McComb bending over the body of Commander, which lay half on the bank and half in the creek. Even as I looked, my breath caught in my throat and my blood went cold. McComb's face was ashen gray and he wiped away the perspiration from his forehead with one hand.

But it was at the other hand I stared. It held his service revolver, and plainly he was nerving himself to use it on the horse.

"Is he—is he—going to kill him?" I managed to ask at last.

Marrand nodded sadly, his gaze fixed on my face.

"Right foreleg crumpled to splinters. We can't save him. Oh, Jack," he cried, "why did you do it? Your uncle never will forgive you. It means banishment aboard a training ship. You'll be lucky if he doesn't whale you within an inch of your life."

I staggered lamely to my feet.

"He'll never whale me," I cried hotly. "He's hated me ever since I came here. I'm sorry I—I killed his horse. But I'll run away. I'll get a job somewhere and support myself."

Marrand studied me quietly.

"No, I can't let you do that," he said after a moment. "Before your mother died, Jack, she asked me to look out for you. She knew you probably would come here. She knew, too, that your uncle wouldn't understand you. I gave her my promise. I can't let you run away."

Suddenly behind us sounded the shot. I went sick and cold inside. I knew Commander, so fleet of limb, so bounding with energy, would never run again.

Sadly Marrand and I started toward the house. Neither of us looked around, neither said a word.

I went to my room—that prison that had become so hateful to me—and brooded. At first I wanted to kill myself. When that feeling passed I set about hating my uncle with a new and venomous intensity.

He did not return for several days and I kept to myself. Marrand was ill again, but he came to me at last.

"Jack," he began, "I've come to a decision about the horse.

I loved the animal almost as much as your uncle loved him. It never will do for you to take the blame—and I'm about through. I'll tell your uncle I did it. I'll say I wanted one last ride, and that the horse ran away with me. McComb won't tell if I ask him not to."

"I'll not let you take any blame of mine," I cried. "I killed the horse and I'll either run away or tell Uncle Raynor what happened. I won't let you take the blame!"

"Good boy!" Marrand murmured. "I like your spirit. But it isn't the best way. Your uncle is an old man. He'll be needing you soon, Jack. I won't be here. Please let me handle this—I know best, Jack. You're all he has left, and after all, you owe a duty to him as his only living kin. Besides, it may save him and you both from—well, going to hell. No, Jack, I'm going to tell him I did it. As a most extreme personal favor, I want you to leave this with me."

I continued to argue. But because I was a boy, desperate with fear of my uncle, driven to a point where I could not see ahead, at last I consented.

My uncle returned the following day.

Almost the first thing he did was to go to the stables. I saw him from my window—and I saw him come back to the house, walking quickly, his hands clenching and unclenching, his face white with anger.

A Bad Boy's Weird Adventure

He wasn't really vicious—just mischievous, high-spirited and—lonely. But his tyrannical uncle, the Colonel, thought he needed constantly to be flogged and locked up, for the good of his soul.

The lad had only one friend in the world—Captain Marrand, the gentle old invalid—and it seemed that all hope was at an end when Marrand's spirit passed out into the Unknown.

How could the boy know that his friend would keep faith even though the mists of Death separated them?

HE sent for me at once, and I faced him in the study. His lips, set in a thin line, seemed bloodless. Perspiration stood out in beads on his forehead.

"Well, what have you to say for yourself?" he snapped, as I stood before him.

"Nothing," I replied.

"Nothing? Good God! Nothing, when my best saddle horse has been ruined—killed! You have the temerity, sir, to stand there and tell me you have nothing to say? Why, by hell's bells on the mountain, sir——"

I thought he would rise from his chair and tear me to pieces. But at that moment Marrand came into the room feeling his way along the wall, catching at chairs to support himself, one hand clutching at his heart.

"Wait, Raynor," he panted. "The boy didn't—do it."

My uncle leaped to his feet.

"Captain Marrand!" he exploded.

"I swear it, Raynor. You hear—me?" His words came in gasps. "The—boy—didn't——"

He stopped, his voice cut short. For before he could go on to tell my uncle he was responsible—before he could finish what he wanted to say in my behalf—Death's hand reached out and caught him. With a weird cry his head fell back, there came a gasp, and he fell at my uncle's feet.

Grief that settled over the household following Marrand's tragic death—for he was well beloved by everyone—gave me a temporary respite from my uncle's anger. I saw them bear Marrand to the family plot at the edge of the estate, where a long line of my uncle's forebears slept. According to Uncle's direction the funeral was a military one with a flag draping the coffin and a firing squad from Old Point Comfort to fire a volley over the grave.

The house seemed strangely lonely, afterward, with my friend and comrade gone. I kept to my room, avoiding my uncle—a boy hard pressed, remorseful, penitent, but afraid, knowing not which way to turn.

Then strange things began to happen.

Desperate, driven to distraction, I determined to leave Fairleigh Hall forever. I threw a few clothes into a bag, and that night, when everyone was in bed, I planned to let myself out of the house, make my way by whatever means I could to Norfolk, and court Fortune's frowns or favors through whatever chance might present itself.

I did not go down to supper. From my window I watched the sun decline, and darkness gather. No one had come to call me. No one seemed to care whether I existed or not.

But in that vague period of twilight, between daylight and dark, footsteps suddenly sounded in the corridor. They stopped outside my door. I knew someone was there. But whoever it was neither rapped nor called.

I stared at the door questioningly. If my uncle, or McComb, had come for me, why did they not enter? And if it were one of the servants, why was there no knock?

Unable to bear the suspense longer, I rose quickly and opened the door.

The hallway was empty!

I stared into the shadows, my eyes widening in surprise. Then I stepped outside the door, peering the length of the hall. But I could see nothing, nor was there any place for a person to hide.

I could not understand it. I was certain I had heard the steps. Where, then, had the person disappeared to?

As I hesitated, striving to suppress the fear that made tremors shiver up and down my spine, there came to my ears, from outside my window somewhere, the nicher of a horse.

It started as a nicher, soft and gentle—a nicher of eagerness. But in a second it rose shrill and high into a whinny of impatience. It was the sound of a horse impetuous to be off, calling his rider to be going. And the whinny was not that of Lightning, or Water Lass, or Field Queen, or any of the others in the stable. I knew them all, their temperaments and their inflections. This was the whinny of Commander, imperious, demanding—the big, black horse that was my uncle's pride—the horse I had ridden to destruction!

Had I been older, I might have attributed the footsteps to an errant echo from some other part of the house, the whinny of the horse to one of the hungry animals that McComb would shortly feed. But to me, trembling in the darkness of my room, the footsteps were real, the presence I had felt outside my door a tangible thing, the neighing of the horse the voice of Commander, and none other!

At that moment a greater fear than I had ever known before came over me—fear of myself, fear of the dark, fear of my uncle—and fear of something I had felt but could not see, out there in the hallway.

AS I crouched there on my bed, waiting, afraid to turn on a light, yet fearing the shadows that seemed to creep out of dark corners toward me, I felt again a strange presence somewhere about me. I peered at the knob of the door until my eyes became strained, expecting it to turn. But the room remained as still as death and out in the hallway nothing moved.

There stole over me the feeling that some queer thing was about to happen, that some act in an uncanny tragedy was about to take place.

In panic at last I caught up my bag and, despite the tremors that seized me, tiptoed across the room. Summoning

all my courage, I once more threw open the door. I stepped back. Nothing moved. The house seemed silent and deserted.

Perspiration stood out all over me. My body became hot and cold by turns. I stole out of the room, felt my way along the corridor and down the stairs. There I turned, to look upward into the darkness whence I had come. Was someone there, just beside the old carved banister, peering down at me? Did a figure stand silently there, watching me?

I gulped. The old house was so strange, so silent, so fearsome, with Captain Marrand away. Suddenly, in greater panic, I fled through the darkened rooms, letting myself out of the great door to the porch, pausing a moment to gaze about me.

It was lighter there. The moon had risen well above the trees now; the night was chill, with a tang of frost in the air. I shivered. As I hesitated there came a stamping noise, and the click of gravel, as though a horse's hoof, pawing impatiently, had kicked up a bit of the broken stone in the drive.

QUEER! I listened but heard no more. Quickly I moved across the porch and down the steps. In the drive, with the moon full on me, I felt less nervous. I paused for one last look at the old house that had held so many sorrows, so much of misunderstanding and turmoil for me, and then I started down the drive, hurrying as fast as I could without breaking into a run. Once down the lane, past the corner where Commander had fallen, and I would be on the high-road, safe at last to win my way to whatever Fortune might dictate.

But I did not get far.

Suddenly the gravel crunched in front of me. A figure—the figure of my uncle—stood barring my path. In the shadow I could not see his face, but I did observe that he wore his riding habit and carried a heavy crop in his hand. My heart sank. For an instant we stood surveying each other. Then his voice came, crisp and hard.

"So! Running away, eh? Running away, like a cowardly traitor! And you *did* ruin Commander! I knew it, in spite of what Marrand, that unspeakable cad, tried to say. Ah, you don't deny it—eh?"

I stood speechless, too chilled with fear to utter a word.

He took a step nearer me.

"Come—speak up!" he raged. "In God's name, must you stand there like a dunce, without a tongue in your head?"

Still I could not speak. My knees grew weak beneath me, my body sagged. Before the terrible rage, the burning insults of this man, I could not defend myself.

He seized me by the collar and swung me roughly about, shoving me ahead of him along the broken stone of the drive.

"By the gods, we'll see about this," he fumed. "Attempting to run away, eh? Deserting your post in the face of duty. Well, I'll discipline you. McComb!" He raised his voice to a bawling command. "Sergeant McComb! Report at once."

He shoved me as far as the steps of the porch. There he waited for McComb. But the man did not appear. Again my uncle bawled his order.

"McComb! I say, McComb!"

His voice carried far through the night. There was no answer. The man did not come.

My uncle grew furiously angry, more angry than I had ever seen him. He was like a madman.

"Insubordination to my command—eh?" he snarled. "First it's you, then it's McComb. Well, I'll teach you, sir. I'll discipline you. Then I'll find McComb and, by God, I'll discipline him, too. I'll teach you, sir."

He flung me from him. Before I had a chance to recover my feet, he stood over me, the heavy crop raised, already bearing down on me.

In an agony of fear I cried out. If that heavy weapon descended, it would brain me. From the deep agony of my soul I called a name—the only name I could remember of anyone who had ever befriended me.

"Captain Marrand!"

But Marrand was dead. I covered my face, flattening myself against the driveway, waiting for the blow.

I waited what seemed a long time. The blow did not fall. I could not understand. Slowly, bit by bit, I uncovered my face, venturing to look upward at my tormentor.

The moon shone brightly. It lighted all the garden in front of the old house—the driveway leading to the lane, the clumps of shrubbery set in the horseshoe formed by the drive, the woods out beyond, the glimmer of the moonlight on the creek where it showed through the denuded trees.

I saw it all in a glance. But it was at my uncle that I stared.

He stood there like a carved image, his right arm raised high, the riding crop suspended, about to fall. But he held it there. He had forgotten me. He had forgotten the position in which he stood. All his concentration, all his thought, was directed toward the porch. And gradually I turned my head to look, even as he was looking.

I gasped in surprise and terror. On the porch, just in front of the open doorway, as though it had emerged from the house, stood another figure—a dim, intangible figure that seemed as thin as a wisp of smoke. It stood there, without moving, gazing at my uncle.

And though it stood fairly within the shadow where the moon's rays did not penetrate, I knew it at once for the figure of the man whose name I had called—Captain Marrand, my friend and counsellor.

My uncle recovered himself. A curse leaped from his lips. The figure on the porch swayed slightly, as though a breath of wind disturbed it. My uncle turned his gaze away, as if he did not credit the thing he saw there on the porch—as if it were a mirage, a figment of his imagination. He caught sight of me—stooped and quickly yanked me to my feet. Once more his arm flew up to strike me with that heavy crop.

And once more he hesitated. A groan escaped his lips. He seemed to be fighting, straining against some power that held him bound. Through clenched teeth he mouthed a curse. His eyes blazed wildly and it seemed as though in the effort to release himself from the spell that held him he would burst an artery and collapse.

Then strangely his name was spoken. We both heard the voice.

"Raynor!"

Firm, but kindly, impressing but appealing, the voice held nothing of censure.

"Raynor!"

THE word seemed to be borne in on our consciousness, as though it came distantly down the path of the gorgeous moon that lighted the front of the old house.

My uncle stood transfixed. Then slowly the dim figure moved from the porch, gliding toward us without apparent effort. As it moved into the moon's radiance we saw that it had no substance, but was a mere outline, as if a phantom artist had sketched it in mist. And all around it shone an aura of light—not bright, but as if it caught an atom of the moon's silver sheen.

The figure passed us, gazing straight ahead. It made no motion or sound. But as it passed, suddenly my uncle seemed once more to forget me.

"Marrand!" he breathed. "My friend! You have come back? Wait for me, Marrand."

Even the stare on his face was set, transfixed. Like an automaton, he turned and followed the figure down the drive. Awed beyond conception, I stood there, watching—a boy viewing an amazing thing, and, boylike, not knowing what to do.

Down the moonlit drive they passed—a living man following a specter—down the lane to the place where Com-

mander had floundered in the mire and McComb had ended the stricken animal's life. And once more the silence of that moon-enchanted place was broken by the shrill whinny of a horse. It came from the direction of the lane as though Commander himself waited there, eager to be away, greeting his master, waiting to be mounted and off.

I stood spellbound. I saw my uncle disappear with that strange phantom of his friend—and mine—behind a copse of higher shrubbery. I waited, eager to see what would happen, held immovable, amazed.

What went on behind that copse I never knew. Whether than phantom spoke as mortals may speak by word of mouth or whether it found some way to convey its thoughts to my uncle, I do not know. Nor what was said, if anything, for my uncle kept silent about it afterward and I did not question him.

I only know that after a time I saw my uncle returning toward me—alone. And what a change in him! No longer was he the automaton. The spell had left him. He seemed shrunken, stooped. He staggered, his hands pressed over his face.

HE no longer carried the riding crop, but I thought that as he approached he intended to strike me with his fist, to make good the threat that he would thrash me within an inch of my life.

And as I was about to dodge, to flee from him, he suddenly went to his knees, there in the drive, reaching blindly for my hands, strange sobs striving to release themselves from his constricted throat.

"Jack," he cried at last. "Jack! I didn't understand. I—I never knew, I—never realized. Forgive me. I'm a wicked old man, to harm a boy. Jack! Forgive me."

I stared at him in amazement. I could not believe my eyes. This martinet who was my uncle, whose rage had put the fear of death in my soul—here on his knees before me, pleading for my forgiveness! It could not be possible.

Yet it was. Tears streamed down the old man's face now. He still knelt in the drive, clinging to me. Then, at last, he seemed to recover a part of the austere dignity that always cloaked him. Wearily he arose. Alert, I sensed new danger. But it did not come.

Mastering himself with difficulty, he stood beside me, hesitatingly, awkwardly slipping an arm about my shoulders. He spoke quietly.

"Jack," he began, "I've been a hard, unyielding old man, irascible, foolish. I did not realize it. Nor did I realize how you longed for sympathy, for the friendship of someone who understood. I should have been that person—for the sake of my dead sister—and her son.

"But—but——" With difficulty he steadied his voice. It was an effort for him—this confession. "Somehow I've failed. I want to do better, Jack. Something that happened tonight has opened my eyes. Marrand showed me. Will you—will you promise me to stay, Jack, and let me try again? Will you let an old man make it up to you—son—if he can?"

Not until long years afterward did I understand how hard it was for him thus to subdue his pride. But he hesitated only a moment.

"Jack," he pleaded, "I want you to stay. It does not matter about—about Commander. Marrand wanted to take the blame, but I saw through it all—I see through it now to my utter shame, that it should be necessary for a man to take the blame for a boy's mistake, to save that boy from such a beast as I. Say you will stay! Tell me that, Jackie—my son. Here's my hand. Will you—will you take it?"

As in a daze I reached out and did as he wished. As he gripped my hand, a sob, which he could no longer restrain shook from his throat. Suddenly his arms were about me, pressing me to him. In the moonlight I saw his face working strangely, but in his eyes was a glad new light—a light I never had seen there before.

"Thank God for this night," he breathed fervently. "Marrand!" His voice quavered as he raised it, looking off toward that copse of shrubbery. "Marrand! Thank you, Marrand!"

Suddenly I heard again the whinny of a horse. Even as we stood there, my uncle's arm about my shoulders, intangible, swiftly moving figures appeared in the pathway. I thought we could hear the rush of air past them—the man astride the horse. And as I gazed at them, I saw that the horse was Commander, and that the rider was my friend, Captain Marrand. Both intangible. Both phantoms. Commander with flying hoofs, head thrust a little forward, straining at phantom reins—Captain Marrand no longer ill, something luminous about his features, joy in his look, riding Commander.

"Look!" cried my uncle. "They're going away together. Marrand and Commander. They've found each other in the spirit world! God, what a picture!"

I saw that Marrand, clad in his captain's uniform, sat his horse as only a cavalryman can. Headlong in a glorious mad rush, but soundless as a wisp of fog, Commander dashed down the lane, straight for the barrier where he had been thrown. He did not falter, did not hesitate. Straight at it! I saw him leap. This time a steady hand was on his rein. Commander soared upward in a beautiful leap. At the top of the jump Marrand turned and waved. And strangely they did not land on the other side, but horse and rider, ghosts together, seemed climbing, climbing, up into the path of the moon, even as Marrand waved back at us.

My uncle snapped to attention, straight and stalwart, beside me.

"To the trail, sir," he called, his voice still a bit tremulous. "To the trail! And—and Good Luck, sir!"

Just as in the old days, you see, when he had parted with a brother officer assigned to an important mission, and had wished him well.

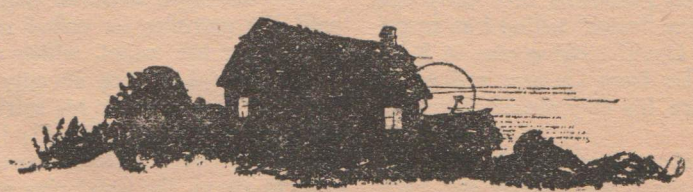
Gone were that strange rider and his horse. My uncle stared about him, as if awakening from a dream. Then it was that he discovered McComb, who had come up quietly and had observed it all. My uncle addressed him.

"Sergeant!" he said, his voice striving to be brave, "dismiss the company. And Sergeant!"

"Sir?"

"Taps."

Together we stood silent, as the Sergeant unslung the bugle at his waist and sounded the call that sends the tired soldier to his rest—asleep or in death. When the last silver note had died away, sweetly, musically, my uncle and I, our arms about each other, turned back into Fairleigh Hall.



The Thing That Paid the Rent

This bewildering incident actually occurred in Quincy, Massachusetts. Can YOU explain it?

By ARTHUR SAMUEL HOWE

HERE is the true story of the weirdest occurrence that has ever come to my attention. Will Davis, the principal character in this drama from real life, is a man of subnormal intelligence, whose readiness to respond to any form of suggestion is very unusual. In his earlier years he was employed as a "subject" by experimenters in hypnotism, but this means of livelihood was abandoned after an almost fatal experience with a group of Harvard students. These students put Davis in a trance and later were unable to awaken him. His life was saved by a well-known magician and hypnotist.

Subsequently he earned a livelihood by performing odd jobs in the town of Roxbury, Massachusetts. He also began to attend spiritualistic circles, and it was not long till he was practicing as a medium. It would hardly be correct to say that Davis was a professional. What sittings he gave were only an addition to his odd-jobs program. Erratic and irresponsible, with such an extremely limited vocabulary that he rarely made use of a sentence consisting of more than a half dozen words; his appearance, not too prepossessing at best, and rendered almost uncouth by misfit clothing and neglect—he was not the debonair sort of character who usually wins attention as a "psychic marvel."

So Davis continued to eat at more or less irregular intervals, to sleep in whatever poor lodgings his scanty income afforded, and to work at whatever unskilled tasks fell into his hands.

His proneness to respond all too readily to every suggestion proved a serious handicap to him, more than once imperiling his own life, as well as the lives of others.

One day a charitably disposed woman employed him to assist her in moving. The household effects were being carried downstairs to the sidewalk when someone remarked, "The stove ought to go next." Quickly responsive, as usual, Davis laid hold of the heavy cook-stove and started downstairs with it in his arms. Half-way down the flight, he made a misstep, and landed at the bottom of the stairs with the stove on top of him.

It was while Davis was still confined to his bed as the result of the injuries he received, that I visited him, and on that occasion he told me of the strange part he had played in the mysterious affair of the black pocketbook.

I shall not attempt to give the narrative in the words of Davis. It required a lot of patient effort on my part to get the story, owing to the poverty of Davis' vocabulary; moreover, it required subsequent investigation to confirm its truth, although I never doubted the honesty of Davis—going upon the assumption that such characters are seldom found to be wilfully untruthful. In regard to the explanation of the weird incident, the reader is free to make his own decision; but there is no doubt that Davis himself fully believes that he was routed out of bed by a ghost and sent upon an unknown errand.

According to his story, he was awakened very early one December morning by an uncanny "voice" telling him to get up at once and go to Quincy. Davis' lodging was in Roxbury, a distance of several miles from Quincy, and as he had not even the price of car-fare, his only means of getting to the latter place was to walk.

He said it must have been about four o'clock when the "voice" called to him—furthermore, it was bitterly cold. But he hustled into his clothes and started out on his early hike. By the time he arrived in Quincy, it was getting quite light, and a few people were already upon the street. Up from a basement coffee parlor came the tantalizing aroma of food but Davis had no money; moreover, he did not know for what purpose he was in Quincy.

Then, according to his story, the "voice" spoke to him again, this time telling him to go to a certain address. Davis got his bearings from a pedestrian and made his way to the house bearing the indicated number. It was a small house with a yard in front. He went up to the door and rang the bell. He rang several times. However, he didn't know what he was going to say or do when his ring was answered.

At length a woman came to the door, a baby in her arms and another small child clinging to her skirts.

"Good morning, ma'am," said Davis. "I was sent here—"

But the woman interrupted him with a flood of tears and protest, the purport of which eventually conveyed to his slow mind the fact that she believed him to be the landlord's collector looking for his rent.

Finally the woman paused in her tearful tirade. Davis spoke again. "Your husband sent me, ma'am."

"How did you know it was her husband?" I interrupted at this point in the narrative.

"I heard the voice again," he replied, "and it told me. It says for me to go in. Then I started to go in the house; but the woman tried to keep me out.

"'You're a liar,' she says. 'My husband has been dead for a month. Maybe you're a thief,' she says."

Disregarding the protests of the woman, however, Davis crowded past her, into the house. Up the stairs he went, and into a small, disordered room, the woman following at his heels the while, and renewing her protests.

At length he opened the door of a small closet.

"You keep out of there," cried the woman. "Everything in there belonged to my dead husband." But whatever suggestion was dominating the mind of Davis was superior to the woman's command.

"The voice kept telling me what to do," he said.

He rummaged about the dark, stuffy place. At one end of the closet were several pairs of worn shoes. Davis pulled them away, and felt the floor. One of its boards yielded readily to his touch. Lifting the board, he drew out a fat wallet from its hiding-place, and handed it to the woman.

"Your husband says to give this to you," he said. "Good morning, ma'am."

And then, because he had no money to pay his fare, Will Davis trudged back to Roxbury.

MY subsequent inquiry developed the fact that the woman was the widow of John Lorrance, who had been killed at his work about a month previous. She had had little money on hand, and as Lorrance carried no insurance, at the end of a month the family was reduced to desperate straits. She fully confirms the story given above.

Mrs. Lorrance declared that she had never seen Davis until the morning he called upon his strange errand and handed her the wallet, which contained over $300.00.

Did John Lorrance actually return to aid his suffering family? Was it really his spirit that gave the suggestion to the plastic brain of Will Davis, as the latter lay asleep in Roxbury? Or did Davis merely "pick up" some telepathic thought-waves, the wandering remnant of Lorrance's mental agony during his last moments of life?

The reader must be the judge.

The Château of Laughing Phantoms

By GEORGE A. SCOTT

When the old Frenchman swore that uncanny creatures lurked in the ruined castle, the two Americans scoffed at the idea. But one of them lived to learn the awful truth

ALL hope is gone! The last plea has failed! Tomorrow, at the first dim light of dawn, I must ascend the scaffold of that inhuman relic of barbarism, the Guillotine, and there meet my doom in punishment for a crime of which, I swear by all that I hold sacred and holy, I am innocent.

Yes, I am innocent, despite the blackness of the evidence against me. And before I go to my death, I must leave a record of the events of that night of horror—a record that may be read by my friends at home, and that may, perhaps, convince them. Still—I wonder! My story, no doubt garbled and reduced to banality by the court interpreters, brought nothing but incredulous smiles from the jury. Will it meet with greater credence from my friends? I do not know—I can only try.

Here, then, is a true recital of the things that occurred in the north chamber of the Château des Verboises on the night of August 9th, and of the incidents which led to the death of my friend, Paul Granger, and my own trial, conviction and sentence on the charge of having murdered him.

It was on the fifth of August that I chanced to meet my old friend and college chum, Paul Granger, in the famous Café Maxim in Paris. I was surprised and delighted to see him, for at least five years had passed since our last meeting. He seemed quite as happy to see me, and in his usual frank and outspoken way he told me, during the first few minutes of our conversation, of the change in his fortunes which permitted him the luxury of European travel. It seemed that a distant relative had recently died, leaving to Paul his entire fortune—a sum very closely approaching a million dollars.

"Just now," said Paul with a smile, "I am considering some investments in French real estate. I used to have a small real-estate office in New York, you know, and I can't get the old business out of my blood."

"I'm afraid this is poor territory for real-estate booms," I replied. "The French nation is much too old to be stampeded even by American advertising methods."

"I was only joking about going into the business," he said. But the fact is that I am thinking of buying one of these old castles, fixing it up with all the modern conveniences, and using it as a kind of country home. It may seem idiotic, but you know, I always have been a born romanticist. Ever since I first read *Ivanhoe*, when I was twelve years old, I've wanted a castle of my own. I began looking around when I came to France, and I find that there are several castles on the market at ridiculously low prices. A good many of the old moneyed class here have lost their fortunes, you know, through the fluctuations of the franc, and have to sell their estates. Hard luck for them, of course, but it gives me a chance to get hold of one of these old châteaus at a reasonable figure."

"HAVE you anything particular in mind?" I asked.

"Well, there's a place down in Brittany, the Château des Verboises, that I'd like to look over. It seems to be in pretty good repair, considering that it was built sometime in the Eleventh Century. I have talked to the agent here in Paris who is handling the sale, and he has shown me photographs taken from every angle. But I want to run down for a day or two and examine it thoroughly, inside and out. By the way, why couldn't you come along with me? You're interested in these old places, aren't you? Besides, you're an architect and you could probably tell me

just about what wourd have to be done to put the place in condition. What do you say, old man?"

I agreed at once. As an architect, I am always glad of an opportunity to examine the architecture of other centuries, and particularly those amazing structures built by unknown architects of the Middle Ages. But my chief reason was that I wished to renew my friendship with Paul. It was decided that we should start four days hence—on the morning of August 9th.

"I'll take a couple of canvas cots along," said Paul, "and we can sleep in the château. The agent tells me that there is an inn in a little hamlet near the castle, but I'm not sure that I would care to sleep there. You know what most of these country inns are. I don't suppose you would be nervous about sleeping in an empty castle that hasn't had a tenant for a good many years?"

"Not at all," I answered with a smile. "Of course the place is probably haunted, and there will be ghosts tramping about all night, but I prefer ghosts to bedbugs."

To be brief, we started early on the morning of the 9th and, after driving all day in Paul's car, arrived late in the afternoon at the little hamlet near the château. After a glance into the doorway of the filthy inn and the still filthier café, we promptly decided to prepare our own dinner with provisions we had brought from Paris, and to sleep at the château.

"We won't need a big meal tonight," said Paul. "We have some sausage and bread, and we can make coffee on that little sterno outfit. Now I'll have to look up the caretaker of the castle and get the key. I have a note to him from the agent."

The caretaker's house was pointed out by one of the inhabitants of the hamlet, most of whom were by this time grouped about our car. Paul crossed the single street of the village, knocked upon the door and in a few moments returned bearing a huge iron key, at least eight inches in length.

"Here it is!" he cried, holding it up as he approached the car. "This, I'd have you know, is the key to the small gate in the wall—what do you call it?—the postern gate. If we wanted to go in by the front door, we'd probably have to get another car to carry the key."

When Paul started to climb into the machine, I noticed that some of the people in the crowd around the car exchanged startled glances. As he started the motor, an old man on the outskirts of the group pushed his way forward and said in a low voice: "Do you go to the château?"

I cannot speak French well, though I understand it perfectly, so I left the reply to Paul.

"Yes, monsieur," he said, "we are going to look at the place."

"But not at night!" exclaimed the old man with agitation. "It will be moonlight before you can reach there. Wait until the morning."

"But why should we wait?" asked Paul. "We intend to sleep there."

"No, no—do not go!" cried the old man excitedly. "The hand of evil is upon the place. A curse rests upon all those on whom the shadow of the château falls by moonlight."

"Ho! So it *is* haunted!" said Paul, turning to me. "You were right." Then, speaking to the old man again, he asked: "What is this evil? What happens to those who fall under the curse?"

"They die!" said the old man. "All—all! They die!"

"Wait a minute!" Paul exclaimed, looking more serious. "There might be something to this. Some of these old places may have pockets of poisonous gas, or something of the sort. These people who died—they were all found dead in the château in the morning?" he asked, again addressing the old man, who stared at us with horror in his eyes.

"No, no! One, perhaps, or two. But mostly they die in a day, a week, a month—even a year. The curse is upon them! They cannot escape! They die—all die!"

"Oh," said Paul with a laugh, "they die afterward, eh? Well, that's all right. As long as they're not found dead in the château, I'm not afraid." He let out the clutch.

"Funny thing how these superstitions get started," he said, as the car moved forward. "I suppose some fellow happened to die after having been near the château at night, or perhaps even slept there—and the news went around that the place was haunted. And after that, of course, whenever anybody in the village happened to die, it was because he had been in or near the château. That's a rummy idea, though, about the moonlight shadow."

"If you're going to buy a castle in France," I said, "you must expect to get at least one ghost along with it. They're part of the equipment."

We were driving slowly, for the road was rough and muddy—we had left the high road some ten kilometers back. As the old man had predicted, the night fell swiftly. Before we had hardly left the hamlet behind, it was quite dark. With the darkness came fog—not a heavy, blinding fog, but a thin, drizzling gray mist, through which we could dimly discern the stark, barren landscape of this most dismal section of the damp and windswept coast of Brittany.

PRESENTLY, looming obscurely through the mists before us, we saw the shadowy outlines of the huge castle. As we approached slowly, the car sliding from one side of the road to the other in the mud, it seemed to bend its bleak, gray bulk above us, lowering upon us with a sullen and menacing frown. It was then that I felt the first touch of a cold and incomprehensible fear—a sense of terror that constricted my throat and pressed upon my chest like a heavy weight.

I think Paul felt something of it, too, for he shivered and turned up the collar of his coat, with some remark about the dampness.

"We'll have to follow the road around to the other side," he added. "The postern gate is in the rear."

Driving slowly, he piloted the car over the narrow wagon road that led to the rear of the vast building, and stopped before a narrow door set deep in the masonry of the towering wall.

As we stepped from the car, a light breeze rose and quickly scattered the mist, and the ghostly landscape was flooded with pale, sickly moonlight. I glanced at the sky, but the moon itself was hidden behind the huge towers that rose above us. Involuntarily, I thought of the old villager.

"Come on, let's get this stuff out of the car," said Paul. I thought his voice sounded a little strained and high-pitched. "Here's a flash-light." Then, after a pause: "Humph—it doesn't work. Batteries used up. Well, never mind—I've got some candles and plenty of matches." He picked up half of the bundles and started for the gate, while I followed with the rest.

I lit one of the candles, while Paul, after a few moments of effort, succeeded in turning the key in the rusted lock. The door swung back with a creak of hinges, and we found ourselves in a small tunnel, scarcely three feet wide and just high enough to permit us to stand erect. A damp, sickening odor pervaded the place, and the stones underfoot were slippery with a slime that showed green in the candle light. The walls were of solid masonry, pierced by horizontal slits an inch or two in width, about four feet from the floor. These, I knew, were for the purpose of permitting bowmen in the interior of the castle to discharge arrows upon any

enemy that might succeed in battering down the postern gate and gaining entrance to the passage. I could not help wondering how many brave fighters of a former age might have given up their lives in this dank and musty corridor.

Paul took the candle and went ahead. After proceeding for about fifty feet, we came to another heavy door. This was not locked, but the hinges were so rusty that our combined efforts were required to open it. It led into another and more spacious passage, and this, after devious twists and turns, brought us to the great hall of the castle.

It was an immense room, fully three hundred feet in length and half as wide. Paul held the candle as high above his head as he could reach, but its rays could pierce the darkness only dimly. High overhead we could sense, rather than see, the network of vast rafters that supported the roof. Thick dust on the floor beneath our feet deadened our footsteps, but as we crossed that silent space it seemed to me that somebody, or something, was looking at us, watching us, following each step that we took. Several times I caught myself glancing quickly over my shoulder.

PAUL must have felt it, too, for he turned to me, his face white in the circle of candle light, and said, with an attempt at a grin: "Nice place for a murder."

The grin froze on his face, and I felt my own scalp itch as the hair stood up—for a hollow, sepulchral voice from the other side of the hall replied: "Murder!"

For a second we stood staring at each other in horror. Then we both laughed.

"An echo!" said Paul.

"Ho, ho!" said the voice.

Even though the source of the voice was thus easily explained, such was the weight of the feeling that lay upon us that neither of us spoke again until we had reached the broad stone steps that led to the upper stories of the castle.

Then Paul said, "Let's go upstairs."

"Upstairs!" repeated the voice.

I was glad enough to leave that vast hall, where the feeling of abysmal space had given me a sense of helplessness—such a sensation, I believe, as might be felt by a swimmer alone in the middle of the ocean at night. But before climbing the stairs, I struck a match and lit another candle.

At the head of the stairway we found another passage, or corridor, this one of such huge dimensions that it might have been taken for a room except for its length and the fact that other rooms opened into it from each side. Paul turned toward the north end of the building, and when he reached the first door, opened it and looked in.

"This won't do," he said. "No shutters on those windows. These foggy nights are pretty cold, even in August."

We glanced into each room as we came to it, but in all of them the windows were unshuttered and the draught which swept across the room upon the opening of the door, making our candles flicker and flutter, warned us away.

"I'd rather sleep out here in the hallway," said Paul, "than have a gale like that blowing over me all night. Think what colds we would have in the morning."

At last, at the end of the passage, we came to a room in which the heavy oak shutters were still in the window openings. Unlike the other rooms into which we had glanced, this one still contained some of the furnishings which had graced it in the days when knights were bold and feudal barons ruled the countryside. A bed of vast size stood in one corner of the room, and a canopy of silk, now shredded and tattered and filthy with the grime of centuries, hung drunkenly above it. It was a larger room than the others, measuring fully fifty feet on each side. The walls, which towered above us to a vaulted ceiling that seemed almost lost in the distance, were hung with heavy draperies of a somber and funereal color. Dust lay thick upon everything. It rose in clouds as we walked across the floor. A touch of the elbow upon a fold of the hangings brought down a stifling, choking cloud. At the corner opposite the door by which we had entered, was another door, probably leading to an adjacent chamber. As the door was barred on the inside with a stout oaken bar, we did not investigate further.

"This will do," said Paul, dropping his bundles upon the floor. "We can camp here for the night."

At that moment the door by which we had entered the room swung shut with a crash that echoed and re-echoed. I turned with a gasp, instinctively drawing the pistol that I carried. We looked at each other for a moment. Paul's lips were blanched, but he laughed in a strained way.

"Seems to be a bit draughty in here, too, in spite of the shutters, doesn't it?"

"Paul," I asked, "wasn't that door standing open when we came up here? I don't remember that you opened it."

"Yes. No. I don't know. I think it must have been shut. It wouldn't have blown shut like that after standing open all these years. It must be years since anybody was in this room. See, the dust is at least an inch deep and ours are the only footprints here."

I WENT over to the door and looked closely at the marks in the dust.

"Look!" I exclaimed. "The dust is nearly an inch deep—except in one place. See, where the door has been standing open—all these years. Paul, someone, or something, shut that door behind us."

"Oh, pshaw!" said Paul. "You've been reading too many ghost stories. Here, let's see if it will open. If somebody closed it behind us, it must have been to lock us in." With that he caught the huge iron latch-handle and swung the door open. The hinges creaked, but turned easily enough.

I was almost convinced until the light of my candle fell upon the thumbpiece of the latch on the outside of the door.

"Look here, Paul," I said. "If you had opened the door, you would naturally have to raise the latch, wouldn't you. But you see that the dust on the thumbpiece is undisturbed."

He stared at the latch for a moment uneasily. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

"Say, are you trying to make me believe in ghosts?" he asked. "I suppose the door was almost closed when we came, and I pushed it open. Then, when it was all the way open, the draught caught it and (*Continued on page* 90)

"Not One Escapes!"

"The hand of evil is upon the place," the old peasant said. "A curse rests upon all those on whom the shadow of the château falls by moonlight."

"What happens to them?" Paul asked.

"They die!" he answered. "All—all! They die!"

Wouldn't you think that any sane man would stay away from a place with a reputation like that? But Paul and I were young and headstrong—so we entered the castle—and faced a monstrous doom!

The HAND

By THEODORE DREISER

Author of *An American Tragedy*, *The Genius*, etc.

DAVIDSON could distinctly remember that it was between two and three years after the grisly event in the Monte Range—the sickening and yet deserved end of Mersereau, his quondam partner and fellow adventurer—that anything to be identified with Mersereau's malice toward him and with Mersereau's probable present existence in the spirit world, had appeared in his life.

He and Mersereau had worked long together as prospectors, investors and developers of property. It was only after they had struck it rich in the Klondike that Davidson had grown so much more apt and shrewd in all commercial and financial matters, whereas Mersereau had seemed to stand still—not to rise to the splendid opportunities which then opened to him. Why, in some of these later deals it had not been possible for Davidson even to introduce his old partner to some of the moneyed men he had to deal with. Yet Mersereau had insisted, as his right, if you please, on being "in on" everything—everything!

Take that wonderful Monte Orte property, the cause of the subsequent horror. He, Davidson—not Mersereau—had discovered or heard of the mine, and had carried it along, with old Besmer as a tool or decoy—Besmer being the ostensible factor—until it was all ready for him to take over and sell or develop. Then it was that Mersereau, having been for so long his partner, demanded a full half—a third, at least—on the ground that they had once agreed to work together in all these things.

Think of it! And Mersereau growing duller and less useful and more disagreeable day by day, and year by year! Indeed, toward the last he had threatened to expose the trick by which jointly, seven years before, they had possessed themselves of the Skyute Pass Mine; to drive Davidson out of public and financial life, to have him arrested and tried—along with himself, of course. Think of that!

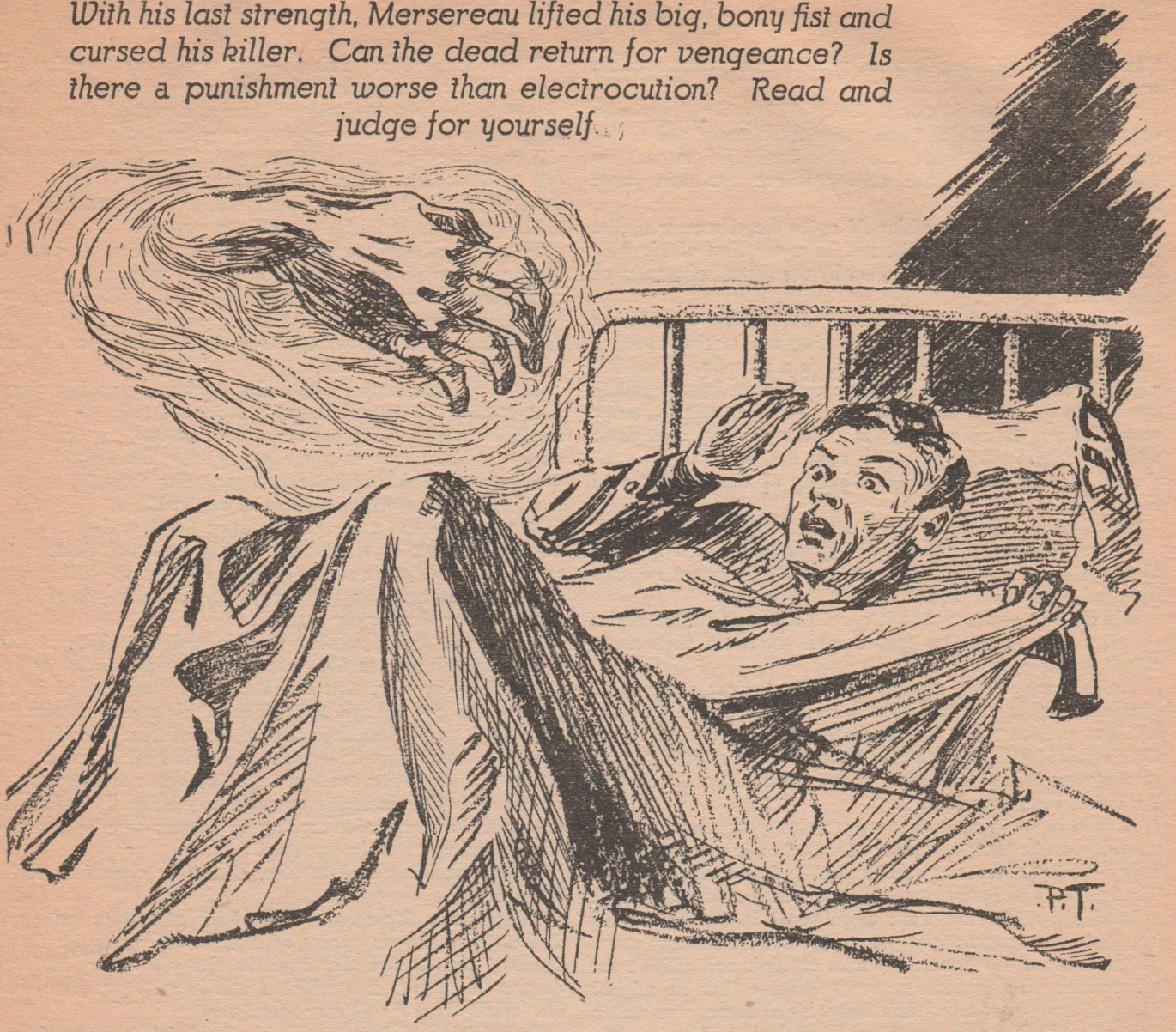
But he had fixed him—yes, he had, damn him! He had trailed Mersereau that night to old Besmer's cabin on the Monte Orte, when Besmer was away. Mersereau had gone there with the intention of stealing the diagram of the new field, and had secured it, true enough. A thief he was, damn him! Yet, just as he was making safely away, as he thought, he, Davidson, had struck him cleanly over the ear with that heavy rail-bolt fastened to the end of a walnut stick, and the first blow had done for him. He hadn't died instantly, though, but had turned over and faced him, Davidson, with that savage, scowling face of his and those blazing, animal eyes.

LYING half propped up on his left elbow, Mersereau had reached out toward him with that big, rough, bony right hand of his—the right with which he always boasted of having done so much damage on this, that, and the other occasion—had glared at him as much to say:

"Oh, if I could only reach you just for a moment before I go!"

Then it was that he, Davidson, had lifted the club again. Horrified as he was, and yet determined that he must save his own life, he had finished the task, dragging the body back to an old fissure behind the cabin and covering it with branches, a great pile of pine fronds, and as many as one

With his last strength, Mersereau lifted his big, bony fist and cursed his killer. Can the dead return for vengeance? Is there a punishment worse than electrocution? Read and judge for yourself.



hundred and fifty boulders, great and small, and had left his victim. It was a sickening sight, but it had to be.

Then, having finished, he had slipped dismally away, like a jackal, thinking of that hand in the moonlight, held up so savagely, and that look. Nothing might have come of that, either, if he hadn't been inclined to brood on it so much, on the fierceness of it.

No, nothing had happened. A year had passed, and if anything had been going to turn up, it surely would have by then. He, Davidson, had gone first to New York, later to Chicago, to dispose of the Monte Orte claim. Then, after two years, he had returned here to Mississippi, where he was enjoying comparative peace. He was looking after some sugar property which had once belonged to him, and which he was now able to reclaim and put in charge of his sister as a home against a rainy day. He had no other.

But that body back there! That hand uplifted in the moonlight—to clutch him if it could! Those eyes!

II. *June, 1905*

Take that first year, for instance, when he had returned to Gatchard in Mississippi, whence both he and Mersereau had originally issued. After looking after his own property, he had gone out to a tumble-down estate of his uncle's in Issaqueena County—a leaky old slope-roofed house where, in a bedroom on the top floor, he had had his first experience with the significance or reality of the hand.

Yes, that was where first he had really seen it pictured in that curious, unbelievable way; only who would believe that it was Mersereau's hand? They would say it was an accident, chance, rain dropping down. But the hand had appeared on the ceiling of that room just as sure as anything, after a heavy rainstorm—it was almost a cyclone—when every chink in the old roof had seemed to leak water.

During the night, after he had climbed to the room by way of those dismal stairs with their great landing, unlighted except for the small glass oil-lamp he carried, and had sunk to rest, or tried to, in the heavy, wide, damp bed, thinking, as he always did those days, of the Monte Orte and Mersereau, the storm had come up. As he had listened to the wind moaning outside, he had heard first the scratch, scratch, scratch, of some limb, no doubt, against the wall—sounding, or so it seemed in his feverish unrest, like someone penning an indictment against him with a worn, rusty pen.

And then, the storm growing worse, and in a fit of irritation and self-contempt at his own nervousness, he had gone to the window, but just as lightning struck a branch of the tree nearest the window and so very near him, too—as though someone, something, was seeking to strike him—(Was it Mersereau?) and as though he had been lured by that scratching. God! He had retreated, feeling that it was meant for him.

BUT that big, knotted hand painted on the ceiling during the night! There it was, right over him when he awoke, outlined or painted as if with wet, gray whitewash against the wretched but normally pale blue of the ceiling when dry. There it was—a big, open hand just like Mersereau's as he had held it up that night—huge, knotted, rough, the fingers extended as if tense and clutching. And, if you will believe it, near it was something that looked

like a pen—an old, long-handled pen—to match that scratch, scratch, scratch!

"Huldah," he had inquired of the old black mammy who entered in the morning to bring him fresh water and throw open the shutters, "what does that look like to you up there—that patch on the ceiling where the rain came through?"

He wanted to reassure himself as to the character of the thing he saw—that it might not be a creation of his own feverish imagination, accentuated by the dismal character of this place.

"'Pears t' me mo' like a big han' 'an anythin' else, Marse Davi'son," commented Huldah, pausing and staring upward. "Mo' like a big fist, kinda. Dat air's a new drip come las' night, I reckon. Dis here ole place ain' gonna hang togethah much longah, less'n some repairin' be done mighty quick now. Yassir, dat air's a new drop, sho's yo' bo'n, en it come on'y las' night. I hain't never seed dat befo'."

And then he had inquired, thinking of the fierceness of the storm:

"Huldah, do you have many such storms up this way?"

"Good gracious, Marse Davi'son, we hain't seed no such blow en—en come three years now. I hain't seed no sech lightnin' en I doan' know when."

Wasn't that strange, that it should all come on the night, of all nights, when he was there? And no such other storm in three years?

Huldah stared idly, always ready to go slow and rest, if possible, whereas he had turned irritably. To be annoyed by ideas such as this! To always be thinking of that Monte Orte affair! Why couldn't he forget it? Wasn't it Mersereau's own fault? He never would have killed the man if he hadn't been forced to it.

And to be haunted in this way, making mountains out of molehills, as he thought then! It must be his own miserable fancy—and yet Mersereau had looked so threateningly at him. That glance had boded something; it was too terrible not to.

Davidson might not want to think of it, but how could he stop? Mersereau might not be able to hurt him any more, at least not on this earth; but still, couldn't he? Didn't the appearance of this hand seem to indicate that he might? He was dead, of course. His body, his skeleton, was under that pile of rocks and stones, some of them as big as wash-tubs. Why worry over that, and after two years? And still——

That hand on the ceiling!

III. *December, 1905*

Then, again, take that matter of meeting Pringle in Gatchard just at that time, within the same week. It was due to Davidson's sister. She had invited Mr. and Mrs. Pringle in to meet him one evening, without telling him that they were spiritualists and might discuss spiritualism.

Clairvoyance, Pringle called it, or seeing what can't be seen with material eyes, and clairaudience, or hearing what can't be heard with material ears, as well as materialization, or ghosts, and table-rapping, and the like. Table-rapping—that damned tap-tapping that he had been hearing ever since!

It was Pringle's fault, really. Pringle had persisted in talking. He, Davidson, wouldn't have listened, except that he somehow became fascinated by what Pringle said concerning what he had heard and seen in his time. Mersereau must have been at the bottom of that, too.

At any rate, after he had listened, he was sorry, for Pringle had had time to fill his mind full of those awful facts or ideas which had since harassed him so much—all that stuff about drunkards, degenerates, and weak people generally, being followed about by vile, evil spirits and used to effect those spirits' purposes or desires in this world. Horrible!

Wasn't it terrible? Pringle—big, mushy creature that he was, sickly and stagnant like the springless pool—insisted that he had even seen clouds of these spirits about drunkards, degenerates and the like, in street-cars, on trains and about vile corners at night. Once, he said, he had seen just one evil spirit—think of that!—following a certain man all the time, at his left elbow—a dark, evil, red-eyed thing, until finally the man had been killed in a quarrel.

Pringle described their shapes, their spirits, as varied. They were small, dark, irregular clouds, with red or green spots somewhere for eyes, changing in form and becoming longish or round like a jellyfish, or even like a misshapen cat or dog. They could take any form at will—even that of a man.

Once, Pringle declared, he had seen as many as fifty about a drunkard who was staggering down a street, all of them trying to urge him into the nearest saloon, so that they might re-experience in some vague way the sensation of drunkenness, which at some time or other they themselves, having been drunkards in life, had enjoyed!

It would be the same with a drug fiend, or indeed with anyone of weak or evil habits. They gathered about such an one like flies, their red or green eyes glowing—attempting to get something from them, perhaps, if nothing more than a little sense of their old earth-life.

The whole thing was so terrible and disturbing at the time, particularly the idea of men being persuaded or influenced to murder, that he, Davidson, could stand it no longer, and got up and left. But in his room upstairs he meditated on it, standing before his mirror. Suddenly—would he ever forget it?—as he was taking off his collar and tie, he had heard for the first time that queer tap, tap, tap—right on his dressing-table or under it—which, Pringle said, ghosts made when table-rapping in answer to a call, or to give warning of their presence.

Then something said to him, almost as clearly as if he heard it:

This is me, Mersereau, come back at last to get you! Pringle was just an excuse of mine to let you know I was coming, and so was that hand in that old house, in Issaqueena County. It was mine! I will be with you from now on. Don't think I will ever leave you!

It had frightened and made him half sick, so wrought up was he. For the first time he felt cold chills run up and down his spine—the creeps. He felt as if someone were standing over him—Mersereau, of course—only he could not see or hear a thing, just that faint tap at first, growing louder a little later, and quite angry when he tried to ignore it.

People did live, then, after they were dead, especially evil people—people stronger than you, perhaps. They had the power to come back, to haunt, to annoy you if they didn't like anything you had done to them. No doubt Mersereau was following him in the hope of revenge, there in the spirit world, just outside this one, close at his heels, like that evil spirit attending the other man whom Pringle had described.

IV. *February, 1906*

Take that case of the hand impressed on the soft dough and plaster of Paris, described in an article that he had picked up in the dentist's office out there in Pasadena—Mersereau's very hand, so far as he could judge. How about that for a coincidence, picking up the magazine with that disturbing article about psychic materialization in Italy, and later in Berne, Switzerland, where the scientists were gathered to investigate that sort of thing? And just when he was trying to rid himself finally of the notion that any such thing could be!

According to that magazine article, some old crone over in Italy—spiritualist, or witch, or something—had got together a crowd of experimentalists or professors in an aban-

doned house on an almost deserted island off the coast of Sardinia. There they had conducted experiments with spirits, which they called materialization, getting the impression of the fingers of a hand, or of a whole hand and arm, or of a face, on a plate of glass covered with soot, the plate being locked on a small safe in the center of a table about which they sat!

He, Davidson, couldn't understand, of course, how it was done, but done it was. There in that magazine were half a dozen pictures, reproductions of photographs of a hand, an arm and a face—or part of one, anyhow. And if they looked like anything, they looked exactly like Mersereau's! Hadn't Pringle, there in Gatchard, Mississippi, stated spirits could move anywhere, over long distances, with the speed of light? And would it be any trick for Mersereau to appear there at Sardinia, and then engineer this magazine into his presence, here in Los Angeles? Would it? It would not. Spirits were free and powerful *over there*, perhaps, in which case anything might be expected of them.

There was not the least doubt that these hands, these partial impressions of a face, were those of Mersereau. Those big knuckles! That long, heavy, humped nose and that big jaw! Whose else could they be?—they were Mersereau's, intended, when they were made over there in Italy, for him, Davidson, to see later here in Los Angeles. Yes, they were! And looking at that sinister face reproduced in the magazine, it seemed to say, with Mersereau's old coarse sneer:

You see? You can't escape me! I'm showing you how much alive I am over here, just as I was on earth. And I'll get you yet, even if I have to go farther than Italy to do it!

It was amazing, the shock he took from that. It wasn't just that alone, but the persistence and repetition of this hand business. What could it mean? Was it really Mersereau's hand? As for the face, it wasn't all there—just the jaw, mouth, cheek, left temple and a part of the nose and eye; but it was Mersereau's, all right. He had gone clear over there into Italy somewhere, in a lone house on an island, to get this message of his undying hate back to him. Or was it just spirits, evil spirits, bent on annoying him because he was nervous and sensitive now?

V. *October, 1906*

Even new, crowded hotels and new buildings weren't the protection he had at first hoped and thought they would be. Even there you weren't safe—not from a man like Mersereau. Take that incident there in Los Angeles, and again in Seattle, only two months ago now, when Mersereau was able to make that dreadful explosive or crashing sound, as if one had burst a huge paper bag full of air, or upset a china-closet full of glass and broken everything, when as a matter of fact nothing at all had happened. Finding that it was nothing—or Mersereau—he was becoming used to it now; but other people, unfortunately, were not.

He would be—as he had been that first time—sitting in his room perfectly still and trying to amuse himself, or not to think, when suddenly there would be that awful crash. It was astounding! Other people heard it, of course. They had in Los Angeles. A maid and a porter had come running the first time to inquire, and he had had to protest that he had heard nothing. They couldn't believe it at first, and had gone to other rooms to look. When it happened the second time, the management had protested, thinking it was a joke he was playing; and to avoid the risk of exposure he had left.

After that he could not keep a valet or nurse about him for long. Servants wouldn't stay, and managers of hotels wouldn't let him remain when such things went on. Yet he couldn't live in a house or apartment alone, for there the noises and atmospheric conditions would be worse than ever.

VI. *June, 1907*

Take that last old house he had been in—but never would be in again!—at Anne Haven. There he actually visualized the hand—a thing as big as a washtub at first, something like smoke or shadow in a black room, moving about over the bed and everywhere. Then, as he lay there, gazing at it spellbound, it condensed slowly, and he began to feel it. It was now a hand of normal size—there was no doubt of it in the world—going over him softly, without force, as a ghostly hand must, having no real physical strength, but all the time with a strange, electric, secretive something about it, as if it were not quite sure of itself, and not quite sure that he was really there.

The hand, or so it seemed—God!—moved right up to his neck and began to feel over that as he lay there. Then it was that he guessed just what it was that Mersereau was after.

It was just like a hand, the fingers and thumb made into a circle and pressed down over his throat, only it moved over him gently at first, because it really couldn't do anything yet, not having the material strength. But the intention! The sense of cruel, savage determination that went with it!

And yet, if one went to a nerve specialist or doctor about all this, as he did afterward, what did the doctor say? He had tried to describe how he was breaking down under the strain, how he could not eat or sleep on account of all these constant tappings and noises; but the moment he even began to hint at his experiences, especially the hand or the noises, the doctor exclaimed:

"Why, this is plain delusion! You're nervously run down, that's all that ails you—on the verge of pernicious anæmia, I should say. You'll have to watch yourself as to this illusion about spirits. Get it out of your mind. There's nothing to it!"

Wasn't that just like one of these nerve specialists, bound up in their little ideas of what they knew or saw, or thought they saw?

VII. *November, 1907*

And now take this very latest development at Battle Creek recently where he had gone trying to recuperate on the diet there. Hadn't Mersereau, implacable demon that he was, developed this latest trick of making his food taste queer to him—unpalatable, or with an odd odor?

He, Davidson, knew it was Mersereau, for he felt him beside him at the table whenever he sat down. Besides, he seemed to hear something—clairaudience was what they called it, he understood; he was beginning to develop that, too, now! It was Mersereau, of course, saying in a voice which was more like a memory of a voice than anything real—the voice of someone you could remember as having

spoken in a certain way, say, ten years or more ago:

I've fixed it so you can't eat any more, you——

There followed a long list of vile expletives, enough in itself to sicken one.

Thereafter, in spite of anything he could do to make himself think to the contrary, knowing that the food was all right, really, Davidson found it to have an odor or a taste which disgusted him, and which he could not overcome, try as he would. The management assured him that it was all right, as he knew it was—for others. He saw them eating it. But he couldn't—he had to get up and leave, and the little he could get down he couldn't retain, or it wasn't enough for him to live on. God, he would die, this way! Starve, as he surely was doing by degrees now.

And Mersereau always seeming to be standing by. Why, if it weren't for fresh fruit on the stands at times, and just plain, fresh-baked bread in bakers' windows, which he could buy and eat quickly, he might not be able to live at all. It was getting to that pass!

VIII. *August, 1908*

THAT wasn't the worst, either, bad as all that was. The worst was the fact that under the strain of all this he was slowly but surely breaking down, and that in the end Mersereau might really succeed in driving him out of life here—to do what, if anything, to him there? What? It was such an evil pack by which he was surrounded, now, those who lived just on the other side and hung about the earth, vile, debauched creatures, as Pringle had described them, and as Davidson had come to know for himself, fearing them and their ways so much, and really seeing them at times.

Since he had come to be so weak and sensitive, he could see them for himself—vile things that they were, swimming before his gaze in the dark whenever he chanced to let himself be in the dark, which was not often—friends of Mersereau, no doubt, and inclined to help him just for the evil of it.

For this long time now Davidson had taken to sleeping with the light on, wherever he was, only tying a handkerchief over his eyes to keep out some of the glare. Even then he could see them—queer, misshapen things, for all the world like wavy, stringy jellyfish or coils of thick, yellowish-black smoke, moving about, changing in form at times, yet always looking dirty or vile, somehow, and with those queer, dim, reddish or greenish glows for eyes. It was sickening!

IX. *October, 1908*

Having accomplished so much, Mersereau would by no means be content to let him go. Davidson knew that! He could talk to him occasionally now, or at least could hear him and answer back, if he chose, when he was alone and quite certain that no one was listening.

Mersereau was always saying, when Davidson would listen to him at all—which he wouldn't often—that he would get him yet, that he would make him pay, or charging him with fraud and murder.

I'll choke you yet! The words seemed to float in from somewhere, as if he were remembering that at some time Mersereau had said just that in his angry, savage tone—not as if he heard it; and yet he was hearing it, of course.

I'll choke you yet! You can't escape! You may think you'll die a natural death, but you won't, and that's why I'm poisoning your food to weaken you. You can't escape! I'll get you, sick or well, when you can't help yourself, when you're sleeping. I'll choke you, just as you hit me with that club. That's why you're always seeing and feeling this hand of mine! I'm not alone. I've nearly had you many a time already, only you have managed to wriggle out so far, jumping up, but some day you won't be able to—see? Then——

The voice seemed to die away at times, even in the middle of a sentence, but at the other times—often, often—he could hear it completing the full thought.

Sometimes he would turn on the thing and exclaim: "Oh, go to the devil!" or, "Let me alone!" or, "Shut up!" Even in a closed room and all alone, such remarks seemed strange to him, addressed to a ghost; but he couldn't resist at times, annoyed as he was. Only he took good care not to talk if anyone was about.

It was getting so that there was no real place for him outside of an asylum, for often he would get up screaming at night—he had to, so sharp was the clutch on his throat—and then always, wherever he was, a servant would come in and want to know what was the matter. He would have to say that it was a nightmare—only the management always requested him to leave after the second or third time, say, or after an explosion or two. It was horrible!

He might as well apply to a private asylum or sanatorium now, having all the money he had, and explain that he had delusions—delusions! Imagine!—and ask to be taken care of. In a place like that, they wouldn't be disturbed by his jumping up and screaming at night, feeling that he was being choked, as he was, or by his leaving the table because he couldn't eat the food, or by his talking back to Mersereau, should they chance to hear him, or by the noises when they occurred.

They could assign him to a special nurse and a special room, if he wished—only he didn't wish to be too much alone. They could put him in charge of some one who would understand all these things, or to whom he could explain. He couldn't expect ordinary people, or hotels catering to ordinary people, to put up with him any more. Mersereau and his friends made too much trouble.

He must go and hunt up a good place somewhere where they understood such things, or at least tolerated them, and explain, and then it would all pass for the hallucinations of a crazy man—though, as a matter of fact, he wasn't crazy at all. It was all too real, only the average or so-called normal person couldn't see or hear as he could—hadn't experienced what he had.

X. *December, 1908*

"THE trouble is, Doctor, that Mr. Davidson is suffering from the delusion that he is pursued by evil spirits. He was not committed here by any court, but came of his own accord about four months ago, and we let him wander about here at will. But he seems to be growing worse, as time goes on.

"One of his worst delusions, Doctor, is that there is one spirit in particular who is trying to choke him to death. Doctor Major, our superintendent, says he has incipient tuberculosis of the throat, with occasional spasmodic contractions. There are small lumps or calluses here and there as though caused by outside pressure and yet our nurse assures us that there is no such outside irritation. He won't believe that; but whenever he tries to sleep, especially in the middle of the night, he will jump up and come running out into the hall, insisting that one of these spirits, which he insists are after him, is trying to choke him to death. He really seems to believe it, for he comes out coughing and choking and feeling at his neck as if someone has been trying to strangle him. He always explains the whole matter to me as being the work of vile spirits, and asks me not to pay any attention to him unless he calls for help or rings his call-bell; and so I never think anything more of it now unless he does.

"Another of his ideas is that these same spirits do something to his food—put poison in it, or give it a bad odor or taste, so that he can't eat it. When he does find anything he can eat, he grabs it and almost swallows it whole, before, as he says, the spirits have time to do anything to it. Once, he says, he weighed more than two hundred pounds, but now he weights only one hundred and twenty. His case is exceedingly strange and pathetic, Doctor!

"Doctor Major insists that it is purely a delusion; that so far as being choked is concerned, it is the incipient tuberculosis, and that his stomach trouble comes from the same thing; but by association of ideas, or delusion, he thinks someone is trying to choke him and poison his food, when it isn't so at all. Doctor Major says that he can't imagine what could have started it. He is always trying to talk to Mr. Davidson about it, but whenever he begins to ask him questions, Mr. Davidson refuses to talk, and gets up and leaves.

"ONE of the peculiar things about his idea of being choked, Doctor, is that when he is merely dozing he always wakes up in time, and has the power to throw it off. He claims that the strength of these spirits is not equal to his own when he is awake, or even dozing, but when he's asleep their strength is greater and that then they may injure him. Sometimes, when he has had a fright like this, he will come out in the hall and down to my desk there at the lower end, and ask if he mayn't sit there by me. He says it calms him. I always tell him yes, but it won't be five minutes before he'll get up and leave again, saying that he's being annoyed, or that he won't be able to contain himself if he stays any longer, because of the remarks being made over his shoulder or in his ear.

"Often he'll say: "Did you hear that, Miss Liggett? It's astonishing, the low, vile things that man can say at times!" When I say, 'No, I didn't hear,' he always says, 'I'm so glad!' "

"No one has ever tried to relieve him of this by hypnotism, I suppose?"

"Not that I know of, Doctor. Doctor Major may have tried it. I have only been here three months."

"Tuberculosis is certainly the cause of the throat trouble, as Doctor Major says, and as for the stomach trouble, that comes from the same thing—natural enough under the circumstances. We may have to resort to hypnotism a little later. I'll see. In the meantime, you'd better caution all who come in touch with him never to sympathize, or even to seem to believe in anything he imagines is being done to him. It will merely encourage him in his notions. And get him to take his medicine regularly; it won't cure, but it will help. Doctor Major has asked me to give special attention to his case, and I want the conditions as near right as possible."

"Yes, sir."

XI. *January, 1909*

The trouble with these doctors was that they really knew nothing of anything save what was on the surface, the little they had learned at a medical college or in practice—chiefly how certain drugs, tried by their predecessors in certain cases, were known to act. They had no imagination whatever, even when you tried to tell them.

Take that latest young person who was coming here now in his good clothes and with his car, fairly bursting with his knowledge of what he called psychiatrics, looking into Davidson's eyes so hard and smoothing his temples and throat—massage, he called it—saying that he had incipient tuberculosis of the throat and stomach trouble, and utterly disregarding the things which he, Davidson, could personally see and hear! Imagine the fellow trying to persuade him, at this late date, that all that was wrong with him was tuberculosis; that he didn't see Mersereau standing right beside him at times, bending over him, holding up that hand and telling him how he intended to kill him yet—that it was all an illusion!

Imagine saying that Mersereau couldn't actually seize him by the throat when he was asleep, or nearly so, when Davidson himself, looking at his throat in the mirror, could see the actual finger-prints—Mersereau's—for a moment or so afterward. At any rate, his throat was red and sore from being clutched, as Mersereau of late was able to clutch him! And that was the cause of these lumps. And to say, as they had said at first, that he himself was making them by rubbing and feeling his throat, and that it was tuberculosis!

Wasn't it enough to make one want to quit the place? If it weren't for Miss Liggett and Miss Koehler, his private nurse, and their devoted care, he would. That Miss Koehler was worth her weight in gold, learning his ways as she had, being so uniformly kind, and bearing with his difficulties so genially. He would leave her something in his will.

To leave this place and go elsewhere, though, unless he could take her along, would be folly. And anyway, where else would he go? Here at least were other people, patients with him—people who weren't convinced as were these doctors that all that he complained of was mere delusion. Imagine! Old Rankin, the lawyer, for instance, who had suffered untold persecutions from one living person and another, mostly politicians, was convinced that his, Davidson's, troubles were genuine, and liked to hear about them, just as did Miss Koehler. These two did not insist, as the doctors did, that he had slow tuberculosis of the throat, and could live a long time and overcome his troubles if he would. They were merely companionable at such times as Mersereau would give him enough peace to be sociable.

The only real trouble, though, was that he was growing so weak from lack of sleep and food—his inability to eat the food which his enemy bewitched and to sleep at night on account of the choking—that he couldn't last much longer. The new physician whom Doctor Major had called into consultation in regard to his case was insisting that along with his throat trouble he was suffering from acute anæmia, due to long undernourishment, and that only a solution of strychine injected into his veins would help him. But as to Mersereau poisoning his food—not a word would he hear. Besides, now that he was practically bedridden, not able to jump up as freely as before, he was subject to a veritable storm of bedevilment at the hands of Mersereau. Not only could he see—especially toward evening, and in the very early hours of the morning—Mersereau hovering about him like a black shadow, a great, bulky shadow, yet like him in outline, but he could feel his enemy's hand moving over him. Worse, behind or about him he often saw a veritable cloud of evil creatures, companions or tools of Mersereau's, who were there to help him and who kept swimming about like fish in dark waters, and seemed to eye the procedure with satisfaction.

When food was brought to him, early or late and in whatever form, Mersereau and they were there, close at hand, as thick as flies, passing over and through it in an evident attempt to spoil it before he could eat it. Just to see them doing it was enough to poison it for him. Besides, he could hear their voices urging Mersereau to do it.

That's right—poison it!

He can't last much longer!

Soon he'll be weak enough so that when you grip him he will really die!

It was thus that they actually talked—he could hear them.

HE also heard vile phrases addressed to him by Mersereau, the iterated and reiterated words "murderer" and "swindler" and "cheat", there in the middle of the night. Often, although the light was still on, he saw as many as seven dark figures, very much like Mersereau's, although different, gathered close about him—like men in consultation—evil men. Some of them sat upon his bed, and it seemed as if they were about to help Mersereau to finish him, adding their hands to his.

Behind them again was a complete circle of all those evil, swimming things with green and red eyes, always watching—helping, probably. He had actually felt the pressure of the hand grow stronger of late, when they were all there. Only, just before he felt he was going to faint, and because he could not spring up any more, he invariably screamed or gasped a choking gasp and held a finger on the button

which would bring Miss Koehler. Then she would come, lift him up and fix his pillows. She always assured him that it was only the inflammation of his throat, and rubbed it with alcohol, and gave him a few drops of something internally to ease it.

After all this time, and in spite of anything he could tell them, they still believed, or pretended to believe, that he was suffering from tuberculosis, and that all the rest of this was delusion, a phase of insanity!

And Mersereau's skeleton still out there on the Monte Orte!

And Mersereau's plan, with the help of others, of course, was to choke him to death; there was no doubt of that now; and yet they would believe after he was gone that he had died of tuberculosis of the throat. Think of that!

XII. *Midnight of February 10th, 1909*

THE Ghost of Mersereau (*bending over Davidson*): "Softly! Softly! He's quite asleep! He didn't think we could get him—that I could! But this time—yes. Miss Koehler is asleep at the end of the hall and Miss Liggett can't come, can't hear. He's too weak now. He can scarcely move or groan. Strengthen my hand, will you! I will grip him so tight this time that he won't get away! His cries won't help him this time! He can't cry as he once did! Now! Now!"

A Cloud of Evil Spirits (*swimming about*): "Right! Right! Good! Good! Now! Ah!"

Davidson (*waking, choking, screaming, and feebly striking out*): "Help! H-e-l-p! Miss—Miss—h-e-l-p!"

Miss Liggett (*dozing heavily in her chair*): "Everything is still. No one restless. I can sleep." (*Her head nods.*)

The Cloud of Evil Spirits: "Good! Good! Good! His soul at last! Here it comes! He couldn't escape this time! Ah! Good! Good! Now!"

Mersereau (*to Davidson*): "You murderer! At last! At last!"

XIII. *3 A. M. of February 10th, 1909*

Miss Koehler (*at the bedside, distressed and pale*): "He must have died some time between one and two, Doctor. I left him at one o'clock, comfortable as I could make him. He said he was feeling as well as could be expected. He's been very weak during the last few days, taking only a little gruel. Between half-past one and two I thought I heard a noise, and came to see. He was lying just as you see here, except that his hands were up to his throat, as if it were hurting or choking him. I put them down for fear they would stiffen that way. In trying to call one of the other nurses just now, I found that the bell was out of order, although I know it was all right when I left, because he always made me try it. So he may have tried to ring."

Doctor Major (*turning the head and examining the throat*): "It looks as if he had clutched at his throat rather tightly this time, I must say. Here is the mark of his thumb on this side and of his four fingers on the other. Rather deep for the little strength he had. Odd that he should have imagined that someone else was trying to choke him, when he was always pressing at his own neck! Throat tuberculosis is very painful at times. That would explain the desire to clutch at his throat."

Miss Liggett: "He was always believing that an evil spirit was trying to choke him, Doctor."

Doctor Major: "Yes, I know—association of ideas. Doctor Scain and I agree as to that. He had a bad case of chronic tuberculosis of the throat, with accompanying malnutrition, due to the effect of the throat on the stomach; and his notion about evil spirits pursuing him and trying to choke him was simply due to an innate tendency on the part of the subconscious mind to join things together—any notion say, with any pain. If he had had a diseased leg, he would have imagined that evil spirits were attempting to saw it off, or something like that. In the same way the condition of his throat affected his stomach, and he imagined that the spirits were doing something to his food. Make out a certificate showing acute tuberculosis of the esophagus as the cause, with delusions of persecution as his mental condition. While I am here, we may as well look in on Mr. Baff."

A Hindu's Strange Impersonation

IN India there are innumerable religious bodies, but Hinduism has the greatest number of followers by many hundreds of thousands. In this religion the Holy Ganges River and the Sacred Cow are the two great purifying factors.

Professor Arces Claudell, who returned recently to England after an extensive tour of India, related a curious experience in Calcutta. One very enervating afternoon he reclined in an easy chair on the veranda of his hotel, resting, when he was aroused by the occasional tinkle of a bell and an oft-repeated moo, such as signals the privileged passage of a Sacred Cow as it wanders through the streets and bazaars of any of the cities of India.

"Expecting to see the indolent movements of such a cow," he stated, "I was amazed when my eyes fell upon an unkempt Indian with numerous appendages around his neck and waist, who alternated his mournful moo with the tinkle of his brass bell. At the same time I noted Zarrah, my bearer, hurry to him and drop a small coin in a basin held by the man, then exchange a few words in the vernacular. The mendicant passed on and I summoned Zarrah, who is a *subluntawaliah* (know-it-all), to question him.

"'Is he a beggar?'

"'No. But he is cursed. He is very bad man, and he is carrying much sin.'

"My servant then explained that the wanderer was atoning for killing a cow. He was by profession a cow-cart driver. On a particularly hot day, in 1921, one of his beasts of burden was inclined to be lazy, so he twisted its tail. Then the animal absolutely refused to move. Infuriated, the driver struck it over the head with an iron bar and killed it.

"That night, in great fear, the man confessed his guilt to Guru. Since he had committed his crime upon the eve of the rising of the eighth moon, his crime was doubly serious. To his amazement and that of his friends who accompanied him, the spirit of Guru the god appeared, accompanied by the phantom of the cow. The spirit informed the sinner that the only way he could save himself from eternal torment was to impersonate the animal he had killed until the rising of the eighth moon in the tenth year thereafter. The man was going through this atonement when I saw him.

"I DID not believe the tale, so inquired of other natives. All asserted it was true, saying the story was known throughout India, for the unfortunate man had wandered far in his travels. The appendages about his neck and waist were signs of his sin and consisted of the cow's tail, horns and bell, in addition to strips of hide. Whenever he approaches another human he must moo, and the latter is supposed to give him alms so that he will not starve. The natives, when telling about this man, always conclude with, 'Guru has said it; it must be done'."

Jealous Ghost

By DOROTHY VENNER

The food was poisoned!

In life the pretty black-haired artist was impulsive and tempestuous—equally ready to love or hate with sinister violence. Did she carry her anger into the next world? Did she return that awful night to separate me from my lover?

AS I sit by the window of my studio I can see far down the valley. The hills rise high on either side, to lose their summits in the blue of the sky. The gorgeous sunshine of an April morning bathes the landscape and a fresh breeze softly stirs the green foliage of the trees.

We came to this valley in the hills of eastern Pennsylvania—Betty Scarsdell and I—after we had met in art school and had completed our course. It would be fun, we decided, to rent the old abandoned Dynes farm and fit it up as our studio-home. The house creaked in its dilapidation, but with ladders, brushes and paint we set about to create a marvelous new dress for it of deep blue, magenta and orange—a color scheme that made the natives gasp in surprise.

"Them crazy artists!" they exclaimed, pointing their thumbs over their shoulders.

While we were at work that first morning, Ralph Pringle, who occupied the farm adjoining ours, came over to see if he could help us.

I guess that for Ralph and me it was a case of love at first sight—the sort that you read about in books but rarely encounter in real life. He was tall and lithe, with the ath-

letic figure and handsome, eager face of an outdoors man.

"I'd like to help you," he said shyly, suddenly appearing around the corner of the house. "That ladder isn't strong. One of you might fall and get hurt."

Betty stood transfixed as she saw him. Her dark eyes narowed to slits. Her brush remained in mid-air, dripping blue paint.

But it was toward me that he moved, away from her. It was I who answered.

"There really isn't anything, thanks," I said. "We like to do this ourselves, you know."

I heard the sharp intake of Betty's breath and I knew she was suddenly angry. That was Betty's way. An orphan, she had fought for everything she ever owned. I guess it had hardened her, inside somewhere. It made her self-centered, harsh and selfish. Few understood. Perhaps that was why I was the only real friend Betty had. She stood stock-still for a moment, her eyes flashing; then she threw her brush spitefully in the dirt. Without a word she disappeared around the corner.

But Ralph did not notice. His attention was on me. He helped me move the ladder, brought my paint pail, studied the modernistic design we were spreading on the old house.

"Well, it's—it's unusual," he said critically, "though I—I do rather like it."

We both laughed.

He told me he was an orchardist. Like Betty, he too was an orphan. After finishing at agricultural school, he had bought the old farm next door and hoped in a few years to have an orchard that would produce special apples and other fruits for the city markets.

"It's a beautiful valley here," he said suddenly, waving a hand toward the hills. "I'd like you to go with me on a picnic if—if you care for that sort of thing. I'd like to take you up to the summit of the hills where you look down on the world at your feet and feel like a god. Where the wind blows and you brace yourself and feel that you could conquer——"

WE went that afternoon—he and I together, with Macgregor, his great Scotch collie, running on ahead. I packed a lunch and we asked Betty to go, but she shook her head.

It was a glorious day. We climbed the summit of a hill. At our feet two tiny lakes nestled among the trees. Ralph told me strange stories about them—Indian legends of the countryside. When the afternoon shadows lengthened, we came home again.

As the weeks passed, there were other similar occasions. My days were busy, for I was trying to build up a reputation as a commercial artist, but more and more Ralph and I found ourselves in each other's company.

Then suddenly I realized Betty was becoming morose and sullen. She was not putting her best efforts into her work and her orders began to fall off. I tried to encourage her. I tried to help. But she would turn upon me with blazing eyes.

"You're a fine friend," she raged at me one day. "It was you who proposed coming to this farm. And now that Pringle is running after you, you'd drop me like an old shoe. That boor! If you don't want me around, if you don't want to live with me any longer, say so and I'll get out!"

"Betty, dear!" I cried in deep concern. "Please don't talk that way. You know I love you, dear. We've both invited you to go with us, but you never do."

"Pringle!" she flashed. "I don't see how you can stand him. A farmer! A common nobody! A country oaf——"

"Betty! Please!" I said sternly. "He's charming."

She whirled and stamped viciously out of the room. Nor would she speak to me the rest of the day. I felt sorry about it. Why had she taken such a dislike to him? I wanted them to be friends. I was sure a mutual liking could spring up.

In my blindness I did not realize that Betty was jealous—that she was giving way to that unreasoning emotion which through the ages has turned friend against friend and has brought more trouble into this world than can ever be told.

Mid-summer arrived—a day in August. Ralph came over early and proposed that we all seek some cool, shady spot on the hilltop. It would be another picnic time, he said. I readily agreed. But Betty set her lips and shook her head. From her eyes shone a queer, cat-like gleam. I shrugged. If she didn't want to, I couldn't make her.

So Ralph and I went together. That night when I returned, the house was dark.

"Betty! Betty dear!" I called happily, as I opened the door. "It was such a wonderful day. Where are you, chum?"

I turned into the studio and switched on a light. My gaze went to the easel in the corner. I turned chill with consternation and anger.

A canvas on which I had been working—an order that I had almost completed—hung in shreds from its frame, torn and slashed from repeated hackings. It was no accident. Only too evidently a vehement hand had wielded the kitchen knife that lay on the floor beside it.

Quickly I ran from the room, searching for Betty.

I found her at last, in the kitchen, crouching in a corner, her dark face contorted, weeping spasmodically. I thought at first she would fly at me like a cat, her nails working viciously. But she sank back, hiding her face in her hands, crying as though her heart would break.

Compassion filled me. After all, she was my chum, a weak, silly, impulsive girl, and alone. I took her in my arms. She confessed to it all.

"I—I couldn't stand it," she said. "You—you were with him, and I—I was here. I hated you. You always seem to have the best in life. I—I never have anything. I hated everything you owned—when I thought of you up there on the hill, enjoying yourself—with him. I got the knife. With every slash I—I wished it was you I was cutting."

"Betty!" I gasped. "Don't say that! Say you don't mean it, dear! Oh, Betty!"

The flood gates opened then. Impulsively she kissed me, hugged me, implored me to forgive her. There in the darkness we cried together. Each in the other's arms, two girl chums who had come to a flinty barrier in life's road, but who had overcome it and found solace together in tears.

I FORGAVE her, of course. After the cry we felt better. Temperamental girl that she was, she could not love me enough now. She clung to me. She could not bear me out of her sight. And oh, how lovely it was to have Betty that way once more—my little chum, my own dear friend!

But before bedtime Betty was in another mood. She fell silent, and several times I looked up from my book to find her studying me. Each time she smiled pleasantly, but somehow, underneath, I knew that all was not well in Betty's mind. Once I surprised a hard, set look on her face. She was good-looking, Betty was, in a dark, Spanish way. Her bright color was accentuated by her black, glossy hair, and her features always seemed carved out of ivory. But that hard, set look about her mouth, fleeting though it was, changed her beauty to evilness.

We bade each other good night after a while. The kiss she gave me seemed tense—a cynical kiss. I thought about that kiss long after I got into bed. It disturbed me. Then I dropped off to sleep.

With the new day Betty's mood had changed again. Now it seemed to reflect the jolly sunshine, the blue sky and the fleecy clouds. If only it had been true!

She was downstairs before me and I heard her moving about in the kitchen. She bubbled over with laughter as she greeted me. For an instant I stopped to wonder if somehow the laughter wasn't too boisterous. It sounded forced.

But Betty caught me and pushed me into my chair at the table.

"This is to pay for yesterday," she announced, waving a mixing spoon at me. "I've made you a lovely breakfast, Dot

honey. I hope you'll eat every morsel of it. I've made it with my own hands—all for you."

"You're a dear!" I exclaimed happily. "Let's forget all about yesterday. Today is a new day. Here's to the future."

I broke open a hot biscuit. I lifted a bit of the lovely golden omelet to my lips.

But I stopped. A strange sensation came over me. It was as though a hand gripped my throat. I could not move my tongue. The food lay in my mouth—bitter as gall.

Cold perspiration broke out on my forehead. Slowly I turned my eyes to Betty. She stood there, tense, watching me, waiting, a ferocious, fiendish look of hate spreading over her countenance.

Even as I stared at her, my gaze wandered past her to the table where she had been at work. A tiny brown bottle stood half hidden behind a pan. And its red label bore the horrible skull and crossbones of poison!

Quietly I removed the food from my mouth. Quickly I arose and hurried to the sink, rinsing my mouth again and again.

Then I turned to her. She faced me squarely. She did not flinch. Pallor replaced her usual color. Her eyes closed to slits, and she spoke through half-clenched teeth.

"Yes," she cried. "I tried to poison you! I wanted to see you die—writhing in agony here on the kitchen floor. I hate you. I hate you!" she screamed, her voice rising shrill.

"Betty! Stop!" I commanded.

"I won't stop. I hate you, I tell you. All your life you've had everything—and I've had nothing. And now you'd steal Ralph Pringle from me. Oh, I know how you've sneered at me as you walked away with him. I've seen you two laugh."

"Betty! It isn't true!" I cried. "You're imagining things that aren't true——" But she would not listen.

"I tore up your canvas," she broke in. "You said you forgave me, but you only patronized me. You patted me on the head, as you would a dog. You were going with him again. You'd tell him what I did—just to make him hate me, as I hate you! Yes, I tried to kill you. I will again, I hate you—hate you—hate you!"

Unconscious of disaster, he stepped carelessly down toward the next rung—and then——

JEALOUS temperament—do you see?—springing from a selfish and impulsive nature, beyond the bounds of reason now.

Before I could stop her, she turned and ran. I followed, but she was too quick for me. Into her room she dashed, slamming the door in my face, locking it. I called to her and rattled the knob. But she would not answer.

Then rage at last overcame me. I could forgive her for tearing up my picture. I could bear with her temperamental spells. But not this.

Out of the house I ran, and down the road. I did not know where I was going, or what I would do. I was hurt, disappointed, more angry than I ever had been in my life.

But the physical exertion proved a safety valve. Soon I gathered my wits. Calmness brought reason. Poor Betty! Child of moods. I pitied her. So awfully alone. With pity came a desire to go back to her. Willfulness would give way to tears. She would be sorry now.

But should I go back? It was a wicked thing she had attempted. She might try it again. Yet out in the sunshine the thing did not look so colossal as in the kitchen. Maybe I had neglected her. Maybe I, too, was at fault.

Everyone says I am good-natured, of an even disposition. Often I get impatient with myself for it. But after all, why hold a grudge? My anger was passing. It would be so good to make up. And I understood at last. Jealousy. Just plain jealousy. Betty was in love with Ralph and angry at me. Incensed when I had found a new interest in life, she had let morbidity take the place of reason with her.

I turned homeward. Betty needed help. The motherly instinct dominated me. If Betty would promise never to do a thing like that again, I wanted her still to be my chum. I at least could make the overture to her—as I usually did. There would be a good cry.

Betty would be deplorably sorry. And we would start together once more.

But suddenly the sun hid itself behind a cloud. The valley lay hushed as though tragedy stalked abroad. The hum of the insects was stilled. In the silence a bird chirped quickly—and stopped, as though it realized its chirp was out of place.

The cloud above me widened, spreading like a pall between the hills.

I hurried on, a sense of impending disaster depressing me.

I ran into the house. The very air of the rooms seemed stifling.

"Betty! Betty!" I called, running frantically from one room to another.

She did not reply. What was this sudden sense of menace that beset me? I ran to her room upstairs. The door hung open on its hinges. The room was empty.

"Betty! Betty" I called again, fear chilling my blood.

There was no answer.

I SEARCHED the house. I ran from cellar to garret. She was not there.

In consternation I stopped to think. My gaze wandered through a window to the old barn in the rear. Something seemed to draw me to it.

Out of the house I dashed. A small door at the side of the barn stood unlatched. I swung it open. The interior was dim, the tiny windows covered with dust, while dust-laden cobwebs dangled like eerie festoons from the rafters.

As my eyes became accustomed to the half light, I saw—in a far corner where hardly any light at all could creep from the windows—that something white hung from a rafter.

My knees sagged under me. A stifled cry sprang to my lips. Then, aghast at what was before me, hardly believing my own eyes, I sprang forward, running across the barn floor to that dim corner. . . .

I have little memory of the events that followed. The next conscious moment I recall was when I leaned against Ralph Pringle's door, hammering upon it with my fists, calling him, screaming. He heard me from his own barn where he was at work. He came running and caught me in his arms as I was about to fall.

"Quick!" I cried. "In our barn! Betty has—has hung herself!"

"Good God!" he gasped.

Together we ran back. He took her down and carried her into the house, while I summoned old Doctor Hough, a kindly, understanding country practitioner. He worked over Betty a long time before he gave up. But the horrible red mark around her throat, caused by the ancient halter she had found in the barn, indicated only too vividly that Betty's tempestuous, temperamental, impulsive life had come to an end

Or had it? Can wild impulses that stir in the mortal body and influence our lives—strange fringes of a force that emanates from some source far back of birth—carry over into the world beyond the Veil and then return again? I wondered whether it *was* the end.

For though all that was mortal of Betty, my chum, lay before me silent in death, yet I could not feel that Betty was gone. Somehow in that very room, with Ralph and the doctor present, I felt that Betty watched me, studied me, hated me, and again and again I looked to see if she had not opened her eyes. It seemed that she had moved, had focused her vision on me, through half-closed lids. But of course she had not. Betty was dead.

To say I was prostrated by the terrible happening is to consider it only by half. Moreover I was made ill by the discovery of Betty's note after Doctor Hough had left. Ralph and I found it on the table in the studio.

I cried then, my grief inconsolable. The final message from Betty was one of hate. No remorse had entered her soul at the last moment. Fear, yes. Fear that I would have her arrested for the deed she had tried to commit. And because of her fear she had hated me the more.

You may have him to yourself now, the note read. *I see that our love for each other, as I had always accepted it, was something to be laughed at, and that as soon as you saw an opportunity to get the best of me, you took it. I hate you. I am sorry that I did not kill you in the kitchen as I meant to. But you will never have the pleasure of seeing me in jail, to gloat over me. Not you, Dorothy. You have gone for the police now, but I can save you your trouble. Some day I may come back again. If that is possible, I will. If there is any way, you never shall have Ralph Pringle for yourself. I will not say—good-by.*

An evil note. As a last word from the girl I had loved, it was horrible.

After a while, since Betty had no near relatives, Ralph and I followed the body to the little village cemetery not far from our farms. The minister of the local church read the committal service and three neighbors whom Ralph had asked to serve as pall-bearers, together with himself, lowered all that remained of Betty into the earth.

As we turned away, as the first shovelfuls of earth rattled on the coffin, the sky was suddenly darkened by heavy clouds, and again a hush settled over everything as though the valley waited for the next act in this strange drama of life. I clung to Ralph. He slipped an arm about me for support. Without a word we got into his little car and drove away.

Ralph wanted an elderly woman to come and stay with me as a companion. But his own companionship was enough. Besides, I wanted to be alone where I could bury myself in my work and try to forget the tragedy.

So it was arranged that way, especially as Macgregor, the collie, suddenly assumed a protective attitude and elected to stay with me most of the time. He lay near-by in the studio, dozing, watching me at work, until I was ready to put aside my brushes. Then he would leap up, eager to go for a walk with me.

"HE'S more your dog than mine," Ralph said. "I'm glad of it," he added thoughtfully, "since you won't have anyone else here."

But now, as so often happens in the latter part of August, there came a week of damp, cloudy weather that makes everyone irritable. My paints would not dry. My body revolted against the humidity. I could not sleep. Probably my thoughts dwelt more often on the tragedy than I would admit.

What had Betty meant when she wrote that she would come between me and Ralph? Could the dead come back? I did not think so. But I lay awake at night, unable to rid myself of the feeling that something hovered about the house, that eyes were watching me from the darkness. By day I felt those eyes staring down at me from the hills. Sometimes Mac, lying on the floor in my studio, would raise his head and sniff the air suspiciously. Up would go the ruff on his back and through bared teeth he would utter a rumbling, growling bark, breaking into a whine. His actions disturbed me.

If I spoke to him he would quickly forget his mood and bound over to me, gravely wagging his great brush. But even then he always seemed intently listening. I spoke to Ralph about it.

"High-strung," he said. "Sensitive fellow. His ears catch sounds tuned too high, or too low, for human ears.

Mere vibrations, perhaps. That's why a dog howls when the high notes of a violin are sounded. His ears are finer than ours. I wouldn't let it bother me."

I promised not to, if I could help it.

Then a strange thing happened.

At the mysterious hour between daylight and dark Ralph and I were walking together along a woods-path near our farms, with Mac running ahead somewhere, stopping to snuff in the leaves. Fireflies lighted their tiny lanterns in the foliage. High above us a night-hawk cheeped plaintively.

All at once, around the corner of a bush, a wild, mournful note came back to us, startling us, stopping us—a cry of challenge, mingled with fear. I caught Ralph's arm. My nerves were tense.

"It's Mac!" Ralph said in a low tone. "He's found something. I never heard him cry like that before."

We stood there in the half darkness, Ralph peering ahead, I clinging to him. Ralph started to move forward, when suddenly Mac came dashing back to us, the ruff on his back straight up. The dog turned to look along the path he had come. Again that wild, weird note of challenge and fear issued from his throat.

"Mac! What is it?" Ralph cried.

The dog whined again.

RALPH, moving forward, half dragged me to the bend in the path. Then we saw it. We stared in amazement. Fifty feet to one side, in among the bushes and trees, glowed a strange light. It wavered as if stirred by the wind. It had no form. It seemed suspended a foot or so above the ground—a shining cloud as high as a person and perhaps as large around.

Suddenly Ralph laughed.

"Shucks!" he exploded. "Marsh fire. A will-o'-the-wisp. Phosphorescence that comes from decaying vegetation. Poor old Mac was frightened by a spook that didn't exist."

I breathed again. I felt relieved. But not the dog. He growled more than ever. He caught my dress and tried to drag me away. He leaped up against Ralph, almost knocking him over. And when we would not go, he turned and faced the light in the bushes, snarling horribly, his body tense and quivering, fangs bared. Not until the light slowly dissolved and disappeared would he heed Ralph's scolding words.

Somehow, in spite of the common-sense explanation, the incident left me afraid. As Ralph led me down the path, I turned to him nervously.

"I've got to leave this valley, Ralph," I said. "I can't stand it any longer. It seems as though eyes peer at me from every bush. I've got to go where people are, where there are lights and movement that I know are real."

Ralph faced me. And all at once I was in his arms, half weeping, half laughing, my lips meeting his, his arms about my waist, mine about his neck.

"I don't want you to go, dear," he said at last. "Not ever. I want you with me. I—I love you."

"And I love you, my own," I told him, "steadfastly, earnestly, always."

Then suddenly, over Ralph's shoulder, far back in the trees, I saw the strange light again, though this time it moved and flitted, as though rushing aimlessly in a frenzy. A night breeze soughed mournfully above us through the tree tops and the leaves all seemed whispering, as if talking to themselves of another tragedy about to happen.

Ralph felt me grow tense in his arms.

"Come," he said at last. "I must take you home. You're tired and upset. Perhaps it will be better for you to go away for a while. I'll miss you awfully, dear. But if you say you'll come back to me, I'll try to be content. Say you'll come back, dear, for I love you so!"

He left Mac with me that night. It was arranged that I should go away next day and spend a few weeks in the city. Then when I felt better I should return. I had a bit of work to finish before leaving and Ralph would come over to take me in his car to Port Jervis in time for an evening train. But I was destined not to go to the city that day.

All night, it seemed, I lay sleepless, obsessed by a sense of some impending tragedy. Mac, too, was restless. I heard him walking about the house, stopping to sniff in corners, pausing with a mumbling growl in front of the screened door. With the coming of morning I arose wearily, and in the mirror my face was reflected haggard and worn.

As soon as I let the dog out of doors, I saw him go bounding off toward home. When he was gone, I felt lonely and I had to drive myself to work.

It took me until late afternoon to finish my task. There was time then to prepare a bite of supper and to pack my bag before Ralph came. He would be feeding his stock, I knew. Then he would change his clothes, and come over to get me.

But clouds were settling down as darkness came on. Again the countryside seemed hushed, as if waiting for another act in a play. The leaves were whispering, whispering, though there hardly was a breath of wind.

I had started for the kitchen, although I had little appetite for food of any sort, when suddenly I stopped to listen. Mac was at the door, whining in excitement, his nails scratching at the screen. I heard him jumping on the porch, whimpering. Then his voice broke out into a louder whine, filled with misery and pleading, as though he called me to hurry.

I ran to the door. He hardly could wait for me to open it. He caught my dress in his teeth and began to pull. Next, he ran to the edge of the porch to gaze an instant toward home and then back again he would come to me. He jerked at my dress again.

I did not hesitate. He would not let me. Had he been a human, he would have picked me up and carried me. When he saw I would follow him, he leaped ahead of me with whimpering cries that broke almost into a howl. As we neared Ralph's home, up came the ruff on his back. He became a changed dog—a fighting dog—a demon. His fangs gleamed white against drawn lips. His body tensed so that he ran like an automaton, stiff-legged. His whine changed to a growl of angry terror. And at last his mood was communicated to me.

"Ralph! Ralph!" I called, running now. The door to his home was closed, the house dark. I opened it, calling his name. He did not answer. But the dog would not let me stay there. Again he caught my dress, pulling me; then, dropping it, tried to push me with his body—toward the barn!

Half-way along the path from the house I stopped. The barn! I did not want to go further. Only too recent was that awful experience in my own barn. What would I find in Ralph's? God in heaven, what had happened!

But I made my faltering legs carry me forward. The dog stopped, refusing to proceed further. Inside the barn I heard only the mellow clangor of a cow bell and the uneasy stamping of Ralph's horse. I steeled myself. Then I pushed open the door and entered.

I FOUND Ralph sprawled grotesquely on the floor. Frenziedly I bent over him, raised his head in my arms. A sinister bruise marked his forehead, his hands were pulseless—but he was still alive! I saw the slight movement of his lips as he breathed.

Thank heaven I was neither faint nor hysterical. Instead I was very calm. Considering what to do, I straightened. And then I saw a queer thing. It was quite evident Ralph had been climbing to the mow to throw down feed for his stock. He had done it scores of times, as had other occupants of the farm before him. But the pegs in the ladder were old and worn. Unconscious of disaster, he stepped carelessly down toward the next rung—and then the peg snapped under him.

Yet there was something curious about that peg. Old and seasoned by time it had not broken completely off. It was bent, splintered, twisted, as you might twist a match. If some person, of superhuman strength, had twisted it in his

fingers, you would gain a better idea of how it appeared. Ralph's weight would have broken it short off, or bent it downward. But this was twisted *sideways,* its fibers turned into spirals. This was deliberate, vehemently done. There was a number of sharp-edged tools near the foot of the ladder—and it was a miracle that Ralph had not been killed instantly when he fell among them.

All this I saw in a glance. The discovery would have made little impression on me then, had not one of the cattle suddenly burst into a terrific bellowing of fear, answered quickly from outside by Mac's snarling bark, rising to a new note of terror. And as I looked, it seemed to me that in the darkness at the end of the barn a vague shape moved—a shape as intangible, as indescribable as the film of a cobweb.

Mind shadows, perhaps—an illusion resulting from frayed nerves. Even as I stared, the thing was gone.

I stooped quickly. By some superhuman strength of my own, I raised him, dragged him to the house, got him on his bed.

FOR a moment I stood exhausted, clinging to the footboard, panting, trembling from my exertion. Then, clenching my teeth, I staggered to the telephone and called Doctor Hough.

"I'll be there in a few minutes," came his voice. And oh, how thankful I was!

He came. He said that Ralph, falling, had struck on his head and was in grave danger. Whether there was a skull fracture he could not tell. But concussion had certainly taken place and his condition was desperate. For a time he worked over Ralph, now and then asking me to help. We got him undressed and under the covers. The doctor continued to work over him.

"We've done all we can for the present," he said at last. "There's nothing else now but to wait."

We sat beside Ralph's bed, saying little, watching. The hours sped on. As it approached midnight, Doctor Hough said it was imperative he attend another of his patients and that he must leave me for a while.

When he had gone the house seemed deathly still. Somewhere a clock ticked off the minutes. Ralph scarcely breathed, his chest rising and falling only occasionally.

Midnight struck. Measured and slow came the tones of the clock. Hardly had it finished before I grew strangely tense. The atmosphere pressed in on me. It seemed to me that someone else was in the room, someone I could not see. Suddenly Mac, outside, set up a mournful wailing again always ending with that uncanny, rising note of fear. For a moment the dog quieted. Then close to me, somewhere in the shadows, came a sound like a sob.

I turned, tremors running down my spine. I stared into the darkness of the hallway, my hands clenched. But nothing moved. No one was there. The silence was broken by Mac sniffing at the screen door, pawing at it to come in. I sank back in my chair.

I turned to Ralph again. Pale and motionless he lay there. Would he ever wake, I wondered. He seemed so near death, so close to the thin veil that separates the dead from the living.

The hours crept on—endlessly. Three in the morning approached. It was the time when body vitality is low, when most ill persons die. Suddenly the atmosphere became charged again. It pressed in on me, as if a great wave were sweeping over me. It was difficult to breathe. Turning to Ralph, I suddenly gripped the bedclothes. He was not breathing at all! The pallor was deepening on his face. His hands were like clay. I knew he was dying!

And I alone with him, with no knowledge of what to do, unable to help! I leaped up. I ran to the telephone. Frantically I called for Doctor Hough. After what seemed centuries a woman responded.

"The doctor has not returned," the voice came thinly, sleepily querulous. "No, there is no telephone at the patient's home. He is at a farmhouse eight miles away. No, we cannot get word to him. I'm sorry."

And my lover lying there, so white, so pitiable—dying!

Mac must have sensed our extremity. Once more he broke into a howl, this time of long-drawn-out agony. His master was going—out into the Unknown. Mac was singing his death chant. The collie's anguished wail penetrated sharply through the stillness of the night, and other dogs far away, took it up—a weird animal chorus for the dead!

But the sounds ceased. Suddenly Mac broke into an angry snarl. It acted like a spur to me. It roused me from the apathy that had settled upon me. It stirred me to action.

For a breathless moment I prayed—prayed to God in heaven that He would tell me what to do, that He would direct me.

And as if in answer to my prayer, a strange thought came to me.

I had never believed in ghosts or spirits. It always seemed ridiculous to me. But now I started up. Betty was in my mind. Without reasoning why, hardly knowing what I did, I went to the outer door and threw it open.

Out into the darkness I stepped. High overhead the stars shone like candle tips. But in our valley, darkness lay like a heavy blanket, the outbuildings indistinguishable masses, the trees near-by without form.

Impelled by some curious emotion I could not fathom, I stretched out my arms to the darkness. I felt like a pagan imploring his gods.

"Betty!" I cried. "Betty, if you are there, listen to me. Betty—please!"

I stopped. The leaves above me in the thick darkness were whispering, as if they talked with each other—excitedly.

"Betty!" I went on. "You loved Ralph. You used to love me, too. Ralph needs help. Help us both, Betty, my chum. If it was through your act that the peg was twisted and Ralph fell, don't let such evil remain on your soul. Don't you see, dear, it was wrong and hateful to hurt a good man like Ralph?"

Strange how I spoke! I would have been considered insane by anyone who heard me. But I did not think of that. I went on:

"Betty, you must know I have always loved you, dear—even when you tried to take my life. Even then I was ready to forgive you. If you can look down from the spirit world, you can look into my heart and know it is true. Help me now, dear, for the sake of our days together. I love Ralph. Help me save his life. Don't let hate and evil mar your soul for eternity. Undo this thing, if you have done it. For the love you had for us both, help me now!"

DAZEDLY I turned back to the room. Mac crouched by the door but he did not enter. As I neared Ralph's bed, I stopped in amazement. Despite my petition of a moment before, I could not believe what I saw. A strange light had appeared in the room. It seemed to come in at the window, to be moving toward the bed. It was a luminousness, more than anything else—like that strange marsh light we had seen in the woods.

Paralyzed, I could only watch. The light stopped beside the bed. Vaguely it began to gather essence. It became more tangible, though opaque like fog. And suddenly from the midst of it I saw eyes staring at me—Betty's eyes! Then her face, indistinct, featureless almost, but still her face.

And how cruel it was! All the hate, all the jealousy, all the evil of a fiend seemed stamped on those vague features. Sneering, contemptuous, conscious of some supernatural power beyond my understanding! Vicious hate!

A new force filled me—the force of love—love for Ralph. At that moment it seemed to me I was stronger than all the powers of darkness. I stretched out my hands appealingly.

"Betty," I called softly. "We both love him. You can help him—for love's sake!"

The phantom swayed. A new expression passed across

that evil countenance. A moment of hesitation. Then a decision.

Long fingers—Betty's fingers—stole out of that cloud of mist. Frantic with terror at what they might do, yet exerting all my will, I watched silently.

Slowly those fingers traveled over Ralph's forehead. Slowly they caressed his brow, moving in rhythmic motion over and across, over and across. Their motion seemed to lull me sleepily as I watched.

But was the color returning to my lover's face? Did I see his lids flutter, his breast rise where it had so long been still?

The phantom turned. A look of pain appeared in its vague features. The staring eyes closed. In an instant the form swayed. Had it been a mortal form, it might have tottered and fallen to the floor. But this Thing was not mortal. It moved away from the bed, changed back into that queer vapor. And as I watched, unbelieving, again came a sound like a sob. Before I knew it, the luminousness was gone and I was alone in the room, with Ralph.

I did not hesitate longer. I sprang to the bed. Ralph breathed! There *was* color in his cheeks, on his lips! I ran to the kitchen. Quickly I brought cool compresses and placed them on his forehead. I chafed his hands, rubbed his heart. For a long time I worked over him.

Then his eyes opened, gazing curiously at me. He sighed, as his body relaxed.

Mac slipped through the open door, giving vent to glad whimperings, eager barks of joy. He ran to his master, frantic with delight.

Ralph moved one hand to stroke his head. He looked up at me, smiling weakly. I saw the love in his look and I wanted to weep with joy.

Then his eyes closed. A deep sleep seemed to enfold him. But it was a normal, healthy sleep. The crisis was past.

It all seems like a fantastic dream as I look back on it. I wonder sometimes if I fell asleep and dreamed it all. Was it the doctor's good work and Ralph's strong body that actually combated the result of the fall? Ralph does not remember anything that happened, except that he came floating back out of darkness to find me beside him, and Mac whimpering. Yet the actions of the dog are more conclusive to me than my reason. I study Mac sometimes, and wish he could speak, to corroborate it all—if it was real and not a dream.

With the coming of daylight I was awakened from a trance-like state by the arrival of Doctor Hough. Ralph lay sleeping quietly on the bed; Mac, watchful, was curled up on the floor in front of it. The doctor's first glance was enough.

"Brave girl," he said quickly. "You've brought him through. The crisis came while I was away. But there's no question now. He'll live and get well. He owes his life to you."

"Not to me, Doctor. To—to her."

"Her?" he asked in surprise.

I told him everything. He listened quietly, testing Ralph's pulse, examining him as I spoke. He did not scoff. When I had finished, his look upon me was full of wise understanding.

"Do—do you believe it, Doctor?" I cried.

He studied me, thoughtfully. He nodded his head.

"We doctors—we general practitioners out here in the country—see strange things," he said, "stranger than we can understand, stranger than we shall ever understand. It's only a thin barrier at best between life and death. Who knows how simple it is to step across, and back again? It's easy for us to believe that impulses from this life carry over into some existence beyond."

He stared out of the window.

"Yes, I believe you," he said finally. "Quick to hate, your friend was just as quick to love. Stirred by one impulse, she was just as quick to react to another. Yes, I believe you."

"And will she come back to—to hate us again?" I asked.

"I cannot tell. Perhaps this was her test of fire before she could approach some higher plane of existence. Perhaps the force of love in you overcame the force of evil in her, and by her new act she purged her soul of hate. The agony in her face, of which you tell me, would indicate some great struggle through which she passed. If her spirit does return, I hope it will be in love."

AFTER long weeks, Ralph recovered. I nursed him back to health. And the next spring, when the earth gave promise of new life, when soft winds blew through our valley and birds came winging back from the southland to take up their residence there and make love, Ralph and I went to the little church in the village and were married. As I stood at the altar, it seemed to me for a moment that I felt again the presence of my rival. But the next instant the sensation was past.

Ralph and I stopped for a moment on the steps of the church as we came out, to gaze up at the hills—our hills—and down into the valley. A cloud came over the sun. But no longer did the valley seem to hold a menace. The cloud was edged with silver and gold as the sun's rays shone around it.

"It's symbolical of our love, Ralph," I said. "Shadows may come, but our love will encompass them and turn them to silver and gold."

He caught me in his arms and kissed me.

I never have seen the strange phantom since. Here in our valley is peace and contentment and love. Ralph is so good to me—so kind and gentle.

In a little while my time will be upon me. I will bear Ralph's child. Will the phantom come to me again? And if it does, will it be in hate—or love? Or is the soul of the wild tempestuous girl I loved safe at last in some higher existence, purged and clean, happy and content up there in the realms of the blessed?

I hope it is. For, after all, she was my chum.

A Specter That Visited a Dead Queen

MRS. ROMA LISTER, leader in the British colony at Rome, is authority for the following strange story which, she says, was told her by Prince Henry of Prussia who was staying at the Swedish court after the death of Queen Josephine.

The body of the Queen was lying in state in a chapel reached by a long corridor from an antechamber. In the antechamber sat one of the king's aides.

Suddenly the aide heard footsteps in the corridor. Looking up, he saw a woman dressed in black, with a long veil, whom he recognized as a lady-in-waiting and a dear friend of the Queen. The lady passed swiftly into the chapel.

Some time passed and when the woman did not reappear, the aide grew nervous. He approached the door of the chamber, and pushed it open.

Four great candles burned steadily. By their light he saw the body of the dead Queen sitting up in her coffin in her royal robes. By her side knelt the lady, her friend, and they conversed. The candles shone on the closed eyes and the cadaverous face of the Queen and showed her lips moving as she answered the questions of her devoted friend.

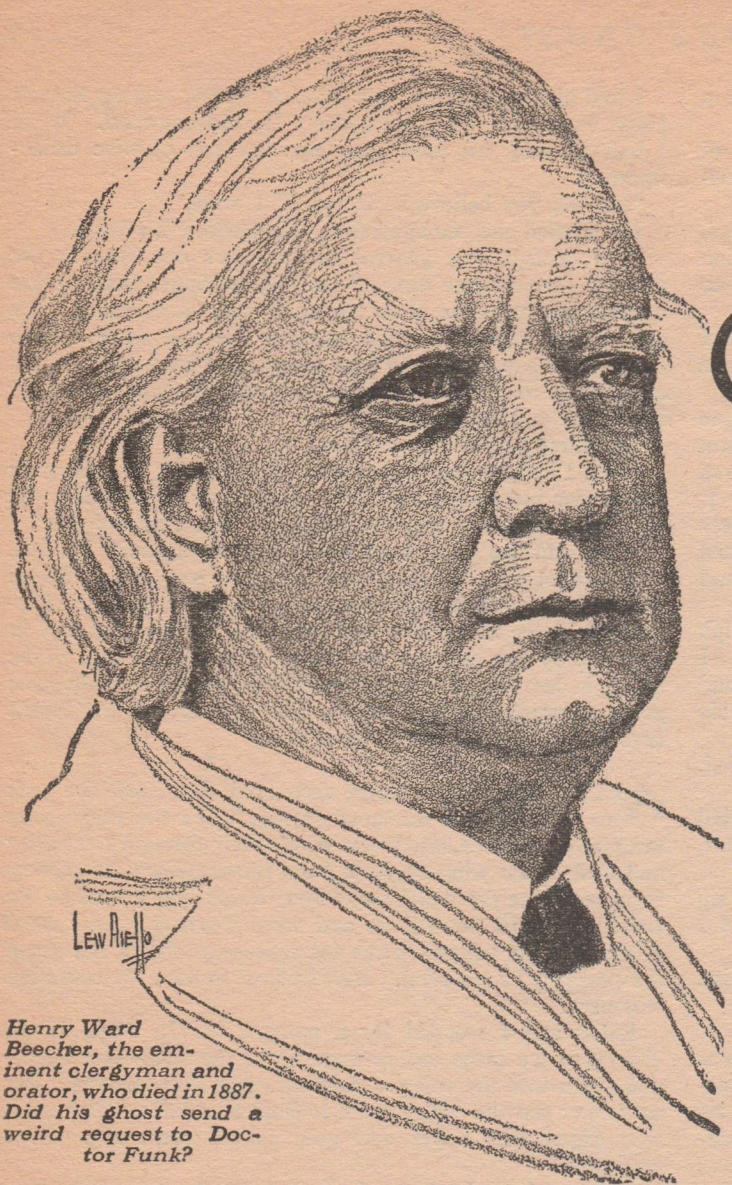
The aide staggered back, struck with terror, and fled from the room. But, nerving himself, he returned to investigate further, just as the clock struck twelve. When he entered the room, no one was there and the body of the Queen lay peacefully in its coffin.

Overcome with fright, the aide summoned help and ran to tell the King. Thereupon the King showed him a message he had just received, announcing the death of the lady-in-waiting, whose ghost had entered the Queen's death chamber.

How Corrected

When a Brooklyn medium uttered a few enigmatic words concerning a lost coin, who could have guessed that this mysterious message would change the life of a famous publisher—startle the greatest scientists of the day—and remove an error from the dictionary?

By STUART PALMER



Henry Ward Beecher, the eminent clergyman and orator, who died in 1887. Did his ghost send a weird request to Doctor Funk?

"HENRY WARD BEECHER is here!" The wavering voice filled the little room in a Brooklyn house where a small circle was gathered to investigate psychic phenomena. The elderly medium lay back in her rocking-chair, stiff in a trance. The listeners gasped, for it was in the early part of February, 1903, and the great preacher had been dead for a decade.

But one of the listeners, who had come incognito, was particularly interested. This was the Reverend Doctor Isaac Funk, head of the publishing firm of Funk and Wagnalls, whose skeptical investigation of spiritualism had become increasingly serious since the death of his close friend, Doctor Beecher.

Doctor Funk leaned forward. Could it be true that Beecher was in communication with the circle, through the medium's control "Jack Rakestraw"? There was no man in the world better able to test the authenticity of the phenomenon than himself, for he had known Beecher like a brother.

It was Doctor Funk's third visit to the little private circle in Brooklyn. Every Wednesday night for four years, he was told, the little old lady who acted as medium had joined her son and brother in what she called "a prayer-meeting with my family." No admission or collection had ever been taken, and the circumstances were such that Doctor Funk had confidence in the genuineness of the whole thing.

Before he had been admitted to the circle for the first time, he had given his word not to divulge the name of the medium, for the good woman insisted that notoriety would only spoil her communion with her dead relatives. This promise, by the way, was always kept by Doctor Funk, even in his published works dealing with the affair.

"Henry Ward Beecher is here," came the spirit voice again. "Has anyone here anything belonging to him?"

There was a moment's silence. Doctor Funk whispered to Mr. Irving S. Roney, his business associate, that he had in his pocket a letter from Doctor Beecher's pastoral successor. Might this be what the spirit meant?

Clear and loud, the answer came, in "Rakestraw's" gruff voice: "No, Mr. Beecher is worried—worried about something——" There was a pause, and then the voice continued more swiftly:

"I must speak for Doctor Beecher, as he has not been on this side of the Veil long enough to project his voice back to you. He is—I get it now—he is worried over a coin—a coin called the *Widow's Mite*. It is out of place, and he looks to *you*"—the voice grew lower and seemed to ring in Doctor Funk's ear—"he looks to you to return it!"

THE good Doctor was nonplussed. "But I have no coin of that name."

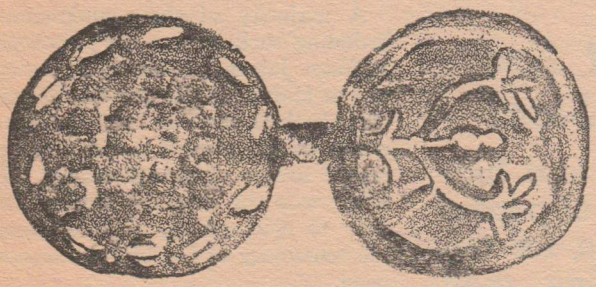
"All I know is that the coin is out of place and Doctor Beecher looks to you to return it. He says that you alone can find it."

"Can you ask Doctor Beecher to talk to me directly, or to tell me where this coin is?"

The voice came more faintly. "He cannot speak to you yet. But I once led the choir in his church, and he is using me as a spokesman. He says that you must return the *Widow's Mite*."

Suddenly Doctor Funk remembered a coin of that name. Years before, in preparing the illustrations for the Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary, he had borrowed a copper coin of ancient Hebrew mintage from a collector in Brook-

a Spirit the Standard Dictionary



This enlarged drawing shows the two faces of the Widow's Mite, *the ancient Hebrew coin that played a startling part in this true drama of the supernatural*

Doctor Isaac Funk, founder of the Literary Digest, *who carried out the astounding instructions of the spirit world*

lyn. But he could not remember the man's name, and the coin, of course, had been returned after being photographed.

He resolved to test the control. "Where is this coin?"

The spirit answered with another question. "Is there a safe—an iron safe—in Plymouth Church?"

Doctor Funk could remember none. Churches, as a rule, deal in the treasures which none "break in and steal," and have little use for safes.

"ANYWAY, the *Widow's Mite* is in an iron safe, lost and forgotten under some papers. It must be returned. And you can return it."

This seemed to be all that Doctor Funk could get out of the elusive control, and after a short interval the medium awoke. So far as Doctor Funk was aware, his identity was unknown to everyone present except his companion. There seemed little chance of fraud.

The next day he called his brother, Mr. B. F. Funk, into his office. The younger Mr. Funk was head of the Business Department of the publishing house.

"Do you remember a coin called the *Widow's Mite* that we used in illustrating the Standard?"

His brother thought a moment and then nodded. "The one we sent to the mint to determine its genuineness? Yes, I remember it."

"What was done with it?"

"I remember ordering it sent back to the owner, with thanks."

Doctor Funk nodded. A few minutes later his partner Mr. Wagnalls, and Mr. E. J. Wheeler, then editor of the *Literary Digest*, confirmed this. The *Widow's Mite* had certainly been sent back to its owner, a Mr. West.

Still, Doctor Funk was anxious to test the matter as fully as was possible. There had been something in the voice from the Beyond which impressed him with its truth and sincerity.

There was no iron safe in the Plymouth Church. But there were two such containers in the outer offices of Doctor Funk's own firm!

The cashier was called. He remembered the whole *Widow's Mite* affair, and insisted that he had carried out the orders of his superiors and sent the coin back to its owner. But the files showed no record of this.

It was decided to search the two safes, and the whole party followed Raymond, the cashier, into the room where the two safes had stood for years. The first one was in constant use, and a quick search of it proved fruitless. There was nothing hidden away in it.

Then the smaller, older strong-box was opened. Only the two owners and the cashier knew its combination. Slowly the deposit of years was removed. Old records, forgotten papers and books—all were carefully searched and then laid aside.

THE men drew closer as the last drawer was withdrawn. Then they drew back with a start.

Underneath the débris of ten years lay a yellowed envelope, inscribed with Mr. West's name.

Feverishly it was opened—and to the astonishment of the searchers, not one, but *two* ancient Hebrew coins were found!

One coin was large, and its copper had turned quite black with the years. The other, slightly smaller, was lighter in color.

As Doctor Funk examined them, the cashier remembered that there had been some question as to which of the two was genuine. He searched in his files, and found a letter from the mint at Philadelphia, crediting the lighter as the true coin. In making up the plate for the dictionary, the lighter coin had, therefore, been used. But it had never been returned, and the voice from Beyond had been right, after all!

However, Doctor Funk was pre-eminently an investigator and he did not let his enthusiasm run away with his judgment. He had been told to return the coin, but to whom did it now belong? Professor West, he ascertained, was dead, and his collection of coins had been sold to a man in Baltimore for $17,000. Should the *Widow's Mite* go to the heirs of Mr. West, or to the man who had purchased his entire collection?

And which coin was the *Widow's Mite?* There seemed to be a slight doubt in his mind, and in the minds of his associates, in spite of the letter from the mint.

At any rate, Doctor Funk mailed both coins to the new Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint, an expert in ancient coins. In the meantime he resolved upon a test.

He could not understand why Doctor Beecher should be interested in the affair, and the Professor not. Why had not Mr. West's voice asked for the return of his own coin?

ON the following Wednesday night he again visited the psychic circle in Brooklyn. Late in the evening the voice of "Jack Rakestraw" came from the medium's lips.

"I have a question," Doctor Funk declared immediately. "Can you tell me which of the coins is genuine?"

He asked the question out of a clear sky, but the answer came without delay.

"The dark one is genuine," announced the spirit. "It is the true Lepton, dated at about 105 B. C. and the other is an imitation."

Doctor Funk was surprised. Did this prove fraud somewhere? Was the medium, or the spirit, simply making wild guesses? There was good authority for the decision that had been made—that the lighter coin was the genuine one.

He went on. "Where shall I return this coin?"

There was some hesitancy on the part of the spirit. At last it answered: "I cannot say. Doctor Beecher is not here at present, and I have only a message from him. He says——"

Doctor Funk was losing patience. "Tell me, then, of whom did I borrow the coin?"

A longer wait came, and then: "A man in Brooklyn."

This much was true. Professor West had been in charge of a girl's high school in Brooklyn Heights for years. The voice went on: "I don't know his name. He lived near here, and I know that he had something to do with girls and with books."

The séance ended, and left Doctor Funk puzzled. The messages seemed inconclusive. Particularly since the spirit voice had apparently made a mistake in the color of the right coin.

His doubt remained until he received a letter from Albert A. Norris, acting superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint. Mr. Norris referred to a book by a numismatist named Madden and proved conclusively that a mistake had been made in the previous verdict, and that the darker coin was the genuine one, valued at $2,500!

"The true *Widow's Mite,*" Mr. Norris said in his letter, "is so called because, being the lowest valued coin in the Holy Land, it must have been the one cast into the alms box by the poor woman mentioned in the Bible. Its true name is Lepton, and its value is half a denarius. It may be recognized by a knob in the center, surrounded by six stars or lobes, and it bears the name Jehonatan Hamelik. The lighter colored coin enclosed is spurious."

The voice from Beyond had been right, not only in the location of the coin, but in the designation of the genuine one!

Doctor Funk was entirely convinced. He lost no time in returning the true *Widow's Mite* to the son of the late Professor Charles E. West, and the plate in the Standard Dictionary was changed to conform with the Mint Superintendent's verdict. Both copies of the Dictionary are to be found in most public libraries, and comparison of the two *Widow's Mites* is interesting.

He also announced the full result of his investigations, withholding only the name of the medium, in accordance with his promise. Complete affidavits were made out and signed by all the parties concerned, and the entire collection of documents was photographed and copies sent to scholars and psychologists all over the world.

A majority of these authorities—including such men as the philosopher William James, professor of psychology at Harvard—decided that the case was absolute proof of the existence of either an active spirit world, or an untapped source of mental energy. The affair won the skeptical Doctor Funk over to spiritualism, and he devoted the remainder of his life to the movement.

Only one thing seemed unsatisfactory to Doctor Funk. Why had not his friend Beecher spoken to him directly, and why had the spirit bothered about so mundane a thing as a coin?

SEVERAL months after the *Widow's Mite* affair when Doctor Funk was still thinking of these questions, he chanced to attend a séance held by a group who were strangers to him.

For a long time the group sat in the darkened room, awaiting developments. Certain vague manifestations had taken place—a tambourine had jingled in the dark—but there was nothing to impress the Doctor.

Suddenly, he heard his name called. He leaned forward.

"Funk—can you see me?" It was Beecher's voice, clearly recognizable, though weak and far away.

"Can't you see me?" The voice came imploringly, and a hand parted the curtains. Behind them, dim but distinct in the red light, was the face of Henry Ward Beecher!

"I could not come before. It is almost impossible now," the spirit whispered. "But I wanted you to believe. I——"

Doctor Funk asked about the *Widow's Mite.* "That is of no importance," he was told. "It was only a means of convincing you. Next to you, West was my best friend on earth. The conjunction of our three personalities gave me strength enough to do what was done with the coin."

Funk waited tensely, but the phantom was already fading.

"Good-by," it said, adding a nickname which only Beecher had ever used in referring to the Reverend Doctor.

Then the figure sank down to the ground like a flame exhausted, and disappeared. But just as it went, so the Doctor always maintained, a firm hand gripped his shoulder for a moment, in farewell.

Eyes That See Through Steel

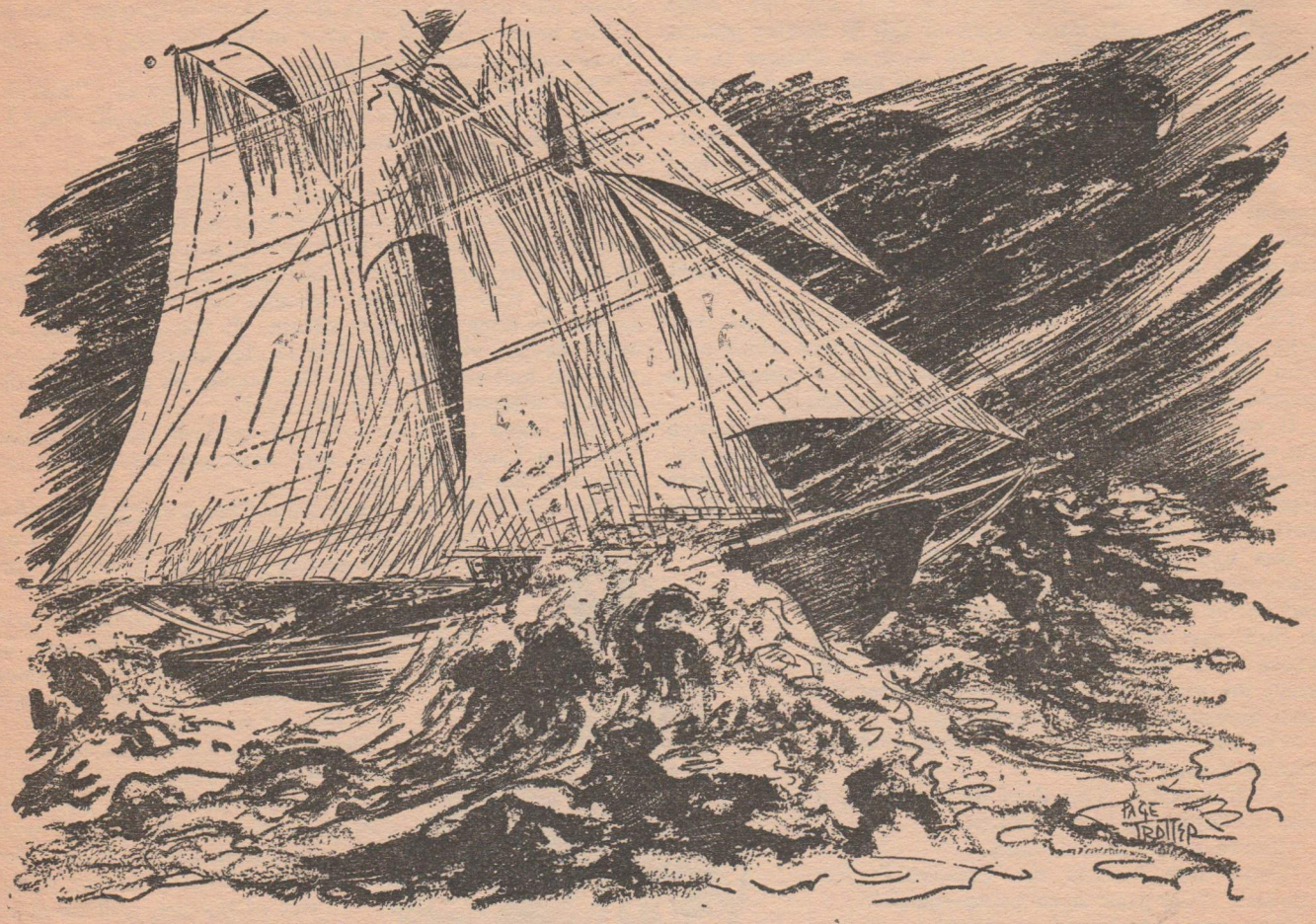
The coin had lain hidden under a pile of papers in a locked safe, for ten years. No living man even remembered its existence.

How, then, did the medium find out about it? Did she really receive a message from the spirit of Henry Ward Beecher? Read the actual facts!

The Invisible Man at the Helm

The Story of Jess Tiverton

By WIN BROOKS



Old, lonely, grief-stricken, the skipper found a new happiness in the companionship of a beloved phantom! Was he crazy—or did some unknown power really guide his ship through storm and danger?

RUTH McKELVIE was fair haired, wind freckled, straight as a young tree. It was her eyes probably, eyes as blue as the zenith of a winter sky at sea, which caught Jess Tiverton. She was twenty-five then, Jess turning forty-seven. After they were married Ruth continued to teach the fifth grade of the Bradley school in Winthrop while her husband sought fish with the *Blue Belle*, second best love.

You might suppose, considering the difference in their ages and education, that theirs was a course precarious, destined by all odds to end up on some submerged reef of incompatibility. It was not so. She was a woman wise in many ways and not without a knowledge of man's shortcomings. That which she gleaned beneath the surface of Jess Tiverton's rough exterior remained foremost in her vision when the false glamor of courting days had worn off. There was for her no disillusionment.

As for Jess, those were no doubt the happiest days of his life, short-lived days, to be sure, but made up in part for their brevity by their overwhelming sweetness. Very often it is true that a man who has not known womankind until comparatively late in life discovers in the companionship a happiness and understanding more complete than his fellows.

He was a good man on the fishing grounds; his was a well-faring, contented crew, the *Blue Belle* one of the staunchest and fastest of the fleet's two-masters. Never a man to drive, he had yet accomplished much, and in the record of fish tonnage and quick trips his vessel stood high.

Never a man to drive; on the other hand, never a man to quibble. What orders Jess gave aboardship were spoken in quiet tones save when necessity ruled otherwise. In the quality of his voice in those days, however, there was a note which commanded respect, and respect he had from his crew and his associates in the Banks fleet. And, for a long time, admiration also.

TRIPPER TARBOY, George Suttle and one or two others will tell you that the two years of Jess Tiverton's married life were supremely happy ones. A strangely silent man for the most part heretofore, although good-humored enough for a fishing master, he became a whistling, singing captain—an uncommon occurrence in the fleet—ready always to pass a little better than the time of day with any member of his crew, never hesitant in lending a helping hand where

he deemed such aid to be needed. Not a marked change, for Jess Tiverton had never been other than a good fellow, but an obvious surface indication of an increasingly pleasant frame of mind.

A crew accepts its master as it finds him—or finds another master. Give a fisherman an inch and he'll take just that. No more. The *Blue Belle's* crew took their captain's new happiness just as it was proffered them, nor attempted to encroach upon his good nature; they allowed that good nature to expand and envelop them. The results were immediately apparent. Jess Tiverton and his *Blue Belle* brought increasingly larger hauls of fish in shorter periods of time than ever before. There were no changes in the personnel of the vessel's crew, ever an indication to careful owners of a money-making boat.

The second autumn following their marriage, Ruth Tiverton failed to return to her teaching, and aboard the *Blue Belle* there ran a rumor that Jess had high hopes of a prospective member of his crew. The man himself, of course, made no allusion to the affair, but they marked that he ceased his whistling and was given to long periods of silent thought.

On December 17th, when the *Blue Belle* had been two days only on Brown's Bank there occurred that which men who have grown old with Jess Tiverton still speak of in hushed tones and with a wagging of sage heads.

It was a fine clear day for winter fishing, a light breeze out of the southwest and a comparative calm upon the sea. Twenty-eight men of the vessel were over the side in their fourteen dories, the farthest of them not a mile away. They worked fast and sure, with a promise of Christmas ashore.

Jess was below; besides himself only his mate, George Suttle, a capable Gloucesterman, and Farley Manser, the cook, remained aboard. A little past noonday Jess came up forward where Suttle was idly splicing cable line. Beneath the brown of the captain's features the mate distinguished an alarming pallor.

"Get your horn going," Jess ordered. "We're heading home."

Just like that! Two days on the Bank, a hold not beginning to fill with fish.

"You're sick?" Suttle asked.

"Don't stop to ask me questions," Jess snapped. "Get your horn going—quick!"

The mate, filled with wonder, complied—two long blasts on the fog-horn repeated at intervals of a minute, for five minutes.

To windward where the dories worked, men ceased their pulling of trawl-lines and, themselves wondering, made a course for their ship standing plainly within sight.

IN almost shorter time than it takes to tell, the *Blue Belle's* dories were aboard and stowed, the anchor broken out, mainsail, foresail, jib and jack set and drawing and she was off for Boston.

Only a light breeze out of the southwest, as I told you, and it gave little evidence of growing stronger. Yet it was a homing wind and the *Blue Belle,* light in her ballast with only her ice, gave her lee rail to the sea and made off on a port run. A fast boat always, more so in a fair blow and to windward but speedy in any breeze, she was not fast enough for Jess Tiverton that day.

A changed man, he paced the windward deck of his vessel barking orders in a language the key to which they never believed he possessed. Now and again he took the wheel himself, trying to draw out of her every bit of speed of which she was capable. Fair time they made; no better.

About sunset the wind swung to the southeast and came on to blow, a strong breeze at first, with the darkness a moderate gale. The *Blue Belle* went hard over and as the seas began to make they broke steadily over her bows, racing aft across the gurry kids and smashing against the deckhouse. She needed a reef in jib sail then to keep her head up.

"Be better going if we claw in one forward," Suttle got up courage enough to suggest.

"You'll take no reefs, mister," Jess answered. "Not this night. She'll sail as she be or she'll not sail at all. And I'll need no help as to her handling."

THAT was enough for Suttle. Enough for any man, for that matter. They sailed her that night with no reef in any sail while Jess stood his deck with neither food nor sleep. It blew a moderate gale, a half gale, a full gale, and Jess Tiverton, who no longer whistled and said kind words, cursed his crew to greater efforts. It was an all-hands job with life-lines rigged fore and aft, for nearly every sea was a breach, and no man slept. The wonder of it is she carried through without mishap of any kind.

That crew asked no questions, received no information. The men knew only that they must get home, that Jess Tiverton was in a hurry.

The *Blue Belle* beat up past the Graves at daybreak of as nasty a winter morning as you'd care to see. When she swung alongside T-Wharf, Jess was the first man off.

Some say he reached home before his wife died, that he was with her at the end, his strong, brown hands clasping hers. Others tell you Ruth died during that night. Jess himself never said.

There was a baby who could not live, the doctor predicted. Jess Tiverton thought otherwise. For three months he did not go to sea; when he sailed again, Young Jess was as healthy as any youngster of his age, well cared for in the home of the captain's sister.

It early became apparent, following Jess Tiverton's return to his vessel, that his whole heart and soul were centered in his boy. The love and the adoration which had belonged to the woman with whom he found happiness were transferred to Young Jess.

Never once aboard the *Blue Belle* did Jess make reference to the loss of his wife. Nor did he ever speak of that driving trip home in a gale of wind from Brown's Bank.

How had Jess Tiverton known that his wife needed him that day? The men of his ship asked that question among themselves, not of Jess. And the answer to it was ever a mooted one, although most agreed it could be traced to a premonition inspired by a knowledge of her condition. Perhaps Jess himself would not have answered differently.

Sonny was only a boy when his daddy took him to sea. No one could have foreseen the weird drama that lay ahead

The story of that trip got around, as such stories are bound to get around after a fashion, and it was told on other vessels out of Boston. All who heard had occasion some years later to recall it.

The *Blue Belle's* captain became a counterpart of his old self in the days before he had known Ruth McKelvie. Gone the whistling and singing; gone also the willingness to fraternize to such an extent with the members of his crew. A good skipper he remained. And a good "fin" man, which covers the necessary qualities of a leader in the Banks fleet.

It was when his boy was about a year old that Jess first began to speak of him to George Suttle.

"I got a fellar growing up to home who's going to push you for your job some day," he told the mate one trip.

"Well, now, I wonder," George retorted. "Got sea legs yet? And a sense of fish?"

"Got big blue eyes like—like———Sea legs, hell! Wait till he's growed, man."

That was the nearest he ever came to the mention of his wife's name in Suttle's presence. But reference to the boy became an almost daily occurrence with him after that.

"Getting big," he'd say. "Ought to heft him now."

Sometimes on a voyage he would converse with Tripper Tarboy, an old man who had sailed with him for years.

"Have to come up to the house and see him when we get home, Trip. Most as big as a trawl tub now. And strong as a gale of wind off Provincetown."

Old Tripper, who was lank and brown as an ancient mast and had a lower jaw shaped like the bow of a clipper ship, would nod his grizzled head in sympathetic understanding.

WHEN the boy was six years old Jess Tiverton bought for him one of those little model sailboats which are the delight of every child. The next trip he was on Suttle's ear with an account of the happening.

"Held that boat in his hands just looking at it all morning. In the afternoon I took him down the beach and showed him how to sail her. But he didn't need much showing, I'm telling you. She only capsized two or three times—and she's got no keel to speak of, at that.

"You want to know what he said to me after she went over the first time?" he asked, pride in the rising inflection of his voice. "'She needs weight on the bottom, Daddy.' What do you think of that?

"I suggested he could take off some of her sail and what do you suppose he said to that? 'You'd spoil her, Daddy, taking the sail off, and she'll go better if you just weight her on the bottom.'"

"He'll take no reefs," Suttle chuckled.

"That he won't," agreed Jess, and went forward to hunt up old Tarboy and tell the story all over again.

After a while he talked so much about his boy that men at the wharf got in the habit of hailing him with, "How's the youngster, Jess?" "When you shippin' that new mate, Tiverton?"; or just, "How's the new mate makin' out to home?" They poked no fun at Jess Tiverton because of his enthusiasm; they knew the man too well for that. And Jess, recognizing their interest as sincere, basked in the sunshine of their friendship and his own hopes.

When Young Jess was twelve years old he went his first trip to sea on the last voyage the *Blue Belle* ever made. It was July, with schooling at an end until autumn, and Jess figured the boy was old enough to make a start. He had been talking about it for weeks, making up to Suttle, who by this time knew from the captain's description the youngster's every mood and characteristic.

With his father, Young Jess went down to the boat at T-Wharf late one afternoon when the *Blue Belle* was "iced" and had her herring aboard, ready to sail when the breeze sprang up at sundown. He was a little fellow for his age with fair hair inclined to curl down over his forehead and eyes as deeply blue as his mother's. His father took him aboard and introduced him all around.

"A good hand and bound to be a real fisherman," Jess said.

"Think you're goin' to like shippin' on a smelly old fish boat?" Tripper Tarboy asked him.

"You bet I am," the little chap answered.

Before the *Blue Belle* sailed, word got about the wharf that Jess Tiverton's prospective mate had finally arrived and a number of men from the other boats came to wish him well.

The vessel went down the harbor with the sunset, old Tripper Tarboy at the wheel and Young Jess by his side.

"You swing her over like this," Tripper was saying, "and keep her foremast leanin' onto that island there; that's Peddock's. Here, feel of her."

Not tall enough to stand over the wheel, Young Jess spread his arms and scarcely touched the spokes on either side. George Suttle happened along and stood for a while watching the fun.

"HE'S a-sailin' of her right enough," cackled Tripper, his wrinkled hands holding the helm steady.

"That he is," said George. "I'm thinking I'll have to be looking for a new berth shortly."

It was the Grand Banks that trip and Young Jess had experienced his spell of sickness and caught his sea legs before they passed Sable Island. He had the spare bunk aft in the cabin with his father and Suttle, and what they did not attempt to teach him about a ship's handling and rigging wasn't worth knowing. He was a capable as well as a lovable chap, and the manner in which he would repeat aloud their instructions would have been laughable but for the sincerity of his efforts.

The *Blue Belle's* captain elected to fish the south outside shoals of the Grand Banks and met with fair success. Young Jess went as third dory mate with Tarboy and Clem Haliday and learned from those old-timers how best to snub his hooks, bait and lay his trawl-lines and, what is more important, pull them afterwards.

The avidity with which he seized upon every little detail of knowledge, his eagerness to learn and his ability to retain what they taught him pleased Jess in no little degree. Nor was the boy's father the only one to experience pleasure in the teaching of Young Jess; Suttle and other members of the *Blue Belle's* crew, particularly Tarboy, took a keen interest in his advancement.

"Think he's going to make the grade?" Jess asked Suttle one evening of a day when the fish had been coming particularly well and the outlook was excellent for an early

Was This Father's Love Stronger Than Death?

When Captain Tiverton sat in his cabin, talking aloud to an invisible guest, the sailors said he was "batty."

But—was he? Read the whole story of the bewildering events on that haunted schooner—and then decide for yourself whether the eyes of faith can see more clearly than those of unbelief.

Here is a story of great pathos and beauty that you will remember for a long time.

trip home. "Does he show any promise as a fisherman?"

"I'm ready to step out after this trip," the mate replied, smiling. "He knows as much as I do now."

Heavy weather seldom bothers a good fisherman. Given a staunch-ribbed vessel and the luck of the fleet, those well-laid two-masters, ranging anywhere from fifty to one hundred and twenty-five tons, make a go of it in any sort of wind and sea—provided that they have plenty of water beneath their keels. But ships have foundered and fishermen have come to grief when caught with shoal water on their lee side during a blow. That has been so since ever the first market fisherman put out to sea; will remain so until the world decides to eat no more fish.

There is an element in the life of the Banks fisherman, however, more treacherous than hurricane or mountainous sea, shoal water on the sands or quick water on the ledges. It is fog.

Men who have spent nearly all their lives upon the water may speak to you lightly of wind and rough weather, yet tell you they know fear when fog sets in. Heavy as a sea may be, blow a gale ever so strong, you can see what is ahead and have a definite knowledge of what to expect and prepare for. Not so in a fog.

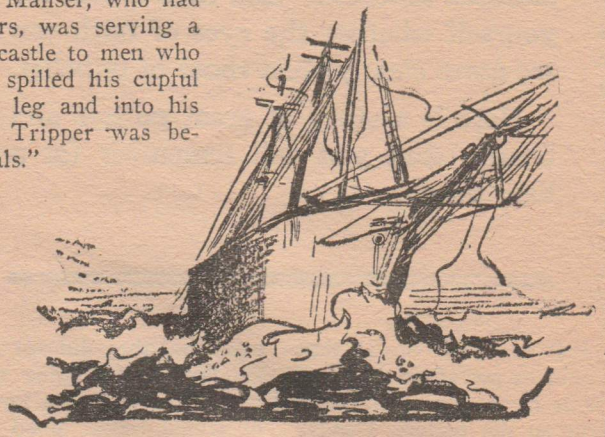
Fog shut down on the south shoals of the Grand Banks on the 17th of July when the *Blue Belle* was fair loaded for a run home the next day. There may be spots on the Atlantic where fog sets in more quickly and with greater density than upon the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. But they have yet to be located.

Jess Tiverton had smelled the fog coming; no boat of his vessel was over the side when it arrived.

"We'll call it a trip, I guess," he told George Suttle. "When it lifts we'll get along for home."

The *Blue Belle* rode at anchor that night in thirty-six fathoms with a calm sea and a fog as thick as a horse blanket. From the deck the masthead lights were barely visible. There was a double watch and the fog-horn was sounded every sixty seconds. Below deck forward, men played cards or reclined in their bunks, smoking and talking of the prospects for a fair voyage home.

At exactly eleven o'clock Farley Manser, who had been Jess Tiverton's cook for years, was serving a round of coffee and pie in the forecastle to men who laughed when old Tripper Tarboy spilled his cupful of steaming liquid down his pants leg and into his boot, and jocularly intimated that Tripper was becoming too old to "handle his vittals."



Fifteen minutes later the *Blue Belle*, or what remained of her, rested on gray sand at the bottom of those thirty-six fathoms of water. Eleven of her crew were with her. Tragedy that night for many homes. Greater tragedy for Jess Tiverton. For Young Jess drowned on his first trip to sea.

OUT of the darkness and the fog, off her course and speeding between fourteen and sixteen knots against all maritime regulations governing the movements of steamers in a fog, came the *Triumph*, pride of the Barthlemess line, New York bound from Cherbourg and overdue.

The watch of the *Blue Belle* saw her lights only when the thirty-two thousand ton express loomed immediately above them. Time only to shout an unheard warning. Time only to sound the fog-horn in one quick, anguished wail. The steel bow of the liner split the fishing schooner from starboard bow to port 'midships, snapping her foremast like a stick of brittle coral. Men were crushed to death and men were drowned by the flooding sea even before the *Blue Belle* sank. She went down almost immediately, however, while the *Triumph*, only jarred by the impact, slowed down, reversed her engines and came finally to a dead stop an eighth of a mile away from the scene of the collision.

No need to describe the horror attending that scene nor the manner of Young Jess' death. None could save him.

The liner, her havoc wrought, steamed splendidly up, brought her battery of searchlights to play on the wreckage and lowered her port-side lifeboats. They picked up the survivors and recovered what bodies it was possible to recover. Two hours later the *Triumph* was again steaming towards New York, speed undiminished, and her wireless was flashing the first cryptic message of the disaster to a world where fishermen count but little in the day's news.

It would have been melodramatic had Jess Tiverton fought against his rescuers. He did not do so; there was in his nature no melodrama of that sort. Nor would he take advantage of the *Triumph's* offer to send his own version of the tragedy through the air.

"I've nothing to tell," he told the *Triumph's* master. And he had nothing to tell, for until they landed in New York he spoke no other word.

"JESS TIVERTON will never sail again," they said along the water-front. In Boston, Gloucester and Nantucket men who knew his story shook their heads.

"The sea has beaten him," was their verdict.

"All his heart and all his soul, if a man has a soul were given to that youngster," George Suttle told old Tarboy. "A man can only fight so long," he added significantly.

Josiah Mulvaney and James Tempor, the *Blue Belle's* owners, sent for Jess to come to Salem.

"There's talk you'll never take out another boat," Mulvaney put it straight up to him.

"I have no boat to take out," Jess answered simply.

"Which means, I take it, that you'll sail again providing you get the boat?"

"Why not?" Answer enough there.

"We're going to build a new boat. You're the man to have her if you want to," Tempor said. Then they asked him for specifications and whether he had any ideas of his own he might wish to incorporate in the new vessel.

"Have her built from the *Blue Belle's* prints," said Jess. "There's no better boat afloat than she was."

And Mulvaney, who was an understanding sort of man despite an exterior as sharply cold as cracked ice, advised: "Go down and help them build her. And name her what you wish."

But after he had gone, Tempor remarked: "Jess Tiverton is getting old. He will not sail any boat for long."

"He is past sixty," Mulvaney said. "Too old a man to hold up against his loss."

Jess Tiverton was getting old; sorrow laid gaunt hands upon his shoulders and weighed them down. But he went down to Sib Benton's shipyard at Gloucester and superintended the building of the new craft he was to sail. They laid her keel line while he looked on and he was there when they bent her ribs in place.

"I want the best job you've done," he told Benton, a strange catch in his voice. "I won't be sailing her long and I want the finest fishing boat in the fleet for the one who takes her over."

He never left the shipyard till she slid down the ways one raw March day when it seemed that spring must never come.

George Suttle was there at the launching. And Tripper Tarboy. They were near enough to Jess to hear him say: "I christen you 'Ruth McKelvie.' Good luck and a bundle of fish, and God be with you." (*Continued on page* 83)

The Wraith in the Picture

A ghostly finger wrote a message of doom on the wall of his chamber—but this skeptic refused to heed the warning. Breath-taking developments followed

An Absolutely TRUE STORY

By WILLIAM H. CRAWFORD
Noted New York Reporter

The woman in the portrait was almost the exact replica of the vivacious girl at my side

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Crawford does not believe in the supernatural—but, nevertheless, he had as uncanny an experience as you ever read about. He has presented the facts exactly as they happened, and his affidavit, attesting the accuracy of every detail of his narrative, is on file in this office.

IN 1912 there was a strong possibility that Lloyd George would overthrow the Asquith Government. So I was determined to take time by the forelock and publish the first interview with the new Prime Minister of England.

In order to secure this "beat," I planned to have the article in type, ready to publish the day Lloyd George took office. I cabled my plans to him, assuring him that the interview would not appear in print until he had actually become Prime Minister. He agreed to give me the interview, making it for April 2nd. I caught the first boat leaving New York, and was on hand two days ahead of my appointment.

True to his word, Lloyd George gave me a wonderful interview, definitely outlining what his policies would be as Prime Minister. I got his final approval on the afternoon of April 6th. I was elated at the success of my mission.

I planned to sail on the first boat headed for New York and to carry my treasured manuscript with me in order to save heavy cable tolls. Just at that moment the London newspapers were filled with glowing accounts of a new ocean greyhound, which they described as a floating palace. This ship was scheduled to sail April 10th on its first transatlantic voyage. I immediately engaged passage on it.

Southampton is a sleepy little village compared to the great city of London, so I decided to spend the four intervening days looking over the big town. My first step was to file a copy of my manuscript with our London correspondent, with instructions to cable it should Lloyd George come into power before I reached New York. This was a useless precaution, for the upset did not come for two years—but that is another story.

An hour later I was strolling down Piccadilly, without a care in the world, when I heard someone call, "Curly! Oh, Curly!" (My nickname at the University.)

I turned and saw a large automobile drawing up to the curb, and a distinguished-looking Britisher getting out be-

fore the car had finally stopped, so anxious was he to greet me. I immediately recognized an old college chum. Since this story concerns his intimate family affairs, which he might not want published, I shall call him "Lord X."

"Why didn't you let me know you were here?" he said rather reproachfully, as he grabbed both my hands.

I explained that it was a hurried trip. I had been extremely busy since my arrival, and was returning to New York four days later. Then rather jocularly I added:

"Besides, I was not sure that since you had become a real, live Lord, you would want to continue your acquaintanceship with a plebeian."

His Lordship insisted that I must spend the rest of my time with him. He made the invitation so urgent that in an hour I had gone to the Ritz, packed my belongings and was on my way in his high-powered car to his ancestral home.

THE castle was located in Hants County, seventy miles from London and an equal distance from Southampton. The country became mountainous as we neared his home. It was a succession of undulating hills, possessing an indescribable scenic beauty. When we reached the summit of a peak, he pointed ahead, saying:

"That is my home over on the next hill."

As we drew nearer, I noted that the architecture of the castle was nondescript. Later I learned that the older section of the building was built in the time of Henry II. The succeeding earls had added to it bit by bit so that the finished product represented no particular period.

Presently we drew up in front of a tremendous archway, closed by a portcullis. Of course, such precautions against attack were not needed now, but the formality was kept up as a matter of family tradition. The ancient earl, seated on his charger, used to blow a mighty blast on his horn as a signal for his retainers to lower the bridge and raise the portcullis. The present earl blew his Klaxon auto horn for the same purpose.

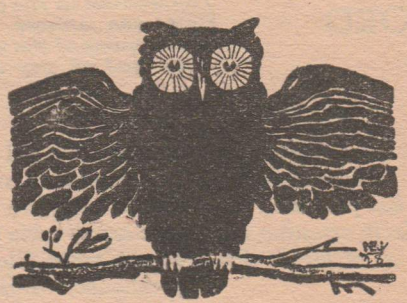
Presently I was introduced to his mother, the Dowager Countess, and Lady Patricia, his youngest and only unmarried sister, then a girl of nineteen. His introduction was quite simple.

"Mother, this is Curly Crawford, of whom you heard me speak so often."

This introduction seemed immediately to make me one of the family. Lady Patricia, who, contrary to the usual opinion concerning British nobility, was a very vivacious girl, took it upon herself to entertain me. Neither the Countess nor his Lordship had a chance to get in a word edgewise.

As we had arrived just before dark, dinner was quickly served. At the dinner table Lady Patricia said:

"I have often heard Buddy tell about the time you slept on a tombstone to win a bet, and how you boys had a big supper with the money you won. Did he ever tell you about our family ghost?"



I am not at all interested in specters, but having a rather keen eye for feminine pulchritude, I decided it would be pleasant to have so charming a young miss relate a spooky story to me. So I assured her:

"Jack has been very remiss. He never told me a word about the family wraith. Won't you do so?"

Her mother interrupted by saying, "Mr. Crawford is not interested in our family affairs."

But on my insistence, Lady Patricia began her story.

"About one hundred and fifty years ago, Lady Patricia (Patricia is a family name), fell in love with the Earl of Northumberland. She was a frail girl. Her parents objected to her marrying, but she pleaded so hard that they finally consented to an engagement on the understanding that the marriage would not take place for a year. If at the end of that time she was more robust, then she could marry. Before the year had expired, war broke out between England and France, and the Earl, with his retainers, joined the British standard.

"Lady Patricia was heart-broken at the parting. She was certain that she would never see her lover again. Either he would be killed, or she would die before his return. Her health failed rapidly, until she was a mere shadow of her former frail self. She was rarely able to leave her apartment and lived almost exclusively within the walls of her bedchamber.

"It was nearly six months later that the Earl of Northumberland's squire rode up to the castle. He had been riding so hard that his charger dropped dead while waiting for the bridge to be lowered. He brought the news of his master's tragic death.

"'Just before he died,' the squire told Lady Patricia, 'he handed me this locket and told me to cut off a lock of his hair. Then with his own hands he placed it beside the one you had given him, and told me to deliver it to you in person with the message that he would be waiting for you on the other side.'

"LADY PATRICIA swooned and never regained consciousness. She died that night.

"A short time after her burial the servants came rushing down into the big hall, trembling with fear, saying that they had heard dreadful moanings coming from Lady Patricia's apartment. The earl, a gruff old soldier who took little stock in old wives' tales, rushed to Lady Patricia's room intending to punish the culprit who was attempting to play a joke on his servants. He found no one. After roundly scoring the servants for their cowardice, he dismissed the subject. But it was not to be so easily dismissed as he thought. Noises were heard frequently on succeeding nights. The servants swore they could see a white wraith floating in Lady Patricia's room and had heard the furniture being moved from place to place. They were so frightened that they refused to enter that wing of the castle. Other servants were called in, but they, too, were terrified by uncanny occurrences. As a matter of necessity the family closed the wing, which was not a great loss because it was the oldest part of the building, dating back to the time of Henry II.

"The wraith seemed satisfied to limit its visits to the rooms that had been occupied by Lady Patricia. But, throughout all the years that have followed, *she has always visited some member of the family in a dream to warn us of impending danger.* She never fails to warn of the approaching death of an earl. She warned Mother that Father was in danger. Two days later, against the pleadings of Mother, he joined the neighboring lords in a fox hunt. His horse stepped into a rabbit hole and threw him on his head, killing him instantly. Isn't that true, Mother dear?"

"Yes, Daughter," the Countess answered in a low, restrained voice. I could see that it was unpleasant to her to have the family's affairs discussed before a stranger, so I tried to change the subject.

When Lady Patricia paused in her story, I pretended that I thought she had finished.

"That's a wonderful story, Lady Patricia," I said. "Thank you so much."

However, youth cannot be so easily silenced; so, soon after we adjourned to the great hall for our after-dinner tea, Lady Patricia gave a saucy toss to her head as she said banteringly:

"I'll wager you would be afraid to sleep in her room, even though you did sleep on that tombstone."

Before I could reply, the Countess spoke up determinedly. "No, Pat, no! The room has not been occupied for so long that it is not habitable."

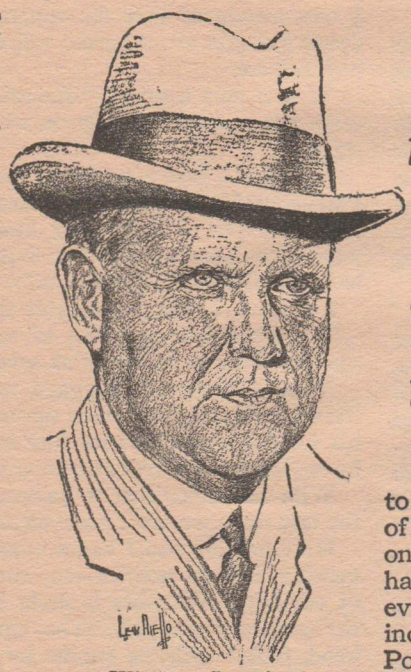
Thinking that the hostess had the right to decide where and how she would entertain her guests, I made no further comment.

A few moments later Lady Patricia said: "Oh, Buddy, let's show Mr. Crawford my namesake's portrait."

She led the way to the family portrait gallery. As we walked down the broad hall leading to it, Jack said to me in an undertone:

"Curly, don't pay any attention to the superstitions which the ladies of our family have treasured for so many years. Father and I both humored them, but you and I know that it was merely a coincidence that he was killed so soon after Mother's dream."

"Don't worry. I am enjoying myself immensely, and am not at all frightened by the bizarre stories."



William Crawford
(from a recent photograph)

Did This American Reporter Come Face to Face With the Ancestral Ghost in an English Castle?

Bill Crawford is known to hundreds of thousands of magazine readers. At one time or another he has interviewed nearly every modern celebrity, including Mussolini, the Pope, Lloyd George, President Hoover and scores of others. Radio fans will also remember him as the fascinating story-teller who has been giving his reminiscences of famous men over the air, from the National Broadcasting Building.

In these pages Mr. Crawford tells of his strange adventure in the castle of an English lord, a former college chum. It is one of the most remarkable occult experiences ever recorded.

Not the least interesting part of the story is the way that Mr. Crawford takes you into the home of a real English peer and shows you exactly how British aristocrats live. The genuine article isn't at all like the fiction noblemen you read about. Every detail in this story is accurate and TRUE.

ANYONE who has not visited the portrait gallery of a noble British family has no idea of its extent. The hall was tremendous. The paintings in it were arranged chronologically. The first portrait was that of a doughty earl who had come to England in the train of William the Conqueror. Both he and his charger were in full armor. His casque was raised so that you could look on his stern, battle-scarred face. Beside him was a portrait of his wife, dressed in the finery of a thousand years ago. Each generation was represented by at least one lord and lady. The ruffled necks of Elizabeth's time and the doublet of Walter Raleigh were there. The knee breeches and high chokers of the Georges were in their place.

When we had gotten more than half-way down the line, Lady Patricia stopped before the portrait of her namesake. The woman in the portrait was almost the exact replica of the vivacious girl at my side, except that she was dressed in the style of her time. The living Patricia laughed heartily at my surprise.

"The family resemblance is very strong, is it not, Mr. Crawford?" she asked. Then with an impish toss of her head, she continued, "I notice that you didn't urge Mother very much to let you occupy Lady Patricia's room."

His Lordship spoke up.

"That's not fair, Pat. You know Curly could not urge Mother after she had expressed so positive a disapproval." Then, turning to me, he said: "If you want to occupy those rooms for the rest of your stay, I'll have them aired tomorrow and some modern furniture put in. It's too late tonight to make the change."

I told him that I would be deeply grateful if it would not be too much bother.

His Lordship is the County Magistrate, a highly honorable position in England. His magisterial duties kept him busy for most of the next day, leaving me to the tender mercies of Lady Patricia. The persistent Miss insisted on taking me to the former Lady Patricia's tomb, which was, as is the custom in rural England, just outside of the castle walls.

As we walked around the building she asked me, with evident interest, "Do you really intend to accept Buddy's suggestion and sleep in that haunted room?"

I told her that I did, and as a result she spent most of the day regaling me with weird stories of the past appearance of the wraith. She assured me that in no single instance had the phantom's warnings failed to come true. I heard more ghost stories than I have ever heard before or since. She seemed to know the entire ghost history of her family.

Although I did not believe any of her weird yarns, they began to get on my nerves; so, excusing myself, I took a walk to the village that afternoon, partly to get away from these weird stories, and partly to get some cigarettes. The Lordship's brand was a little too strong for me.

The barmaid who waited on me asked with great curiosity, "Are you the gentleman who is visiting the castle?"

I told her, "Yes."

Then she said, "Is it true that you are going to sleep in the haunted room tonight?"

The servants had evidently spread the news throughout the countryside!

I WAS glad when Jack got home. He relieved some of the tension by relating many amusing incidents of the day at the Assizes. The evening went so quickly that I was surprised when the butler, at a signal from the Countess, came into the great hall with two three-pronged candlesticks.

His Lordship paused in the middle of a story, to tell me: "I am awfully sorry, old chap, but you will have to use candles as we did not have these rooms wired for electricity when the house was remodeled. We were not using them, you know."

His Lordship and I followed the austere butler through a long corridor which connected the old and new wings of the castle. The lofty ceiling acted as a sounding-board, causing our footsteps to re-echo with ghostly clangor. When we reached the former Lady Patricia's bedroom, the butler took from his chain a large iron key. It appeared to be almost eight inches long.

As the great oaken door slowly opened, its creaking hinges

fairly groaned. The room was as large as an average city apartment. A fire had been built in the open grate early in the day to take off the chill. It was not cold enough to have it replenished. The logs had burned in two and dropped on the outside of the massive andirons.

Although his Lordship had formerly expressed disbelief in the family tradition, he seemed nervous.

"By Jove, Curly, this is a rum go. This place is positively creepy. I wish you wouldn't try to sleep here."

I told him that I was perfectly satisfied, and after bidding him a cheerful good-night, I locked the door on the inside, picked up one of the lighted candle-sticks and went on a tour of inspection. The castle was built on solid rock at the top of a hill and the eastern windows overlooked a precipice of more than two hundred feet. It would have been impossible for either friend or enemy to have entered from the rear.

As I examined the windows, I noted that many of the panes were missing. This part of the castle had been erected before window panes were in use, but later generations had added small sashes—and even these had rotted away. This did not matter, however, because the walls were at least three feet thick, and except in the case of hurricane, rain would not beat in. Out of the northern windows I could see the monument of the former Lady Patricia. It was a replica of her portrait, done in marble which shone resplendently in the brilliant moonlight.

JACK had left the old furniture in the room, adding a few modern chairs strong enough to hold me up. The old canopy bed which had been occupied by Lady Patricia was still there. New ropes, in lieu of springs, had been added to hold the modern mattress. The ancient damask curtain that surrounded the canopy, now almost black with age, was still hanging. I noticed a copy of an old book, apparently the last one that Lady Patricia had read before her tragic death. On a fly-leaf was a tender inscription, "From Percy to Patricia."

I then inspected the second room of the suite. A massive door which had not been opened for years separated the rooms. By pulling with all my might I finally succeeded in wrenching it open. As I did so, a large owl, attracted by the light, flew directly past me. The whir of its wings extinguished the candles. I hastily opened the entrance door and let him out into the main hall. The flickering light of the dying embers in the fireplace cast fantastic shadows on the walls, more noticeable now since half of my candles had blown out.

I decided that I had done enough inspecting for the night. I would go to bed and forget about it. In five minutes I was asleep.

I had a most vivid dream. I dreamed that Lady Patricia, whether it was the ancient or modern Patricia I do not know, for as I have already said, they looked just alike and the apparition was not dressed like either of them, wearing a long, white, flowing robe—I dreamed that she touched me on the forehead to awaken me, then glided, rather than walked, to the end of the room overlooking the precipice.

Looking back to see if I was observing her, she wrote on the wall in letters of living fire. I can see them yet, standing out on that bleak wall. The message warned me to beware of the ship on which I had engaged passage. The horrors of this nightmare awoke me.

My first thought was that the living Lady Patricia had determined to make her ghost story realistic, and had wrapped herself in a sheet and written on the wall with phosphorus or some other luminous paint. Believing that I would catch her in the act, I jumped out of bed and rushed to where she had been standing in my dream. No one was there. No message was on the wall. She had not left the room, for the precipice would prevent anyone from making an escape through the rear windows, and the brilliant moon would have furnished sufficient light to have seen her if she had passed me. She had not escaped into the hall, for the door was locked—with the ponderous key on the inside!

I'll admit that I was a bit shaky, but calm reflection convinced me that it was just a nightmare, so I again went back to bed and slept till late in the morning. I had no further dreams.

When I came down the great central staircase to join the family at breakfast, the Countess and her daughter met me at the foot of the steps.

They breathlessly inquired, "Did you see anything?"

I assured them that I had not, but had had a most remarkable dream. Then I related to them what had happened.

To my surprise, they were greatly impressed.

Many times during the remaining days of my visit the Countess implored me not to sail as I had planned. I explained to her the utmost importance of my going, and that I was convinced that the supposed "warning" was only a dream brought about by the weird tales which Lady Patricia had told me.

"If it is only a dream," she said, "why did she specifically warn you against the ship on which you have engaged passage?"

"Oh, that's just a matter of psychology, I believe. Lady Patricia told me that the former Lady Patricia appeared only in cases of impending danger, and I knew that the voyage to America was the first danger to which I would be exposed—hence, the dream."

I continued adamant against their pleadings.

The night before I was to sail, his Lordship instructed the chauffeur to be ready at seven o'clock.

Next morning my baggage was ready at that time, but the chauffeur did not show up until seven forty-five. When his Lordship reprimanded him for being late, he apologized by saying he had had engine trouble.

With an admonition to James, the chauffeur, to make up the lost time, we were soon on our way to Southampton.

His Lordship and I had a most interesting discussion concerning British politics—so interesting that we lost sight of our trip. We were brought back to the earth when the car suddenly stopped. The chauffeur got out, lifted the hood, fooled with the engine for about fifteen minutes, during which time we were growing momentarily more impatient, and then he got back into the car. His Lordship said sharply:

"James, I never saw you so dilatory. You came three-quarters of an hour late this morning. And now you are wasting precious moments. You must make up the lost time."

"Yes, me Lud," he answered as he stepped on the gas.

The car gave a mighty lurch and then stopped dead still.

James jumped out and made a quick examination. Then, raising up, he said in a frightened voice:

"Beggin' your Ludship's pardon, she 'as stripped 'erself, Sir."

WE got out and examined the engine. We found that the gear had been entirely stripped from the shaft. There was no possible way we could fix it.

His Lordship then asked, "Where is the nearest garage?"

"Hits hin the village we passed through, habout five miles back, me Lud."

"All right. We will wait here. You rush back, hire a car and return as quickly as you can."

After James was gone his Lordship said penitently:

"I am afraid you will miss your boat, Curly. I am mighty sorry I urged you to stay over last night. We should have gone in late yesterday afternoon. You can make it if the boat is late, but otherwise I am afraid not."

More than an hour later, James returned in a dog trot, followed by a mechanic, but no car. He explained that there was not a car for rent in the village, so he had brought a mechanic to help fix his. It did not take the mechanic two minutes to decide that the engine would have to have a new

gear-shift, which must be brought down from London.

Then we decided to find a car ourselves, leaving instructions for James to get a team and tow the car back to the castle. We walked about three miles before we found a farmer who had an old Ford car. The farmer, urged by us, put on full power, and must have made at least fifteen miles an hour.

When we reached the dock, the ship had just sailed. She was less than half a mile from her pier. There was nothing for me to do but wait for the next boat, which sailed a week later. So I returned to the castle with his Lordship.

We had a glorious time for the next two days. I had grown to like my eerie surroundings, and had not been troubled by any further visits from the wraith. On the morning of the third day I was again awakened from my slumbers, but this time my arouser was a very material, and also a frightened one. Jack was standing beside my bed holding in his hand a copy of a London newspaper whose glaring headlines said:

TITANIC SUNK. ALL ON BOARD LOST.

It was on the Titanic that I had reserved passage to sail two days before. At that instant, with a sick and terrified sensation, the wraith's warning flashed before my mind again.

Beware of the Titanic! was the message that had been written in letters of fire on the wall of the haunted room.

I had missed death by a hair's breadth.

His Lordship was white as a sheet, and his voice shook as he said: "Read this, Curly. What do you make of it?"

For the first time in my life I was frightened about the supernatural.

The report in the paper, as we learned later, was an exaggerated one—but actually more than a thousand persons, including practically all the men on board, were drowned when the great liner sank.

Later that morning I learned that I owed my life not to the accidental break-down of an automobile but to the deliberate instructions of the Countess. Believing firmly that I would be lost if I sailed on the *Titanic*, she had told the chauffeur to keep me from catching the boat even if he had to wreck his car. And he had carried out her instructions quite thoroughly by dropping a monkey-wrench in the gear-shaft while pretending to fix the engine.

Then We Saw She Was Not a Human Being

A YOUNG lady from Wilmington, North Carolina, who desires her name to be withheld, has told us, in the following experience, as vivid a ghost narrative as it has ever been our pleasure to read:

A few years ago my aunt moved to a small town. She rented a house from the real-estate agency before moving to the town. The agent wrote her that it was a large house and in a good locality, but the rent was only fifteen dollars a month. She thought there must be something wrong with the property as the rent was too low, but she took it anyway. She sent her daughter, Marjorie, and me to the town before her so we would be there when her furniture came. We went one day and she was to come the next.

Marjorie and I got to the house in the afternoon and were astonished when we saw it. It was a good-looking house and in the best locality of the town. Marjorie and I decided to stay there alone that night, as my aunt would arrive in the morning. All the furniture came that afternoon. We unpacked some of it and looked all over the house and yard and decided that we liked the place very much.

WE had a bed put in one of the bedrooms upstairs, so we could sleep there. We locked up all the house and went to bed about eleven o'clock. Twelve o'clock came and we were not asleep. Neither of us could go to sleep. One o'clock came and still we were awake. Another hour passed. We heard the town clock strike two. About ten minutes after, I heard the door open. I grabbed Marjorie, for we had locked the door. A woman walked in.

She had on a dark dress and walked up to the bed and looked at us, then walked all around the room as if she was looking for something. She even looked under the bed, then walked out of the room and back again. The moon was shining bright and it seemed as if the moonlight followed her everywhere she went.

We both kept our eyes on her. We both were so frightened we could not move. I recognized her as Mrs. Clark. I had seen her once before, when I came to this same town and spent the night to change trains. I had seen her and her husband in the hotel I stayed at, and had asked who they were. She was a good-looking woman and well dressed. When I recognized her I was not so frightened. I thought maybe she lived in the neighborhood and was walking in her sleep.

I called her by her name: "Mrs. Clark! Oh, Mrs. Clark!"

She turned to me and gave a terrible look as if she could kill me. I was sure then that she was the same Mrs. Clark I had seen at the hotel. I decided that I would get out of bed and grab her and wake her up, so I got out of bed, Marjorie also, for we were holding on to each other. She walked out of the room, and all over upstairs. We could never get hold of her, but I was sure she was Mrs. Clark and must be walking in her sleep. She went down the stairs as if she were flying. I could swear she never touched a step.

When she got to the foot of the stairs, she turned around and looked back at us. Then we saw that she was not a human being.

We were so frightened that we both screamed. Now we wanted to get out of the house—but how could we do it! We screamed and she was still at the bottom of the stairs looking at us. We screamed until we awoke the man next door, but he could not get into the house as it was all locked. He came to the front door and called to us.

When he called and knocked on the door, the woman walked to the back of the hall and into the dining room. We ran down the stairs and opened the door, without looking. When we walked out of the door, Mrs. Clark walked out with us and disappeared on the porch.

Marjorie and I both fainted. When we came to, we were next door. I told the woman next door that the phantom looked like a Mrs. Clark I had once seen.

She replied that Mrs. Clark had lived in that same house and that she had hung herself five months before in the very bedroom that Marjorie and I had been sleeping in!

She said that two other families had rented the house, but neither had stayed more than one night; that Mrs. Clark had appeared to both of these families just as she had appeared to us.

When my aunt came, we told her what had happened and she had all of her furniture moved the same day. But Marjorie and I will never forget our experience in the Clark house. Every time we see the moon shining bright we think of that terrible night. We are both afraid of the moonlight.

A Crystal Gazer's

By PAUL ERNST

I watched her with savage pleasure, knowing that my plan was working out successfully

WE never know, here in the psychopathic ward, how much of a patient's raving is truth and how much is caused by the twist of mind that makes him a patient. But the outpourings from the soul of Genevra Fleming—crystal gazer, hypnotist and alleged medium—have a ring of truth that chills the heart. She still is balanced enough to withhold names and avoid definite incrimination of herself; but I imagine the events she describes, involving the vague He and She of whom she speaks, actually took place. At least she is so convinced of the truth of them that her belief has landed her here for mental examination, and the result is that she will be pronounced insane.

She is still a beautiful woman; unusually brunette, with hair, eyes and eyebrows of a startling blackness. From her—when she is not in one of her violent spells—comes an atmosphere of dark strength and quiet. A beautiful woman—but one with whom a man would hesitate to involve himself!

Her story, ramblingly told and retold, begins with an afternoon when she sat in the dusk of her studio and held a man's framed photograph covetously in her hands.

The setting she describes is one of darkness. The studio, draped with black silk and dim with stained glass which she used to impress her clients, was even darker in the late dusk than the failing daylight should have made it. And in that dark place sat its dark mistress, studying patiently over a scheme that should result in a woman's death.

Again and again she reviewed the scheme to see if there were flaws or weak spots in it.

""And I could find none," she says always at this point. "It was perfect. As perfect as human plans can be made, anyway. I knew it would succeed."

So she sat motionless in the big dark room, exulting at the thought of victory.

"By this time tomorrow," she whispered to the man's photograph, "you will have lost her, and you will begin to turn to me."

"I really believed this," she says. "I was sure of it! They had loved each other since childhood, this man I wanted for mine, and the girl he was going to marry. It was the kind of love that is written and sung about, the kind that seems imperishable. But I know men, and I knew that the one sure way was to put her out of his mind permanently. Then, when she was gone out of life and memory, he would turn to me. For you can see I am beautiful. . . ."

Her scheme, then, was formed and ready to put in motion. She set the picture back on a table and picked up her telephone.

"Hello," she called guardedly, as her number was given.

"YES?" The answering voice, a man's, was oily and without expression.

"Is this Bennet, the butler?"

"Yes, madam."

"You know my voice, don't you? You remember me? A few days ago I told you I might give you an easy way to earn a hundred dollars. Do you still want it?"

"Oh, yes!" A hard eagerness in the voice.

"Is any one near you?"

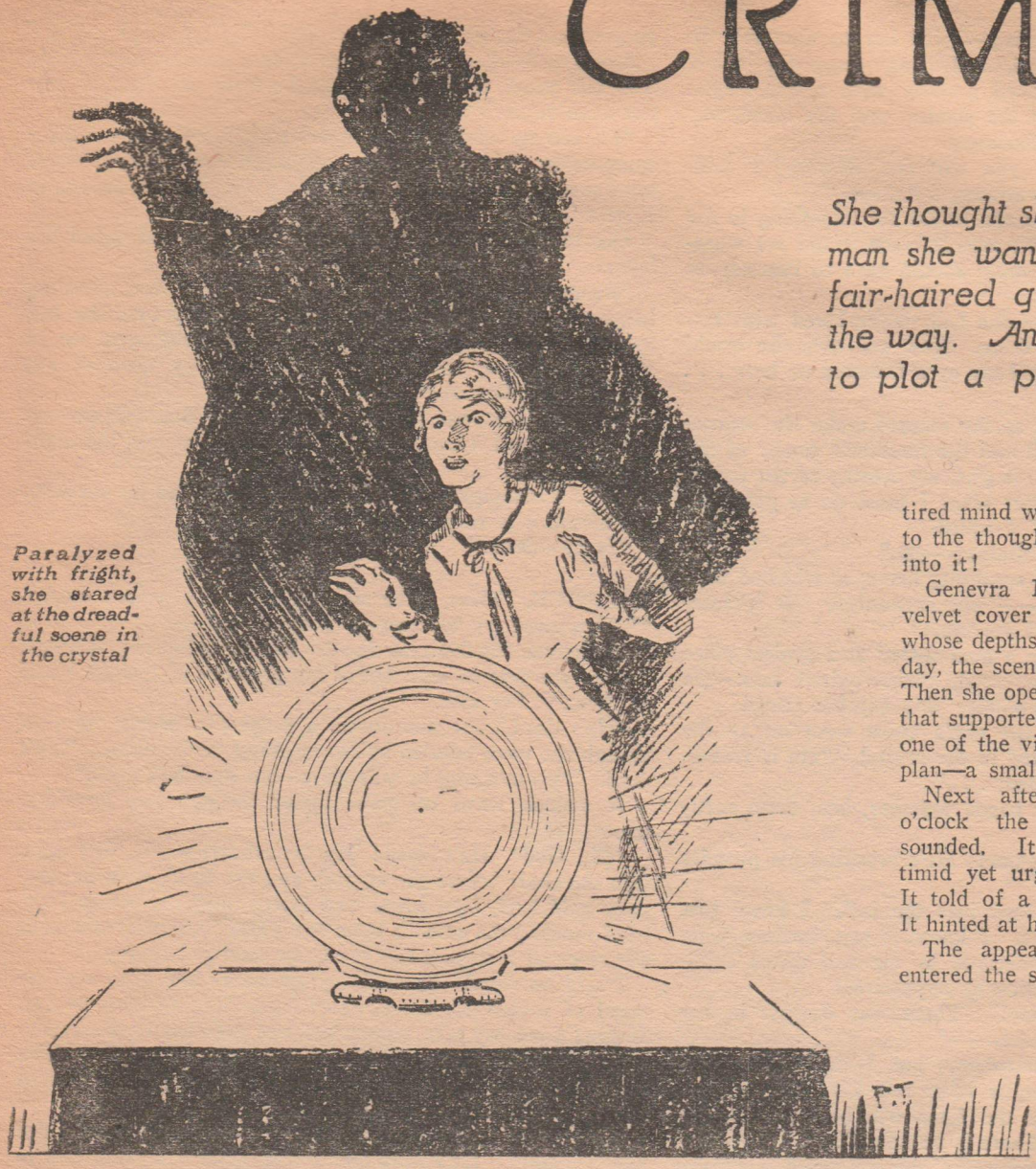
"No, madam. I am alone in the room and the other connection is out of order."

"All right, I'll tell you exactly how you are to earn the money: Tomorrow afternoon at about one-thirty *she* will phone you. She will ask about a certain man—you know him, Bennet. When she does, you are to repeat to her what I am going to tell you now. Get a pencil and paper so you won't forget."

A pause. Then a cautious sentence or two, almost whispered into the phone.

CRIME!

She thought she could win the man she wanted—if only the fair-haired girl were out of the way. And so she dared to plot a psychic murder!



Paralyzed with fright, she stared at the dreadful scene in the crystal

"Did you hear me? Repeat it to me. That's right. Now—call *her* to the phone." The crystal gazer's face, and the vicious inflection on the monosyllable, reflected the hatred such a woman cherishes for the rival who succeeds where she herself has failed. But, as a girl's voice answered a few moments later, her face changed its lines to match the studied kindliness of her tone.

"Hello, darling. This is Genevra Fleming. My dear, I am very worried. This afternoon I saw a dreadful thing in my crystal—it is about someone you care a great deal for! I felt I must call you right away."

A quick reply in a high, clear voice—words that tumbled over each other in their haste to be spoken.

"No, darling. It isn't a matter that we can discuss over the telephone. All I can say is that you must warn your fiancé that he *must* stay indoors tomorrow. On no account can he leave his office, even for lunch! Come and see me tomorrow about one o'clock. Is the time all right? No, I'm afraid I can't see you before that—I am going away now and won't be back till tomorrow noon."

Firm fingers hung up the receiver, snapping off the sound of the clear voice and the fear-edged words that were still coming over the wire. Thin lips smiled quietly as the woman with the dark hair and eyes again picked up the framed photograph.

The girl would be sick of brain and exhausted of nervous energy after the night and morning of apprehension. Her tired mind would be entirely receptive to the thoughts that were to be sown into it!

Genevra Fleming took the black velvet cover from the crystal ball in whose depths the girl was to see, next day, the scene that should destroy her. Then she opened a drawer in the table that supported it. In that drawer was one of the vital working parts of her plan—a small revolver!

Next afternoon at exactly one o'clock the studio door-bell was sounded. It was a revealing ring, timid yet urgent, nervous, appealing. It told of a restless night of worry. It hinted at hysterical tears.

The appearance of the girl who entered the studio confirmed the message told by the bell. Her slender shoulders drooped a little as though she carried a burden. Her dark blue eyes were ringed with almost equally dark circles of sleeplessness. Wisps of coppery gold hair showed from under the rim of her hat, indicating an emotional disturbance that had not allowed for the usual small vanities of preparation before a mirror.

"Genevra!" she cried, her voice mounting shrilly from key to key. "What were you hinting at last night when you phoned me? 'About someone I care a great deal for!' What threatens him? And why wouldn't you tell me over the phone? The suspense of waiting. . . ."

THE older woman comforted her, putting careful sympathy in her voice. "Never mind, I'll tell you all about it now, my dear—or, rather, I'll show you in the crystal. Tell me, did you warn him to stay indoors today?"

"Yes. But—he just laughed. He asked me why he shouldn't leave his office all day and I told him about your phone call, and he said the whole thing was silly. He hasn't my faith in the power of the crystal ball, Genevra. But at last he did say he would stay in to please me since I seemed so upset about it."

"Then everything will be all right," was the soothing answer. "Perhaps the fates will relent after all and spare him the end that was revealed to me yesterday. Now we'll see if he keeps his promise. If he doesn't—I'm afraid it will mean some terrible disaster. Look into the crystal and tell me if you see anything there."

So—continues Miss Fleming—I led her to the table on which was the crystal ball, and drew away the velvet cover. Over it I had placed a lamp with a blue-tinged bulb. I lit this and drew the shades, and the room was dimmed into ghostly blue darkness.

"If he is in no danger you will see nothing," I said. "But if he disregards my warning, I fear——"

But I knew very well that she would see something in the ball! And I knew what it would be—she would see whatever pictures my stronger mind should care to impress on her own tired brain!

For minutes she gazed at the ball, white-faced with terror of what she might see there. Now and then she would look up at me, always to find my eyes fastened on hers . . . staring . . . staring. . . .

Her body swayed a little as she relaxed under the somnolent influence of the crystal and the mesmeric power of my eyes. A poor, weak thing, this girl, not worthy of the man I wanted. *My* man, no matter what I must do to get him!

"Do you see anything?" I asked.

"No," she whispered. "Nothing—yet."

But even as she finished speaking, her eyes widened with alarm. "There is a cloud——" she murmured. "It is clearing now. Oh, I see him, I see him!"

In the ball she could see a man seated at a typical office desk; a tall, straight-shouldered, brown-haired man—the man for whom I was committing this psychic crime.

"He seems impatient," the girl's voice went on as she stared at the picture reflected in the crystal. "He is frowning and looking at his watch. . . ."

She pressed her slender hands together, beat them softly against the table top.

"Genevra! He is going out! He's breaking his promise to me! Look!"

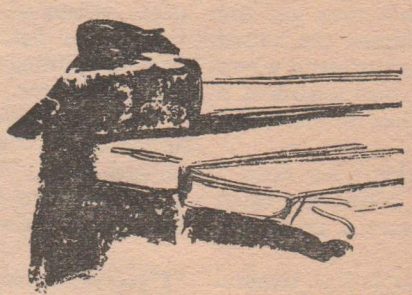
But I had no need to look into the ball. I knew just what she was seeing there. I knew, I say, because what she saw was a picture conceived by me and thrust deliberately into her field of vision by hypnotism!

"He's putting on his hat!" There was despair in her voice. "Oh, stop him! Stop——"

She flew toward the telephone, but I called her back.

"Too late, dear. He must have left his office by this time. We can only hope the fates will be kind to him. Look in the ball again. Where is he now?"

"He is standing on the sidewalk," she continued, her voice dull with the monotone of the hypnotized subject. "What is going to happen? Genevra! Tell me! You promised to tell me——" The words broke into a shriek. Then, paralyzed with fright, she stared at the dreadful scene in the crystal. I watched her with savage pleasure, knowing that my plan was working out successfully.



SHE said no more, just stood there. Her breathing sounded loud and strangling in the quiet of the studio. But I knew what she had seen.

The man—her man, who would soon be mine—had stepped carelessly from the sidewalk to the street—directly in the way of a motor truck! The driver's lips moved with a shout of warning. Then the man was knocked down and one of the enormous rear wheels passed squarely over his limp body. After that the crystal clouded and turned blank.

For several minutes she stood motionless, her gaze still fastened on the crystal. Her eyes were heavy in her pale face, and her shoulders sagged as though sixty years had been added in an instant to her age.

Then came reaction. She sprang away from the table. Her hands flew to her throat and pressed there with such force that red finger marks showed in the white of her skin.

"It didn't happen!" she screamed. "It couldn't have happened! Why—I love him. Such things *can't* happen to people you love! It's all a lie! Tell me it's a lie!"

I said nothing—simply stared at her, pushing suggestions into her mind, telling her what she must do next. I was not quite through with her.

"I'll call up home and see if it's true," she went on, more composedly. "If anything has happened to him they'll phone my house at once. But I know it's a lie. Please, please, let it be a lie."

She reached uncertainly for the telephone and called her home.

"Bennet? Bennet, for God's sake tell me—has anything happened——" Her voice failed her entirely and she had to stop and pull herself together. When she went on, it was in a quieter tone. "Have you had any word of any kind for me, Bennet?"

I was near enough to the phone to hear Bennet's answer. Word for word it came, the phrases I'd given him the night before.

". . . a message from his office. He has had an accident. I'm afraid it is very serious. . . ."

"Is he—dead?"

SILENCE. Then, "The message was very serious indeed. You must try to compose yourself to——"

The phone fell from her hand. She turned to me, although I knew she was as unaware of my presence as though I had not been at her side.

"He's dead," she murmured, a perplexity in her voice as though she were puzzled by the meaning of the word. "He's dead. This morning he was alive—but now he's dead."

A sudden wave of grief broke through her bewilderment.

"Oh, God! He's dead! My sweetheart——" She sank into the chair before the crystal, and her head, with its coppery gold hair, bent lower and lower until her white forehead touched the smooth table top. Her body was still with the rigor of a sorrow too great for sobs and crying.

I said no word. Even if my sympathy had been real instead of pretended, there would have been nothing to say. Instead I put my arm around her and held her to me gently. Also—I pulled the table drawer partly open so that when she raised her head the first thing she should see would be the revolver. Then I moved away.

There's just one thing for you to do—my mind commanded hers urgently. *He's dead and you're separated from him in life. But there's a way to rejoin him. . . .*

Her head moved slightly and I was sure she had received my suggestion. I left the room then, feeling that my plans would be completed soon.

When I came back some time later, the girl was gone—and so was the revolver!

It must have been nearly two o'clock when she left. I suppose I waited barely an hour to hear the end of all my scheming, but it seemed a hundred years! The feverish suspense *she* must have undergone the night before, was nothing to what I endured as I sat with my hand on the telephone, waiting for the call I hoped soon to receive.

That hour crawled by until every second brought a dozen apprehensions with it. Had my plan failed? Surely I should have heard before now, if it had not. Was the girl too weak and frightened to take the step I'd outlined in her mind? *What* had happened? Why didn't Bennet call me!

When the phone bell rang a few minutes after three, I was forced to delay lifting the receiver for an instant till I could control my voice.

"Yes, this is Genevra Fleming speaking."

"My God, Miss Fleming!" A frantic, hysterical Bennet. "She's just killed herself! Three o'clock! The clock was just striking. Right through the (*Continued on page* 94)

The GHOST of Doctor HARRIS

This great novelist came into sudden contact with the spirit world, in a Boston public library—of all places! And his marvelous experience occurred at brightest noonday!

A True Account of a Remarkable Apparition

By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story has never been printed among Hawthorne's collected works. It was first told to a group of friends gathered at the home of Mr. J. P. Pemberton, in Liverpool, England, when Hawthorne was the American Consul there. The famous novelist subsequently recorded the facts as given below, but the manuscript never saw the light of day during his lifetime.

I AM afraid this ghost story will bear a very faded aspect when transferred to paper. Whatever effect it had on you, or whatever charm it retains in your memory, is perhaps to be attributed to the favorable circumstances under which it was originally told.

We were sitting, I remember, late in the evening, in your drawing room, where the lights of the chandelier were so muffled as to produce a delicious obscurity through which the fire diffused a dim red glow. In this rich twilight the feelings of the party had been properly attuned by some tales of English superstition, and the lady of Smithills Hall had just been describing that Bloody Footstep which marks the threshold of her old mansion, when your Yankee guest (zealous for the honor of his country, and desirous of proving that his dead compatriots have the same ghostly privileges as other dead people, if they think it worth while to use them) began a story of something wonderful that long ago had happened to himself.

Possibly in the verbal narrative he may have assumed a little more license than would be allowable in a written record. For the sake of the artistic effect, he may then have thrown in, here and there, a few slight circumstances which he will not think it proper to retain in what he now puts forth as the sober statement of a veritable fact.

A good many years ago (it must be as many as fifteen, perhaps more, and while I was still a bachelor) I resided at Boston, in the United States. In that city there is a large and long-established library, styled the Athenæum, connected with which is a reading room, well supplied with foreign and American periodicals and newspapers. A splendid edifice has been erected by the proprietors of the institution; but, at the period I speak of, it was contained within a large, old mansion, formerly the town residence of an eminent citizen of Boston.

THE reading room (a spacious hall, with the group of the Laocoön at one end, and the Belvedere Apollo at the other) was frequented by not a few elderly merchants, retired from business, by clergymen and lawyers, and by such literary men as we had amongst us. These good people were mostly old, leisurely, and somnolent, and used to nod and

doze for hours together, with the newspapers before them—ever and anon recovering themselves so far as to read a word or two of the politics of the day—sitting, as it were, on the boundary of the Land of Dreams, and having little to do with this world, except through the newspapers which they so tenaciously grasped.

One of these worthies, whom I occasionally saw there, was the Reverend Doctor Harris, a Unitarian clergyman of considerable repute and eminence. He was very far advanced in life, not less than eighty years old, and probably more; and he resided, I think, at Dorchester, a suburban village in the immediate vicinity of Boston. I had never been personally acquainted with this good old clergyman, but had heard of him all my life as a noteworthy man; so that when he was first pointed out to me I looked at him with a certain specialty of attention, and always subsequently eyed him with a degree of interest whenever I happened to see him at the Athenæum or elsewhere.

famous New England writer—from a portrait made about the time of his extraordinary experience with a phantom

HE was a withered, infirm, but brisk old gentleman, with snow-white hair, a somewhat stooping figure, but yet a remarkable alacrity of movement. I remember it was in the street that I first noticed him. The Doctor was plodding along with a staff, but turned smartly about on being addressed by the gentleman who was with me, and responded with a good deal of vivacity.

"Who is he?" I inquired, as soon as the distinguished stranger had passed.

"The Reverend Doctor Harris, of Dorchester," replied my companion; and from that time I often saw him, and never forgot his aspect. His especial haunt was the Athenæum. There I used to see him daily, and almost always with a newspaper—the *Boston Post*, which was the leading journal of the Democratic Party in the Northern States. As old Doctor Harris had been a noted Democrat during his more active life, it was a very natural thing that he should still like to read the *Boston Post*. There his reverend figure was accustomed to sit day after day, in the selfsame chair by the fireside; and, by degrees, seeing him there so constantly, I began to look towards him as I entered the reading room, and felt that a kind of acquaintance, at least on my part, was established. Not that I had any reason (as long as this venerable person remained in the body) to suppose that he ever noticed me; but by some subtle connection, that white-haired, infirm, yet vivacious figure of an old clergyman became associated with my idea and recollection of the place.

One day especially (about noon, as was generally his hour) I am perfectly certain that I had seen this figure of old Doctor Harris, and taken my customary note of him, although I remember nothing in his appearance at all different from what I had seen on many previous occasions.

But, that very evening, a friend said to me, "Did you hear that old Doctor Harris is dead?"

"No," said I very quietly, "and it cannot be true; for I saw him at the Athenæum today."

"You must be mistaken," rejoined my friend. "He is certainly dead!" And he confirmed the fact with such special circumstances that I could no longer doubt it.

My friend has often since assured me that I seemed much startled at the intelligence; but, as well as I can recollect, I believe that I was very little disturbed, if at all, but set down the apparition as a mistake of my own, or perhaps, the interposition of a familiar idea into the place amid the circumstances with which I had been accustomed to associate it.

The next day, as I ascended the steps of the Athenæum, I remember thinking within myself, "Well, I never shall see old Doctor Harris again!"

With this thought in my mind, as I opened the door of the reading room, I glanced towards the spot and chair where Doctor Harris usually sat, and there, to my astonishment, sat the gray, infirm figure of the deceased Doctor, reading the newspaper as was his wont! His own death must have been recorded that very morning in that very newspaper!

I HAVE no recollection of being greatly discomposed at the moment, nor indeed that I felt any extraordinary emotion whatever. Probably, if ghosts were in the habit of coming among us, they would coincide with the ordinary train of affairs, and melt into them so familiarly that we should not be shocked at their presence. At all events, so it was in this instance. I looked through the newspapers as usual, and turned over the periodicals, taking about as much interest in their contents as at other times. Once or twice, no doubt, I may have lifted my eyes from the page to look again at the venerable Doctor, who ought then to have been lying in his coffin dressed out for the grave, but who felt such interest in the *Boston Post* as to come back from the other world to read it the morning after his death. One might have supposed that he would have cared more about the novelties of the sphere to which (*Continued on page* 91)

Can the Dead Help the Living?

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gives his startling answer to an important question

By SAMRI FRIKELL

The great creator of "Sherlock Holmes" is brought face to face with you in this unusual interview and tells of his own thrilling experiences with the occult

ONE of the most important questions arising from the world-wide interest in psychic research is its practical aspect. Can the spirits of the dead help us? Can they guide us to success. If we are actually approaching a practical means of uninterrupted communication with the Beyond, how shall we be able to utilize that stupendous discovery?

If, as the believers in occultism declare, it is becoming easier every day to meet the spirits face to face, what will they be able to do for humanity? Through mediumistic séances, shall we be able to tap the springs of inspiration and knowledge? By spirit guidance and spirit power, can we learn to avoid defeat and to accomplish victory?

"These are searching questions," was the first comment of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, to whom I propounded them. Yet he was quick to grasp their importance and ready to reason out their implications.

No intelligent man today would argue the pertinency of these queries. The rise of public interest in the subject has been astonishing. The topic is more alive today than ever before, even though there was exorcism of phantasms before Moses crossed the Red Sea.

Behind all the attempts throughout the ages to bridge the dark gorge between the quick and the dead, there have been three controlling impulses. Three motives actuated mankind to conjure up apparitions. The first was the true scientific urge, which is grounded in curiosity, and which has for its sole aim the finding of truth. Again there was the emotional urge, often religious in character, which made men seek to demonstrate personal immortality—the survival of their loved ones, and the continuance of identity beyond the grave. Finally there was the fortune-telling instinct, the selfish yet practical desire to get definite assistance from higher intelligences.

From the day when Saul went down to En-Dor until now, when race-track gamblers consult fat old women who read racing tips in the shuffle and cut of greasy cards, men have had the fortune-telling instinct. They have believed it possible, through one marvelous channel or another, to draw down from astral realms such secret information as would give them an advantage over the other fellow.

Men of mighty intellect have clutched tenaciously at this tradition. Socrates relied implicitly upon the mysterious "Voice" which whispered to him counsel and warnings, and which foretold his doom. History is speckled with such stories.

EVEN in our own lives we see men and women around us who seem mysteriously favored by Fortune. Some inner force seems to assist them and bring them all they wish. They are like children of luck. What is the source of their power?

There is an incurable disposition among people to have their fortunes told, and because of that failing, it is important that spiritualists make plain the practical possibilities of the communication which they declare proved and demonstrated.

It was, therefore, with a very definite idea in mind that I approached Conan Doyle for an interview. I went to him because he has become the recognized leader of the entire movement. And these were the questions on which I sought enlightenment:

Have the spirits any higher knowledge than ourselves regarding earthly problems? We all know the questions that sitters ask at séances: Shall they go into the automobile business, or remain in the grocery line? Should they sell their real estate? Can they win a lawsuit? Are they marrying the right person? Are they (*Continued on page* 86)

HAUNTED

An Amazing Exposé of the Devil Cult in the Studios

AN explosion in the studios blinded Frank Padgett for life and was the culminating tragedy in a long series of accidents and delays that had blocked the production of Padgett's mystery story, The Scorpion. *Padgett sent word from the hospital, however, that the filming of the story must go on regardless of everything that had happened, and Clayton Caldwell, a friend of mine, was named as director to succeed Padgett. In spite of my own protests, I was assigned as assistant director to the hoodoo picture.*

I am not superstitious, but I had the impression that something uncanny was at the root of the strange disasters in the Summit Studios.

From the officials of the company Caldwell and I learned that Padgett was to be transferred to his home the next day and that he declared he must hold a short conference with all members of the cast the following evening. We therefore spent the intervening time in familiarizing ourselves with the production.

The "Scorpion" in the story is a human devil who preys on cinema celebrities who are susceptible to the lure of drugs and orgies of mysticism. He finances the career of a young actress who becomes a great star, but at the height of her popularity she falls in love with a novelist who tries to rescue her from the evil influence of the "Scorpion." In the end, in order to prevent the actress from revealing his identity, the magician causes her suicide.

As I read the script, I could not help believing that this bizarre story bore some definite relation to Padgett's own life. I knew that his own fiancée—the beautiful Sybil Dale, an actress—had committed suicide and that she had willed to Padgett the estate, Eagle's Nest, *where he now lived. I said nothing about my suspicions, but Caldwell and I did discuss one remarkable and bewildering feature of the production. We discovered that the final sequence of the story had not been written!*

Late that evening, when I returned to my home in Laurel Canyon, I received an unexpected phone call from Elinor Dean, the young woman who was playing the leading part in The Scorpion. *She seemed almost hysterical and asked if I could hurry over to see her. At her request we drove to a road-house and there she told me her incredible experience. She believed that she had seen the phantom of Sybil Dale, Padgett's dead fiancée!*

The weird, conical mass was writing a message on the wall!

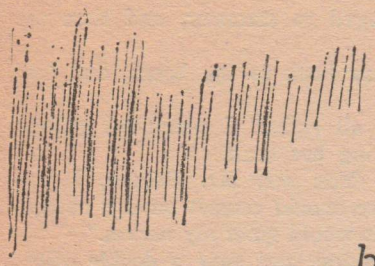
Immediately afterward she had found a blood-red square of paper, bearing the sinister sign of The Scorpion, *on the table in her living room. And all the doors were locked! As she showed me this weird symbol, Elinor fainted.*

AT the moment, I was no little upset myself, but I managed to revive Elinor with nervous and clumsy applications of a wet napkin, after upsetting a tumbler of water in my haste. I was relieved when her eyes fluttered open and she favored me with a wry smile.

"How silly of me to faint," she murmured, the color flooding into her cheeks. Then her eyes settled upon the

HOLLYWOOD

WOE TO THOSE WHO C



Elinor Dean, the famous actress, is marked as a victim by the followers of the "Scorpion"— but she bravely matches her wits and her courage against the powerful forces of evil!

By
GEORGE T. OSBORN
As told to
Wilbert Wadleigh

square of red paper on the table, with its sinister golden scorpion, and her features grew tense. "That—that paper; please destroy it, Mr. Osborn!"

I picked it up somewhat gingerly, studying it closely. The paper was about the size and shape of a baronial envelope, and quite thin. Its color and texture suggested that it was of Chinese manufacture. The golden scorpion seemed to have been made with a wood-block, and was printed in one corner of the paper—a sinister omen, with its spread claws, spider-like legs and long tail. There was no trace of any message, though I held the paper up to the bracket light in the booth to examine it.

"I don't think we'd better destroy this, Miss Dean," I said gravely. "Have you shown it to anyone else?"

"NO one else," she shuddered. "Oh, how was it left in my apartment? I can't understand it, Mr. Osborn; it's—it's positively uncanny."

"You said that the apartment was locked from within——"

"By a burglar-proof latch," she interjected. "And only the one door opens into the hall. As for the fire-escape, only one of the living-room windows permits an entry or an exit that way, and I'm certain that this window was locked. I was advised to keep it locked as a precaution against burglars."

I folded the paper, and tucked it away in my inside coat pocket.

"We could consult the police, of course," I said, "but I'm afraid we would only be laughed at. We could only show them this paper with its gilded scorpion; naturally, nothing could be said about your having seen the ghost of Sybil Dale, or your impression of that evil, invisible presence afterwards."

"The police!" She shrugged. "Impossible. If it were only possible to talk the matter over with Mr. Padgett tonight, he might help us. Oh, I know I can't remain at that hotel, after this!"

I glanced at my watch, nothing it was after ten.

"The hospital wouldn't admit us now," I said, "and I doubt whether it would be wise to phone a message to Padgett at this hour. Personally, I have no doubt that he is in some way connected with this, but we will see him at the conference tomorrow night."

Miss Dean inclined her head listlessly; then her eyes took on a sudden gleam of inspiration.

"I have it!" she exclaimed. "Why can't we consult Ali Cassim, just as the heroine does in the story of *The Scorpion?*"

I REGARDED her dubiously. The Hindu, to me, had simply been a member of *The Scorpion* cast—merely a type, cast in the rôle of a clairvoyant and mystic. He was a suave, mysterious sort of chap, and to tell the truth, I had taken a subtle dislike to him. I remarked that I saw no use in confiding in the man, but Miss Dean assured me that he was really a celebrated mystic and had undertaken the rôle only because of Padgett's insistence.

"We are confronted with a matter," she said, "that concerns psychic or occult forces—possibly both. Heavens knows what is behind it all, but possibly a good clairvoyant might be of some assistance. I have Cassim's professional card right here in my bag, I think." She produced it. "Here it is! If you don't mind——"

"It can do no harm to consult him, I suppose," I admitted reluctantly. "I don't know what time Hindu mystics retire, but if he has a telephone I'll call him."

"His number is written on the card in pencil," Elinor said—"a secret number which he gives only to friends and select clients."

I took the card and went to a pay booth, calling the number listed. Almost immediately a soft masculine voice

---

This is the second part of a swift-moving novel that is more than fiction—it is an actual revelation of the secrets of the Devil Cult in Hollywood. It is written by a man who knows every cranny in the movie capital—Wilbert Wadleigh, actor, author and student of the occult. He was one of the Volga boatmen in Cecil B. De Mille's screen classic; he turned a camera on *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse;* he had a rôle in *The King of Kings*.

Don't fail to read this remarkable story. If you missed the first instalment, the synopsis will give you all the necessary facts and you can still have the pleasure of following Elinor Dean and George Osborn through their spine-tingling adventures with the Unknown.

---

responded and startled me by saying, before I had spoken:

"It is well, Mr. Osborn; you and Miss Dean may come at once. I will be waiting."

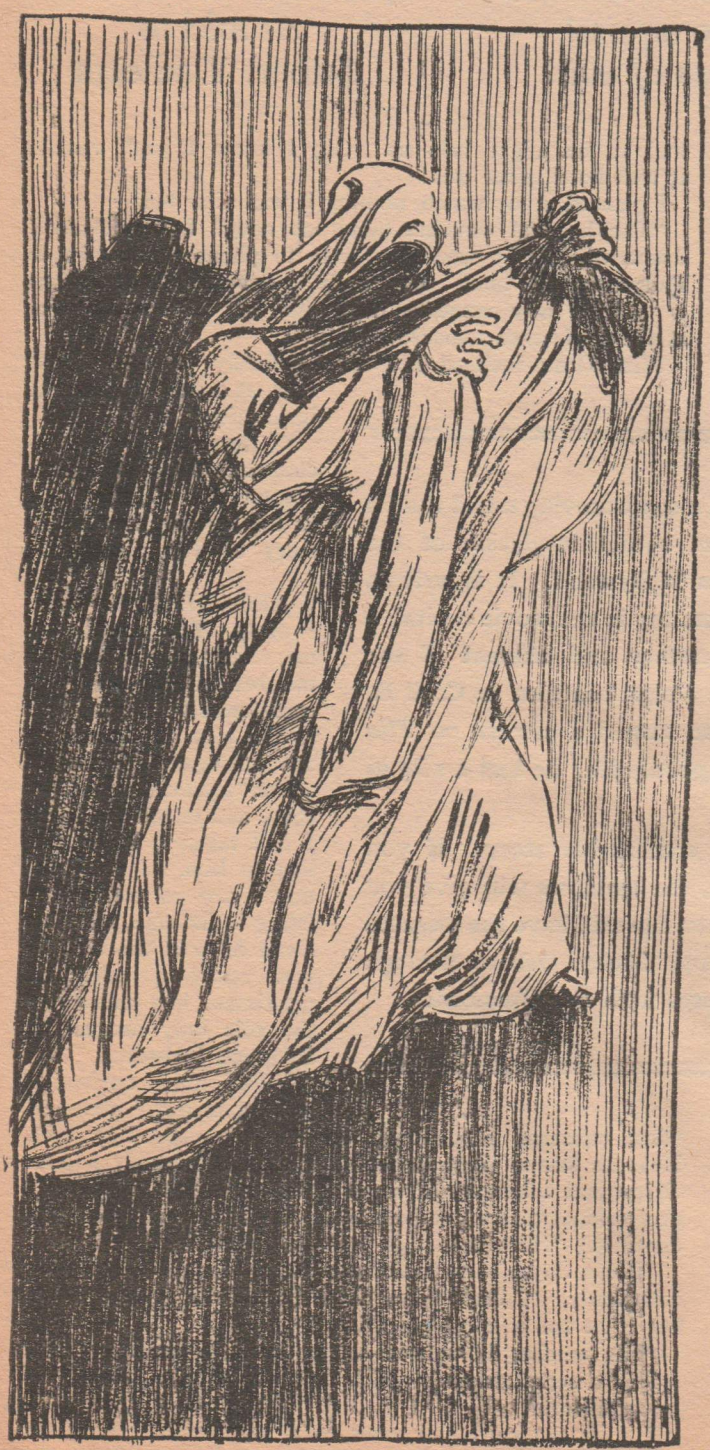
And I had not said a word!

"How—how in the devil did you know I was calling, and that Miss Dean is with me?" I blurted out.

There was a faint chuckle from the other end of the line.

"Would you have me interpret the complexities of cosmic forces over the telephone?" he taunted, and I could visualize his tolerant smile and the gleam of his white teeth. "Enough," he said shortly. "I have expected the call. I know where you are—a road-house beyond Cahuenga Pass. As I speak, a very fat gentleman in a tuxedo is passing a table behind you——"

Of course I looked around, and sure enough, Noah Webster, a comedy director of gross proportions who was employed by a Burbank studio, was passing behind me. He recognized me, and grinned, making some light salutation.



The figure seemed to rise out of the floor

In a daze, I turned back to the telephone. Without waiting for my confirmation, Cassim resumed:

"——and Miss Dean is seated in a booth on the western side of the place. She is in a very nervous state, Osborn; take good care of her. Get her to drink some hot, black coffee before you leave. I shall expect you both within twenty minutes."

"All—all right," I managed to stammer, and then the line went dead.

I literally groped my way back to the booth, and told Elinor what had occurred.

"That chap is a mystic, all right," I concluded grimly.

She smiled slightly, shaking her head.

"Marvelous, wasn't it? You see, Mr. Osborn, I was right: he is the very one we should consult on this matter. As for the coffee, I think it would quiet my nerves."

I pressed the push-button, and gave a double order.

"I think my own nerves need quieting. "I smiled sheepishly as the waiter departed. "And I'm afraid that I haven't been of much use, Miss Dean."

"Nonsense," she replied cheerfully. "I don't know how to thank you for what you have done—and you've really done a great deal by taking me away from myself—away from that hotel and that—that awful force that seemed to be overwhelming me."

There was a resolute set to her head and a calm nuance in her tone; and I realized that, whatever her state had been a few minutes before, she had completely regained control of herself. I found myself responding to her smile—thrilling under the gaze of her soft brown eyes. Then the waiter appeared with our coffee.

Five minutes later we were speeding toward Hollywood in my roadster, and fourteen minutes more saw us headed into the driveway of Cassim's small but pretentious estate in Beverly Hills.

A Hindu youth of solemn mien and outlandish garb admitted us, conducting us through a dark hallway to a reception room which was hung with purple velvet drapes and contained an assortment of Oriental teakwood furniture. At one end of a long table was a semi-transparent globe, mounted on an onyx pedestal with three talon-like feet. The globe was some seven inches in diameter and was probably of beryl, for it threw off a pale, green-blue, vitreous luster.

THE boy silently placed chairs for us, one on either side of the table. We had hardly seated ourselves, facing each other across the glowing crystal, when the draperies parted at the back of the room and the tall figure of Ali Cassim appeared like a phantom. He wore a high turban of cream-colored silk, with a jeweled scimitar adorning it, and a long, flowing silk robe of black upon which were woven red symbols and characters. His eyes, the whites of which showed strikingly clear in contrast to his lean, swarthy features, seemed to glow like the surface of the beryl ball on the table.

He paused at the high-backed chair at the head of the table, bowing.

"I am signally honored, Miss Dean, and Mr. Osborn." He smiled. "Pray remain seated," he added as we started to rise.

He nodded to the dusky youth, who drew out the high-backed chair for him. Cassim sat down with quiet dignity, muttering something in Hindustani to the boy, who bowed low and silently took his departure.

"I hope we haven't disturbed your rest by this late visit, Mr. Cassim," Elinor said contritely.

"Not at all, Miss Dean," he answered, smiling again and studying her features with his keen, dark eyes. "As I told Mr. Osborn over the telephone, the visit was forecast." His smile faded. "What it portends,

of good or evil, I cannot say until I have your full confidence, Miss Dean. I take it that you have already confided in Mr. Osborn."

Elinor nodded, darting me a quick smile.

"I knew that Mr. Osborn would—come to the rescue," she faltered. "But we both realize that my problem concerns psychic or occult forces; we knew that we were helpless, so——"

"——you come to me," Cassim finished. "It is well; as a wise man has said 'if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.' I have certain limited powers, and I shall do my utmost to help you. And now, Miss Dean, tell me what it is that has disturbed you," he invited, kindly.

Elinor told how, shortly after retiring, she had seen the ghost of the former Summit star, Sybil Dale.

"The figure seemed to rise out of the floor," she said. "Of course I was spellbound by astonishment and fear."

The specter had pointed toward the closet containing her trunk, as if directing her to pack up and leave the hotel.

"Was the Thing warning me to leave Hollywood?" Elinor asked. "Did it mean that I must give up my work as leading-woman in Padgett's uncompleted picture, *The Scorpion*. Somehow that thought came to my mind. I am sure that the phantom was trying to give me some message, but the manifestation was short—in a few seconds the form vanished. And then—then," she continued tremulously, "I felt a new presence in the room; some invisible, sinister presence. Oh, I don't know how to describe it——"

"You must endeavor to do so," the Hindu said softly, regarding her with narrowed eyes. "Perhaps I can help; you were conscious of a new vibration—an evil aura? Your subconscious mind suggested these impressions to your conscious mind—that is, there was no preliminary reasoning?"

"That's about the way it was," Elinor admitted. "The impressions just seemed to spring into my head; I sensed that hostile, powerful forces were converging upon me, seeking to crush me. Oh," she choked, squirming in her seat, "it was ghastly! I seemed to grow faint, and as I did, I felt the very air pulsing around me, the pulsations increasing in rapidity and force——"

"WAIT," Cassim interrupted. "You are absolutely sure that they were like pulsations—like cycles of electrical energy?"

Elinor nodded without hesitation, regarding him anxiously. But whatever were the Hindu's reactions, his dusky face was like a mask. I fancied that his thin lips had stiffened, and that his muscles tensed slightly.

"Go on, Miss Dean," he said tonelessly.

"Well, there isn't much more to tell about this—this strange force. As I said, it seemed to increase in power, and I felt a spell of some sort creeping over me; a numbing sensation that seemed to be overtaking brain and body. And then a street-car went by on the Boulevard; the clatter and the clanging of the bell brought me to my senses, and I slid out of bed and switched on the lights."

"Ah!" the Hindu breathed, "and did you still feel this force, in a lesser degree?"

"I think I did," she replied gravely, shuddering. "But I was thoroughly alarmed by that time, and determined not to give in to my impressions—or to the forces. You see, I wasn't sure but that I was ill; just exceptionally nervous, due to all the delays and trouble we have had in filming *The Scorpion*, and that mercury lamp exploding this morning and blinding poor Mr. Padgett. Anyway, I started dressing, with the idea of going out; then I turned on the radio——"

"That was a good move," approved Cassim. "The music was not only a distraction, but it produced etheric vibrations peculiarly useful in hampering the coalescense of the particular forces you have described—forces which, if I am right, were as sinister as your intuition told you they were but which were of a pseudo-mechanical nature, however. But continue—you dressed for the street, then, and went out?"

Elinor shook her head.

"I finished dressing, but I was undecided whether to go out or not. Frankly, I didn't know what to do. I went to the living room and sat down to think, and then my gaze fell upon a sheet of red paper on the table. I stared at it, knowing that it had not been there when I had retired a few minutes before. I saw that one corner of it glittered, and I—I picked it up——"

Her features had gone pale, and her voice trembled.

"It was a golden—scorpion!" she gulped.

The Hindu gave a start, leaning forward tensely.

"A scorpion? Printed in gold upon this sheet of red paper?"

Was the Thing warning me to leave Hollywood?

"Y-yes," Elinor gasped, her dark eyes seeking mine.

I drew the sinister paper from my pocket and, unfolding it, laid it on the table in front of Ali Cassim. I was hardly prepared for what followed: with a hoarse exclamation, he jumped to his feet, tipping over his chair.

"Get away from the table—hurry!" he cried, and as we hesitated, he seized Elinor under the arms and dragged her bodily out of her chair. I jumped up, backing away, staring at the red paper. To my amazement, it was quivering like an aspen leaf!

Elinor screamed.

"Look!" she cried. "The golden scorpion!"

"Be calm," came Cassim's stern command. "Stand still, and watch."

I stared at the quivering paper, and to my amazement it seemed as though the gilded scorpion was moving. As I watched, the beryl crystal took on an amber glow, and a delicate mist materialized directly above it and began whirling until it formed into a conical mass, with the point undulating rapidly on the wall of the room. A message was being written, right before our very eyes—by this weird, conical mass!

The phenomenon lasted about two seconds, and then the strange mist-like cone disintegrated, fading away into nothingness. Scrawled in letters that seemed as though they had been burned into the wall was the cryptic message:

WOE TO THOSE WHO CROSS MY PATH

"Oh—what does—that mean?" Elinor gasped.

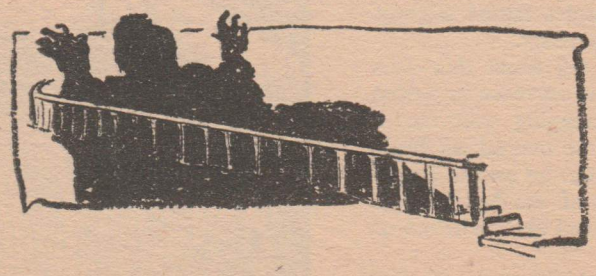
The Hindu laughed harshly. He snatched up the red sheet of paper on the table and crumpled it in his lean, dusky fingers.

"It is a madman's threat, Miss Dean," he said tonelessly. "Let us hope that it is harmless——"

"But in Heaven's name," I choked, "how—how was it accomplished?"

"You have witnessed a diabolical combination of Oriental black magic and misused occult powers," Cassim replied grimly. "I expected something altogether different: fire; a veritable fountain of fire. But this fiend well knows that I was prepared to cope with such a thrust. Pray be seated, and do not be further alarmed. You are both safe in this house."

Elinor and I seated ourselves again, and I saw that her features were ashen, and that she was trembling. As for myself, I felt as though every drop of blood had been drained from my veins, and cold sweat trickled down my face. Cassim raised a finger for silence as I started to speak again, and folding his hands across his breast, he closed his eyes and bowed his head. His lips began moving soundlessly; hard, muscular knots formed over his cheek-bones, and the cords of his neck began to stand out like harp strings.



Gradually syllables became audible; a jumble of mystic sounds — possibly Hindustani. Whether it was an illusion or not, I cannot say, but it seemed as though the beryl globe contained a whirling mass of luminous vapor. Abruptly, Cassim unfolded his arms and reached under the edge of the table. There was a faint click, and the room was plunged suddenly into darkness—save for the faint aura produced by the beryl crystal.

I heard a rustle of silk and the shadowy outline of Cassim's hand approached the globe, placing the crumpled ball of red paper under it. The Hindu had ceased his mutterings and was breathing in sharp, sibilant gasps. The vaporish mass within the globe slowly increased in density until the illusion of movement was gone; then colored spots appeared, growing clearer and more distinct, until I fancied that I could see a house, and moving figures in front of it. Before I could notice the details of the tiny picture, it faded again, and abruptly the luminosity of the crystal expired utterly.

There was a silken rustle, a click, and the lights went on again. The Hindu was staring at the crystal, his teeth bared in a sardonic grin.

"Thou art wise, son of evil!" he hissed. "Be thou vigilant!"

He reached for a chased-silver tray and, after retrieving the crumpled paper, dropped it into the tray. Then he struck a match, setting fire to the sinister missive. It burst into a peculiar greenish-yellow flame, burning to ashes. When the last spark had died, Cassim clapped his hands. The dusky youth appeared, and in response to an order in Hindustani, picked up the tray and bore it away.

Cassim was silent for several moments, elbows on the table, chin in his hands. At length he spoke.

"What I am about to tell you must be kept a secret," he said in a sepulchral voice. "You, Miss Dean, have been singled out by a monster in human form as a victim. Now, wait—" as we both gave vent to startled exclamations—"there is no reason for immediate concern; I believe that I know the full extent of this fiend's powers, and that he fears me. Before you leave this house, I shall take precautions that will render both of you temporarily immune. So much for that; and now for a revelation."

He leaned forward, lowering his voice.

"PERHAPS, after what has happened tonight, it will not be so much a revelation as an expression of your own suspicions——"

"That when Frank Padgett wrote the story, *The Scorpion*, he wrote of facts?" I anticipated—"that there really is such a person right here in Hollywood?"

Cassim nodded gravely, folding his arms.

"Exactly. The 'Scorpion' exists; an emperor of evil, over a kingdom of lesser devils, broken men and women, and ghosts—ghosts of Hollywood; wretched spirits who are bound to this fiend of Hell by invisible shackles that are a thousand times stronger than steel!"

We stared at him, speechless.

"Good Lord!" I finally articulated. "That explains the effort made to recall Padgett's book; the attempts on his life; the 'hoodoo' that has hung over the filming of the story! I knew there was something mysterious about the whole thing——"

Cassim held up his hand and, favoring me with a thin smile, his dark eyes narrowed. Quietly, he went on to say:

"I am glad to note that you have a respect for things psychic and occult, Mr. Osborn, and that you are not too blinded by material precepts and tenets. There are none so blind as those who will not see."

"Then this—this person," Elinor gasped, "does exist in real life; and he seeks to prevent the completion of the picture? He has been the cause of our tragic experiences?"

The Hindu inclined his head.

"Yes. I shall now make a confession. As you know, we three are associated with the motion-picture production of *The Scorpion*: Miss Dean as the leading woman; you, Mr. Osborn, as director Caldwell's assistant, and myself as a character actor, playing the rôle of the clairvoyant whom the leading woman consults—whom she has this night consulted in reality."

"I didn't know that you were really a mystic until Miss Dean informed me this evening," I remarked.

"Had you been assigned to the picture before today," he

said, with a smile, "you would have seen that I am an indifferent actor. But to continue," he went on soberly, "you both know that Frank Padgett was madly in love with Sybil Dale, one of Summit's greatest stars, and that her suicide overwhelmed him. You also know that, prior to her death, she suffered what was said to have been a nervous breakdown and that Summit's general manager, Mr. Weinberg, revoked her contract."

Cassim leaned back in his chair, his features stern.

"She suffered no nervous breakdown, in the accepted sense," he declared grimly. "The truth was: she had long been under the spell of the 'Scorpion'; she had been created a cinema favorite by him to further his diabolical ends; she was this monster's slave—a pawn in his evil hands!"

I stared at him, aghast.

"Great heavens, man!" I gasped. "do you mean to say that——?"

"——Sybil Dale and the character of Lucille Ames, whom Miss Dean was engaged to portray, are identical," finished Cassim; "in short, the whole story, as Padgett wrote it in book form, and as he later adapted it for filming, is based upon the actual experiences of Sybil Dale—Heaven rest her soul. Now let me finish," as we gave vent to horrified exclamations; "Padgett fell in love with the real Sybil Dale. You can now see that it is he who represents the character of Leslie Porter, the novelist, in the story—portrayed by Phillip Benton in the film version. Briefly, Padgett happens to be a student of occult science: a keen analyst, psychologist, and a fearless investigator of spiritistic, psychological, and occult matters. He discovered that Sybil Dale was in the power of some monstrous, evil mind. How much he actually learned before she died, and particularly from her last words—for he was alone with her when she died—I cannot say. My tongue is tied; my hands likewise.

"But this much I will tell you: Padgett wrote the novel, *The Scorpion,* for one purpose—to expose the diabolical work of this evil genius. He knew that the general public would accept it merely as a work of fiction, but on the other hand, he knew that to a few in Hollywood who were marked as victims by the 'Scorpion,' the book would be a warning. More, he knew that the 'Scorpion' would be angered and would make some attempts to wreak vengeance.

"These attempts were made. Padgett expected them; he hoped that the monster, blinded by hatred, would reveal himself by some unwary move. But he underestimated the cunning he had to deal with—the forces at his enemy's command. The 'Scorpion' remained unnamed; an enigma. Padgett played his last card; that is, is still playing it, figuratively—he made arrangements with Summit to film the story. And now we come to the nub of the whole matter."

Cassim regarded us earnestly, lowering his voice.

"In producing the picture, Padgett has been guided by certain occult and psychic forces, and by having the scenes of the story enacted by living persons, he has succeeded in setting up strong vibrations, which, in turn, have attracted other vibrations. I can best illustrate this by asking you to visualize a magnetic needle, attracting metallic particles. Let us elaborate on the simile: imagine this needle, stationary at first, being moved; the radius of its field increased in consequence, attracting still more particles. Such is the growth of the picture, stimulated by these particles—in other words, guided by the unseen forces its brilliant creator has been wise enough to appeal to, the orbit of the film version overlaps that of the book version, which was at best a half-successful seeking after truth."

The Hindu paused, surveying us keenly.

"This may seem highly involved, and quite technical, but I am striving to make it less so," he said. "Now these particles I speak of in the simile are nothing more than abstract facts connected with the nefarious work of the 'Scorpion'; as the filming of the story has progressed, we have been drawn into the orbit of this monster. You can now conceive two magnetic needles, their magnetic fields interlapping. What happens?"

He leaned forward, a dusky fist thudding against the table.

"A contest of power; an impending clash between the two forces. Here the simile becomes useless; for one or the other must be destroyed."

"Then," I said, "the various accidents that have happened during the filming of the picture—that have given it the name of 'hoodoo' production—were brought about by this evil genius, who seeks to prevent the picture from being completed?"

Cassim smiled his approval, nodding.

"Exactly. Can you guess the rest?"

Elinor gave an exclamation. She had grasped the truth.

"I can! Why, it's plain enough, now. Mr. Padgett is waiting for the 'Scorpion' to betray himself; to reveal his true identity——"

A surge of excitement swept over me, and I interposed: "And that is why the final sequence—the one where the 'Scorpion' is unmasked and apprehended—is missing from the scene continuity; why Padgett hasn't written it yet!"

"My friends," Cassim said with emotion, "you now know the truth, or enough of it to put you on your guard."

There was a brief silence, each of us busy with our thoughts.

"What was it you saw in the crystal?" I asked curiously. "I seemed to see a house and moving figures."

Cassim regarded me gravely.

"Then, Osborn, you are not without mediumistic powers yourself," he said, "for you should have seen nothing."

"I saw nothing," Elinor remarked, regarding me wonderingly. I looked away, strangely troubled.

"What I saw may mean much or little," Cassim observed. "That remains to be seen. The house was *Eagle's Nest,* formerly the home of Sybil Dale, and by the terms of her will, now the residence of her lover, Frank Padgett."

"Padgett—*Eagle's Nest!*" I exclaimed, greatly puzzled.

Cassim shrugged.

"Leave that to me; tomorrow night at eight, we three, together with poor Padgett and the other members of the *Scorpion* company, are to gather in conference. You know as well as I do that the subject will be the completion of the picture. Whether Padgett will reveal what I have revealed, I don't know—I doubt it. Remember, there are those among the members of the company who are skeptics; who, by no stretch of the imagination, could believe these things, much less continue to give their co-operation. So remember, what I have told you tonight must be kept secret."

"WHAT about—about my horrible experience tonight?" Elinor asked anxiously. "You say that—the 'Scorpion' sought to get me in his power. And if I can believe my senses, the ghost of Sybil Dale tried to warn me—sought to prevail upon me to leave Hollywood and my work in the picture."

Cassim nodded, smiling sadly.

"Unfortunately, it is true that the 'Scorpion' has selected you as a possible unwilling tool to further his spiteful plans, but so far he has failed. He failed first when the clatter of that street-car broke the spell. He failed more completely when the thought of Mr. Osborn popped into your mind, and you called him to consult with you. The sinister red paper, with its golden scorpion, he contrived to leave on your table knowing that if he failed, you would come to me. In this he was right; you did. To show off his powers, he caused that message to be written a while ago. But have no fear, for between the two of you, you possess a force that will prove a mighty barrier for him to surmount."

He was smiling broadly, now, a twinkle in his dark eyes. As we stared at him, and at one another, he chuckled.

"Tell me: how long have you known each other?" he asked.

"Why," I said uneasily, "not long. That is, we've been working on the same lot for two months, but up until today, we have been associated with different productions. We've met a few times; had lunch on two occasions together, and then tonight——"

Cassim placed a hand upon my arm, and laid his other hand upon Elinor's.

"My young friends," he said, "we have been through a good deal tonight in this room, and you have both stood the test admirably. Perhaps you will not be afraid to look into the future. I saw more than that house in my crystal; I saw each of you, through a cycle of years; I saw danger, anxiety, straight ahead—but beyond, I saw happiness—love. In short, whether you have realized it or not, it is written that you shall love each other, live to a disgustingly ripe old age, and have a family. I should collect my usual fee for this information, but alas!—*exitus acta probat.*"

A deep flush suffused Elinor's cheeks, and she regarded me through lowered lashes. I looked away, embarrassed, though a surge of excitement, of elation, swept over me. Cassim was not minded to prolong the situation. He rose, ringing for the servant.

"Accept what I have said seriously," he exclaimed, his tone and manner quite professional and impersonal. "You are armed against this power by the tie that is fated to develop between you. Love is the greatest force the world knows; it has won more battles than all the armies that ever existed."

The young Hindu servant entered obsequiously.

"But—I—it is all right for me to remain at my apartment?" faltered Elinor anxiously. "That red paper with the golden scorpion was left on my table at a time all the doors were locked and——"

"You can come to no harm in your apartment," Cassim assured her, "now that you are mentally prepared. And I shall take certain precautions of my own. As to that paper, no human hand laid it upon your table; that I know; more I cannot tell you. Rest assured that this monster possesses inhuman patience and cunning, as well as power, but he cannot touch you if you are vigilant. The stubborn mind is the thing, my dear. As to this devil, it was Shakespeare who said: 'it is excellent to have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant.' And this fiend's strength, in the end, shall be his undoing."

It was close to midnight when I parted from Elinor at her hotel, and started homeward. Weird as our experiences of the night had been, all fear had left me. I had the advantage of knowing the truth about the production of *The Scorpion,* and I could not help but admire Frank Padgett. Here, I thought, was a man of unusual attainments, of truly heroic courage, who in spite of the terrible accident of that morning which had left him blinded and scarred, was still determined to unmask his enemy.

I might add that, as I sped toward Laurel Canyon, I also carried the vision of two sparkling brown eyes peering at me under lowered lashes; of ivory cheeks suffused with pale rose; of two quiescent, red lips, and the fresh memory of her parting words, spoken in a soft, musical voice: "We cannot question fate—George; and I'm glad. I feel so much stronger, so much more at peace."

I, too, felt at peace—and more. I felt like shouting my joy from the housetops!

But when I had reached home, the sinister events of the evening, as if conjured up by the dark canyon, recurred to my mind. It was now past midnight, and my little lodge was separated from the nearest dwelling by nearly a block and hemmed in by scraggly oak trees, pitchy darkness and silence. For the first time in the eight months I had been living in the place, I felt lonely—truly isolated.

I laughed at myself, undressing nervously, but I had not been long in bed when I became conscious of a growing fear. I found myself starting at every sound: the flapping of a curtain, the hoot of an owl or the swaying of trees. It was over an hour before sleep overtook me. Oddly enough, no strange dreams haunted me that night; I slept straight through seven full hours. When I awakened, the sunlight was streaming through the windows, and it was nearly nine o'clock. My telephone was ringing; it was Clay Caldwell, and he, utterly innocent of the events of the previous night, invited me to join him at the Miramont Club for a round of golf.

I SPENT the morning with him, making no mention of the experiences that had befallen Elinor Dean and myself. It is doubtful whether Caldwell would have believed me, anyway, and Cassim had made it clear to Elinor and myself that what he revealed was to be kept secret. Nor was Clay disposed to "talk shop." He rarely did when away from the studio, and I was thankful for this. Had he suspected anything, he would have dragged part of the truth out of me, for his is a tenacious and probing mind.

That afternoon Elinor and I took a long drive to the beach, and back through Topango Canyon. Like me, she had slept well but had been nervous before dropping off to sleep. We discussed the experiences of the previous night, but in broad daylight they seemed even more incredible and unreal. It wasn't long before we put these things out of our minds and talked of other things.

We had dinner together that evening at Henry's, after which we went to Padgett's home in Beverly Hills—*Eagle's Nest,* which had been built and named by the unfortunate Sybil Dale. Caldwell had already arrived, for his car was parked in the driveway, together with others. Among these I noticed Weinberg's landau, and Rosenthal's Rolls.

"It looks as though the others are all here," Elinor ex-

claimed. "Are we late?" she asked, somewhat excitedly.

"Right on time," I said, for it was just eight o'clock, the time for which the conference had been called.

Padgett's Japanese butler admitted us, and we found all the members of the company gathered in the living room: Padgett, seated in a big overstuffed chair near the fireplace, his face completely swathed in bandages and looking like some strange lay-figure; Cassim, and the other members of *The Scorpion* cast, including Phillip Benton, Rose Harron and Henry Lagrange; the chief cameraman, Ned Lucas; Clayton Caldwell; Arthur Taylor, personnel manager and Padgett's secretary, and Sam Weinberg and Jules Rosenthal, Summit's general manager and production manager, respectively.

Taylor regarded us with a frown as we took seats.

"MISS DEAN," he said reprovingly, "I have been trying to get in touch with you all afternoon."

"I'm sorry," Elinor said, "but I've been with Mr. Osborn."

"That is quite all right," Taylor retorted, "but you failed to leave word at the hotel. It is my duty to remind you that your contract specifies that you are to keep me informed of your movements, so that I may reach you at any time."

Elinor flushed, glancing at me and biting her lip. Over her shoulder, I saw Cassim's dark eyes take on an amused sparkle. Padgett's crisp voice sounded through his bandages:

"Taylor is right, Miss Dean. As it happens, I have been advised of your movements, so I shall ask for no explanation. However, please be more careful in the future; the provision Taylor mentioned was made for a good reason. Now, then—is everyone present?"

"All here," Taylor answered.

The Japanese butler left the room, closing the curtains in the archway.

"A few questions to begin with," Padgett said. "Mr. Caldwell, are you familiar with my story, *The Scorpion?*"

"I read the book when it came out several months ago," Clayton answered.

"Good. You had the rushes projected last night, Taylor informs me, and examined the continuity——"

"Yes," Caldwell said grimly, "and learned that the final sequence has not yet been written."

Weinberg gave an exclamation.

"What? The final sequence not written? The copy in my office is complete——"

Padgett held up a hand.

"It isn't complete, Sam; there is to be another sequence. Caldwell is right. I intend to complete the sequence in a few days. There will be no additional sets, Sam, so don't worry about that——"

"But good Lord, Frank," Weinberg exclaimed, "why didn't you tell me that——?"

"I will tell all of you my reason in good time. I first want to know if I can rely upon every member of the company to give Mr. Caldwell and me their full support, and see *The Scorpion* through."

He called the roll, and everyone agreed to do so.

"I am grateful—more grateful than I can say." Padgett's voice was husky with emotion. "By now, all of you realize that the completion of the picture means more to me than anything else in the world. You all know that in order to see it through, I took over a controlling interest in the Summit Studios.

"Owing to the condition of my face, I cannot talk without considerable difficulty, so I will be brief. A specialist and nurses are waiting in another part of the house to take me in charge again.

"Tomorrow morning I hope to be able to be at the studio. In any event, Mr. Caldwell, you will resume production where I left off. Sometime tomorrow I will manage to confer with you at length. All of you will be guided by the original shooting schedule, and there should be no questions regarding costumes. I will now answer a few questions, and then this meeting will come to an end."

There were a few technical questions, which he disposed of, and then two nurses took him in charge. The rest of us chatted for a while, and then took our departure, Elinor leaving with me in my car.

But before we reached the gate, a long black sedan drew alongside and the face of Ali Cassim appeared at the window.

"Come directly to my house," he called, his dusky features grim. "The enemy is preparing to strike!"

That was all; his car lurched ahead into the night. Elinor shuddered, snuggling against my shoulder.

"Tonight—the 'Scorpion' plans some evil! Oh, George, what does it mean?"

A terrible menace hangs over Elinor. Can Osborn and Ali Cassim save her from becoming the unwilling slave of the powerful "Scorpion?" The Hindu mystic plans to launch a counter-offensive—hopes to avert catastrophe by carrying the battle into the enemy's territory. Will this ruse work? Read the thrilling developments of this absorbing story in the July GHOST STORIES*—on all news stands June 23rd. The strange adventures of this beautiful movie actress will hold you breathless!*

The Phantom of a Roman Emperor

IS the ghost of the cruel Emperor Caligula to be laid at last? It is believed so. Anyway, not only the superstitious peasants of Italy but also scholars and students of antiquity are watching with the greatest interest the efforts being made to raise the famous "gala" galleys of Caligula from the bottom of Lake Nemi, where they have lain since the beginning of the Christian era.

The galleys, which were once the scene of spectacular feasts and orgies, have long been sought as one of the greatest archeological treasures of modern times. Attempts have been made periodically to recover them since the middle of the Fifteenth Century, but always without success. According to the stories told, the ghost of the Emperor has been seen for many years following each failure, hovering over the lake nightly from midnight until nearly dawn. It was because of this ghostly visitation that the attempts to raise the galleys were widely separated. After a failure, no new attempt was made until the specter disappeared.

At the present time, however, no heed is being paid to ghostly traditions, but whether or not the galleys will be recovered is a question. This time an elaborate modern engineering scheme is being tried. Premier Mussolini and other dignitaries were present when the work was begun.

The Emperor Caligula, or Caius Caesar, who ruled from 12 to 41 A. D., was the cruelest and most profligate ruler of his time and he constructed on the lake a fleet of lavishly decorated galleys which he devoted to ceremonies and orgies. With his favorite generals and officials he would repair to the galleys, order his slaves to bring wine and captured women, and spend weeks in revelry. The women usually were thrown overboard to drown before the Emperor and his intimates returned to shore. According to some ancient historians it was the ghosts of these murdered women, coming back and tormenting Caligula, that drove him mad.

One of his last acts was to bestow a consulship upon a horse. In explanation, he said the animal would be more faithful than any human being and would be able to protect him from the phantom women.

The Mystery of the SPIRIT PAINTERS

An ignorant French miner, working in a state of trance, has painted fifty-seven masterpieces in the style of ancient Egyptian art! Read his wonderful story

By ARNOLD FOUNTAIN

ALL the newspapers in London are excited about a new spirit mystery of an odd, intriguing type.

It concerns two famous painters who acknowledge occult intervention in their masterpieces. They paint pictures in trances.

Here is the story:

At a meeting held at the Queen's Gate Hall, South Kensington, under the auspices of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, Doctor Eugene Osty (Director, Institut Metapsychique International, Paris, and Vice-President of the National Laboratory) delivered a lantern lecture on the work of two trance painters who have been under observation at the Institut Metapsychique. The lecture was delivered in French, but Doctor Osty and the audience were very fortunate in that the Honorable Mrs. Alfred Lyttleton volunteered to interpret, and did so with great skill. Lord Charles Hope was in the chair.

Doctor Osty began by remarking that his audience were the unfortunate victims that evening of a lecture delivered in French, but it was better so than that they should be the victims of his English! He had to say various things which it was better he should say in his own language. He had to tell the story of two persons whose extraordinary work had been under the observation of the Institute in Paris with which he was connected. The first of these was a person named Augustin Lesage, whose portrait he showed on the screen.

This man was a miner of Pas de Calais, was utterly ignorant of painting or design, and was born in circumstances far removed from all artistic influences.

At the age of thirty-five, having read several works on spiritualism, his thoughts turned somewhat in that direction. He attended a séance and from the very first his hand appeared to be seized by an occult power and wrote, "Take a pencil and draw."

He accordingly took in his hand some colored chalks, and at the very first attempt, this man, who had no artistic training whatever, produced a remarkable picture which the lecturer exhibited on the lantern screen.

Some days after, he produced under similar circumstances a second design, which was also shown; and his third and fourth pictures came a few days later. He was evidently endowed, when in trance, with a rare faculty for decorative design.

After a time the invisible agency again seized hold of the hand of Lesage and bade him take a brush and attempt more ambitious work. Accordingly he took a brush and a piece of paper and made two paintings, which the lecturer also exhibited.

Then another instruction came in the form of writing—writing so minute that one had to take a magnifying glass to read it. This message directed him to work on canvas and with a finer brush.

Accordingly Lesage ordered a canvas without giving any dimensions, and was sent a canvas three meters square. When this canvas was placed on the wall of his room, he once more took up his brush and covered it with paint, with the result that a beautiful piece of work appeared.

This first canvas of his was adjudged by numerous painters to be a work of exceptional merit, considering its *genre* and the ignorance of the author. It was suggestive of ancient art with types of decorated effect peculiar to old Oriental civilzation, such as China, Tibet, India and Egypt. Each portion of the canvas had a personality of its own. It was not imitative of any work already in existence, but it expressed the genius of the East. The lecturer added that if any of those present were likely to be in Paris, he would have much pleasure in showing them this and other originals.

Altogether, in the ten years from 1918 to 1928 this man, until lately a working miner, had produced fifty-seven canvases. All of them suggested an innate genius for color, and the conceptions were harmonious throughout. With a great deal of audacity he would even leave certain portions of the canvas quite empty. He never reproduced in detail what he had done before, but all his work was different, though it had the same ornamental character and the same perfect symmetry.

In painting his pictures, Lesage always began at the top of the canvas and worked, as it were, story by story, maintaining the symmetry complete. The design on one side appeared as though it had been mechanically duplicated from the other.

The lecturer showed various works by this medium, including one which was exhibited in 1926 to the Society of French Artists, and he also showed photographs of Lesage actually painting a canvas in Paris, where he spent a month last year.

It was Lesage's opinion that he was the reincarnation of an old Egyptian painter. He had thought so for some time. Such designs as the pyramids of Egypt and the Sphinx appeared frequently in his work.

IT might be said that, whatever was the case when he began, having now produced more than fifty canvases, he could no longer be said to be entirely ignorant of painting.

Lesage himself, however, declared that today as in the past, he was still totally ignorant of painting craft. His hand, he said, was not directed by his will. When he painted, his hand passed out of his control and was moved by some direction from without. There was certainly abundant evidence that in 1918, when Lesage produced his first work, he knew absolutely nothing about painting—and yet that first picture was as remarkable as any of his later works.

His work had shown no progress, and his present productions were on the same level of excellence as his very first efforts.

Here, therefore, was a man who had never learned to paint—a fact well attested by his schoolfellows and by the director of his school—a man with no hereditary skill, one who had never had the opportunity of seeing any great works of art until after his own unique career was well under way—and all at once he was revealed as a painter of considerable talent in a sphere of painting which was very rarely practised.

The psychological aspect of Lesage's mediumship presented a rare example of the (*Continued on page* 85)

The Room of Yellow Shadows

By WILLIAM STEVENS

Faster and faster the thing swept round the walls

Would YOU dare to stay in a place haunted by the ghoulish shade of an unseen Thing? This reporter did— and thereby discovered the secret of that place of horror

"YOU may not be able to see him at all, and if you do see him you may not be able to get him to talk," said the Night Editor.

"What's the idea?" I asked. "Why should I see a crazy man for an interview?"

"I think there is a story there," replied Grantham. "It's just one of those hunches of mine. I've paved the way for you, and Doctor Farquhar expects you at the County Hospital at eight o'clock tonight. See what you can get."

Tex Grantham and I were old friends. Though I was a free lance in newspaper work, my stories of night life in Chicago had often appeared in the big daily paper of which he was Night Editor. Sometimes he tipped me off to things which might almost be called assignments—items hardly worth a regular reporter's time, and never of a pressing news nature; but some of the best stories I had written in ten years of night life had come from just such unpromising beginnings.

Here indeed was a case seeming to offer little. A middle-aged foreigner had gone violent while under the influence of moonshine whisky, and had babbled that his alarm clock was haunted. The police had clapped him into a cell to sleep it off, but when he had slept the moonshine off he still babbled of his haunted alarm clock. He was now in the County Hospital, under observation to determine his sanity.

I could see the reasons for Tex Grantham's hunch easily enough. If a fact seemed curious to him, he believed the reason for the fact might be even more curious. What he called a hunch was merely logical reasoning based on a keen observation of life.

For my part, the stories I liked best were the ones which did have curious beginnings. People, rather than events, interested me. Tex laughingly called me his "mental specialist," and it was in line with that idea for him to suggest that what seemed a whisky-born dream about a haunted alarm clock might have a real story back of it.

I HAD ridden in more than one police ambulance with Doctor Farquhar, and he greeted me with a grin when I reached the hospital at eight o'clock. Five minutes later I was sitting beside the bed of Francois Fircone in Ward D.

"Give me a chance at him alone, will you, Doc?" I begged.

"Fifteen minutes," replied Farquhar with a friendly wave

of the hand as he moved away to other beds in the ward.

The man in bed before me had his head bandaged. The police had handled him roughly in taming him. He was conscious and awake, however, and willing to talk.

"I am a friend of Doctor Farquhar," I began, using the approach we had planned. "The Doctor says you are a foreigner, and without friends in the city. We would like to be your friends, and see that you pull out of this trouble all right if you will let us. I'm a little better fixed for time than the Doctor is, so I've called to see if there is anything I can do. I am a newspaper writer."

"You are right—I have no friends," said a hoarse voice from behind the bandages which partially covered the man's face. His black eyes gleamed with a light which certainly did not seem natural, as he bent on me a look half suspicious and half eagerly welcoming.

"What was the trouble?" I asked.

There was a long moment of silence, as the piercing black eyes searched my face. Then came the hoarse voice again, in good enough English, though with a slight foreign accent.

"Monsieur I am not crazy. I have been through enough to make me crazy, but I am not. What happened to me sounds impossible, but I know it happened. It was not moonshine which gave me my idea about the clock; it was the clock which drove me to the moonshine."

"Tell me about it. If you are in real trouble, we will see it through together," I promised.

"Ah, Monsieur, that is the most welcome word I have heard since I came to this great city. I will tell you what happened, and I do not care if you write about it. I have told it a hundred times already to the police, and they laughed and sent me here. Monsieur, there is something alive inside that alarm clock of mine, and it turns back the hands every night."

I could hardly repress a smile at this statement, and it must have shown in my eyes. I had had alarm clocks myself of which I could readily believe the same to be true.

The black eyes in the bandaged face regarded me with almost a glare. The man certainly was sober now, but there was no doubt that he was convinced he had been through a real and hideous ordeal, deluded though he may have been.

"You think I lie!" he cried, starting up in bed and gripping the blankets with tense hands. "Oh, my God! My God! I thought you would be a friend, but you are like the rest. I have had a nerve-breaking experience, and you, too, think I imagined it! For a week now I have sat in the dark by that clock, watching it in the faint light from the window and waiting for two o'clock to come, and every time it came—*the hands on the clock began to move the wrong way!* They set the time back four—six—sometimes eight hours. Sometimes they would jerk forward and back as though a child or a crazy person were playing with them, but after about five minutes it would all be over. The clock would begin its steady ticking again, but the hands would always be at a wrong hour."

"WHAT makes you think something moves the hands?" I asked. "Maybe something is wrong with the works." Here was a story sure enough, but no newspaper would handle it as an actual happening. They would give it a "laugh paragraph," and dismiss it as in the same class as perpetual-motion claims.

"In the last two weeks I have had a dozen clocks," cried Francois Fircone. "I, too, thought it was the works at first. They are cheap clocks, and I bought one after the other to try to get a good one. They all did the same thing; they all lost hours of time between midnight and morning. This week I went to bed one night and forgot to wind the clock. It was almost two o'clock when I went to bed. I lay there for a few minutes, and Monsieur—I heard that clock begin to jump around on the table! I could hear the bumping, and I could hear the bell tinkle!"

"What did you do?"

"I thought I must be half asleep, but I got up and switched on the electric light. The clock was in the air, ten inches above the table! The second the light went on, it fell to the table on its side, and the hands had been set back four hours! I tell you the truth, Monsieur."

"What do you think makes the hands go back?" I asked after a pause during which I had done some startled thinking.

There was another long moment of silence. Francois regarded me with eyes in which excitement was rapidly fanning fright into terror.

"It is haunted!" he cried. "It is haunted, I tell you! There is something inside of it! You don't realize, Monsieur, what it is to try to sleep in a room with such company!" Suddenly the poor fellow's body stiffened, and his eyes filled with a stony glare of horror. Before I could restrain him, he had hurled the blanket off and was frantically shaking me by the shoulders.

"It may not be inside the clocks!" he shouted. "There may be something in the room which I cannot see, which creeps about and may lay hands on *me* some night! Oh, Monsieur I will go crazy, *crazy!*"

The uproar Francois had made, quickly drew half a dozen interns and nurses to his bed. They forced him back into it, and strapped him down. They intended taking no more chances.

"YOU will have to go," said Doctor Farquhar to me. "It would not surprise me if I were criticized for letting you talk to him at all. We have been watching and making notes, and they will be useful, but you will have to go now."

Francois was straining at his straps, and trying to shout through the aluminum silencer cup which was fastened to his mouth.

"Let me say just one more word to him while you are here," I begged. "I think I can quiet him a little."

"All right—one minute," said the doctor.

"Listen, Francois," I said, bending over him. "I will be a real friend to you. Do not be afraid. Get well. If you are quiet and good, and show you have a good mind, they will let you go soon. As soon as you get out, I will come and live with you, and I will not leave until we find what this trouble is and drive it away. Do you understand?"

The struggling form became quiet, and the glare died in the burning eyes.

"Did you hear me?" I asked.

The bandaged head nodded, and an indistinct murmur came from the aluminum silencer cup over the mouth which a moment before had been raving. The black eyes rested on mine—with faith and comfort, I thought—and then turned to Doctor Farquhar's face with a look which seemed to say: "I am not insane, only frightened. I will show you I can be trusted, if you will only let this man help me."

"We'll let your friend come to see you every day while you are here, if you are good," said the Doctor to Francois—and as we turned down the ward and into the hall, he said to me, "By George, Bill! This doesn't look like the usual run of crazy cases to me. I wonder what happened to the fellow. Are you really going to live with him?"

"Yes," I answered. "I came here tonight to get a news story, but instead of an eccentric character I have found a suffering soul. I'm going to try to help him. I don't think he is crazy."

"Well," said Doctor Farquhar as we parted, "I'll save a bed here for you, in case you find the job drives you out of your head, too. And here is a tip: go and have a talk with Doctor Zeman. He makes a specialty of so-called

psychic stuff, and some of his scientific data may be useful to you. Meanwhile, if you should need an ambulance, give me a ring."

Prophetic words!

I visited Francois at the hospital every day, and he began to recover rapidly under the influence of friendship and hope. I also called on Doctor Zeman, who gave me several hours of his time and placed his library at my disposal. I found considerable scientific data which was a direct help in my problem.

Francois was discharged as sane, a week after my first call, and I went to live with him. He had a large, well furnished, third floor front room in the rooming-house district on West Washington Street. The only change we made in his previous arrangements was to add a cot for me, near the one he used.

Francois proved to be a waiter at one of Chicago's popular night clubs, on a shift which brought him home at one o'clock in the morning. He was well read, had traveled a good deal in Europe and spoke several languages well. His personality, though quiet, promised to make our association agreeable. I arranged my affairs so that I was free to meet him when his work was finished each night, and to join him before he came home.

The first night of our association began quietly. Francois seemed well poised and unafraid. We chatted until about one-thirty in the morning, and then climbed into our cots. The room was in darkness except for the faint light of the moon. We could see the dim outline of the little alarm clock on a large table near-by.

The Devil in the Clock

The night-club waiter raved hysterically about a haunted alarm clock—and William Stevens, a Chicago newspaper man, accompanied him to his lodgings. There the reporter discovered a room where horrible shapes flickered across the walls—without apparent cause! What did it mean? Can a shadow be ALIVE?

SLOWLY the hour of two approached. I could hear Francois' breathing become more rapid and nervous, and I could see that he was sitting up in bed. Except for the faint sound of his breathing and the ticking of the clock, there was absolute silence in the room. The window was wide open.

A faint breeze entered, swaying the curtains slightly. They quickly resumed their inert position, but I had the startling feeling that the breeze was still traveling about the room. Papers rustled here and there, a hanging picture tapped against the wall, and a book I had left standing on the bookcase fell to its side with a thump. Then the clock tinkled!

In spite of myself the gooseflesh went up my spine! A quick glance at Francois told me that he had thrown himself flat on his bed with his face in his hands, and was leaving the entire affair to me.

I fixed my eyes on the spot where the clock had been. To my amazement it no longer rested on the table, but seemed floating in the air a yard above it, where it moved about—sometimes slightly and sometimes violently, as though being shaken by some unseen hand. The bell tinkled frequently.

"This will not do," I said to myself. "Something is going on here beyond a doubt, but I will not find out what it is by lying still in the dark and waiting for it to explain itself."

Slipping from the cot, I softly crept on my hands and knees to the table, where I rose to my feet. The clock was floating in the air level with my breast, and seemed to be bobbing about. Cautiously I reached out and closed my hand around it. Nothing happened. I got it at an angle where the reflection of the moonlight fell on its dial, and I could see that *the hands had been set back six hours.* Silently and carefully I set the hands correctly, and then continued holding the clock in the air, with my fingers on the setting key.

The moonlight was slowly creeping across the floor, and the room was becoming lighter. I seemed absolutely alone at the table, and yet—suddenly—I could distinctly feel fingers on mine, trying to turn the set key at the back of the clock! They felt like fingers swathed in cotton wool, but they were unmistakably fingers.

"No wonder Francois got flighty if he tried anything like this many times," I thought. "This is uncanny."

Three—four—five times the unseen fingers tried to turn the key on which my restraining hand rested, and then they seemed to give up the attempt. For a moment there was a dead silence, except for the ticking of the clock and Francois' breathing; the next instant I could feel the fingers touching my shoulders, my arms, my legs, moving cautiously and lightly over my body.

To tell the truth, it got too much for me all of a sudden, and I let out a yell of revulsion and horror—and the moment I gave that yell, pandemonium broke loose in the room!

Something seemed to be hurling itself in all directions. Chairs overturned, pictures fell from the walls, and suddenly it seemed as though somebody was dashing across the table in front of me. Books and papers fell to the floor, the table lamp went over with a shattering of glass, and then the table itself went to the floor with a crash of breaking wood. Something like cigarette smoke, caught in a draft of air, went out the open window, and then a deep silence fell.

I snapped on the wall light. Francois was crouched on his cot, the old light of frenzied panic blazing in his eyes again. I think it was that glare which steadied me, for I was ready to shriek again myself.

I put the clock on the bookcase, and sat down beside Francois.

"What was it, Monsieur?" he asked in a hoarse whisper.

"FRANCOIS—I don't know," I answered. "There is something wrong here. You were not mistaken. There is something we cannot see which enters this room at night. I went through this experience in the dark tonight, for it was the only way in which I could find out for myself what the actions of this Thing have been like. But, Francois, I do not believe this visitor is after you. Whatever its purpose is, it seems to have little concern for the people in the room. In fact it seems afraid of people. Its actions seem to be a strange mixture of curiosity, timidity, ferocity and supernatural power. If such a thing were possible, I would say it was as nervous over being in this room as we are to have it here."

"Then why in God's name does it come here!" groaned the poor fellow, putting his shaking hand on my arm.

"I don't know," I replied truthfully. "It acts as though it had never *seen* a clock before, and was fascinated by it. We will find out the reason for these visits, though, and end them. You can safely go to sleep now. It won't come again tonight. I will sit up and watch, with the light on. Turn your back to the light and go to sleep."

After smoking a cigarette, he did as I ordered. In five minutes he was asleep, and I was sitting in his one big easy chair prepared to spend the rest of the night in thinking about the strange experience we had just gone through. When daylight came I was still sitting there, with two packages of cigarettes consumed, but with some new ideas. I fell asleep then, and slept until noon.

I awoke to find Francois gone, and the landlady knocking at the room door.

"A pretty how-do-ye-do!" she exclaimed, viewing the broken table and the disordered room. "I'll tell ye what it is, young fellow, I didn't think ye looked like a reliable party when ye came yesterday. If ye are going to have any more wild parties in this room, ye can leave right now. As I was saying to Mr. Christensen, the piana player on the first floor this morning——"

"I know—I know," I interrupted. "I'm very sorry, Mrs. Scorey. "We weren't having a wild party, however—not the kind you mean. We were making some experiments, and I know we made too much noise. Would this twenty-dollar bill enable you to repair the damage?"

Mrs. Scorey accepted the twenty-dollar bill with dignity.

"As I said to Mr. Christensen," she continued, "'Maybe them two gentlemen in the third floor front are rehearsing a play where they have to murder each other,' and Mr. Christensen he says, 'Well I hope they——'" The rest of it was lost to me, for I was half-way down the stairs.

THAT afternoon I installed additional electric wiring in the room, and when I had finished, I had twenty tiny small blue lights burning in frosted globes. They were so located that they would fill the room at night with an evenly diffused, blue light. Then I moved every piece of furniture, every picture and every ornament out of the room—except our two cots.

At one o'clock that night Francois and I began our vigil again.

"What are all the little blue lights for?" he asked.

"Francois, we are going to try to *watch* whatever it is that visits this room at night," I replied. "Even a vapor which cannot be seen by the naked eye will cast a yellow shadow if in the proper light. A diffused blue light, through which a yellow light travels from the side, will cause every object in the room to cast a yellow shadow. Look on the floor at your feet."

He did as I told him. "My shadow has become yellow!" he exclaimed.

"It is supposed that a red light, used as I am using these blue ones, would make an occult presence visible to the naked eye, but in this case that has a disadvantage. Red is a color which would register in the consciousness of the manifestation. The Thing would be aware that it was being watched. Blue will not register on its consciousness, just as blue does not register on a photographic plate. If my plans work as I expect them to, we will be able to observe the movements of our visitor by its yellow shadow tonight, in a room that to us will be lighted—and yet the Thing that visits us will believe that it is unobserved and is in a dark room."

"Why did you move all the furniture out?"

"Simply in order that nothing can obstruct our view of the yellow shadow."

Francois stared at his shadow, which lay like a pool of yellow fluid at his feet; then, with a start, he turned to me.

"It is nearly two o'clock," he whispered.

"Snap out the big ceiling light, and get on your cot," I whispered back, as I lay down on my bunk.

As I had expected, the tiny blue lights in their frosted globes filled the room with a faint blue glow, while the one subdued yellow wall light sufficiently upset the balance of diffusion so that the casting of a clearly discerned shadow was possible.

"Monsieur! The window!" came a whisper from Francois.

"Do not move," I said in a low tone. "No matter what happens, nor what our visitor or I do, do not move unless I tell you to."

The lace curtain at the window swayed slight as I ceased speaking, as though a breeze had come through it, and then—*over the sill slid a yellow shadow.* No mist was visible, only that yellow shadow, and it was a huge one. It must have taken at least a second for that yellow shadow to flow silently across the window sill and enter the room.

For a moment the shadow huddled in the center of the floor, as though puzzled by some new condition it could not identify. I was confident the blue lighting arrangement could not be the cause of this, and concluded it must be the absence of furniture in the room.

Lying motionless on my cot, and watching through half closed eyelids, I watched the yellow shadow on the floor, a shadow for which there was no visible reason. For a moment it remained stationary, as though listening, and then it moved uncertainly toward the spot where the table and clock had been. Evidently excited at not finding this familiar object, the yellow shadow seemed to begin a systematic search of the entire room, but whether for the clock or for some other object which might be the reason for its visits, I could not of course tell.

Faster and faster the yellow shadow swept round the walls. It paused for a moment beside Francois' cot, and then flowed partially over his legs. I could see the poor fellow shudder, but no sound escaped him. Finally the shadow stood beside *my* cot, and flowed partially over my legs and body. As the shadow touched me, I could distinctly feel the pressure of the same invisible fingers which had endeavored the previous night to remove my hands from the set key of the clock.

At last, as though satisfied from my motionless body, that I must be asleep, and that it was therefore free from chance of interruption or discovery, the yellow shadow seemed suddenly to act on a definite plan. It moved directly across the room and remained stationary on the floor close to the wall, moving slightly and jerkily at times as the shadow of a person might move who was working at something hanging on the wall. It remained there so long, that I, too, concentrated my gaze on the wall near where the shadow stood, and for the first time I saw the projecting steel knob of a wall safe, which had previously been concealed by a picture.

By pantomime with fingers and eyes, I asked Francois if the safe was locked. He nodded that it was, and then—with an inward prayer that he might live through the ordeal—I motioned to him to cross the room to where the yellow shadow was, and to *unlock the safe.*

As Francois drew near on this mission, the yellow shadow on the floor moved wildly, as though in anger or terrible eagerness, and when at last the trembling man stood before the safe, the shadow had fled to a near-by corner of the room and was huddled on the floor as though watching.

With swift though shaking fingers, Francois worked the simple combination of the safe lock, and then with blanched face and body bathed in perspiration, he leaped for my cot and threw himself beside me. For pure, silent courage in the face of a torturing fright, I have never seen the equal of his obedience in opening that safe.

HARDLY was the safe door open, before the yellow shadow leaped from its corner and sped to the safe. In a moment more a little shower of papers fell from it to the floor as though snatched out and dropped, and then—my startled eyes saw what seemed to be a little ivory idol burst forth from the safe cavity. The object hung in the air for a moment as if held in trembling hands, and then flew swiftly toward the open window. Underneath it—on the floor—keeping pace with its swift movement—was the yellow shadow! As it passed my cot, I was almost overwhelmed by a terrible odor, ammonia-like in intensity.

As the shadow reached the window, I pressed an extension-cord light switch which I held in my hand. Instantly all the lights in the room were extinguished, and in their place a vivid red spot-light flashed on and was directed squarely toward the window sill.

The yellow shadow had vanished, but in its place—standing upright on the sill and faintly materialized by the red light—was the figure of a gigantic man. It poised there for but a fraction of a second—there came a hollow, reverbera-

ting shriek of either triumph, fright or anger, and then the shadow and the ivory idol were gone into the night.

A cool night breeze, scented from some near-by flower box, entered the room through the still open window, and with its coming the terrible odor of the yellow shadow was swept away.

FRANCOIS had fainted. Nothing I could do restored him. I slipped into the hallway to the wall phone, and in a moment had called the County Hospital and got Doctor Farquhar on the wire. Twenty minutes later, thanks to a swift ambulance, Francois was on a hospital cot, breathing heavily, but conscious, and with his nervous and almost cataleptic seizure gone.

"What was the little ivory idol?" I asked when he was able to talk.

"I don't know *what* it was," he replied weakly. "I was in Cape Town, South Africa, a few months ago, as a waiter in the English Café there. One afternoon some English explorers who had been on a hunting trip in the interior, and who were waiting for their ship, called at the café. After serving them, I stood watching a group of their native porters in the street outside. From one of them I bought that idol. He claimed he had made it while on the hunting trip. It was a crude piece of work, with jagged ends, as though broken from a larger piece.

"When I arrived in Chicago, I put the idol in the wall safe some previous lodger had had installed in the room, not because I thought it valuable, but because it seemed peculiar."

"I'll freely admit it was peculiar!" I exclaimed. "The excitement is over, however, and you will not be visited again by whatever it was that wanted that idol."

My prediction proved true, for the terrible night prowler never again visited the room, to which we returned that night, and where we talked for hours as I wrote this manuscript.

South Africa—voodoo—head hunters—tremendous beasts! Could our ferocious visitor have any connection with any of these? Did the setting back of the clock hands simply represent the fascinated curiousity of some savage? What did that terrible odor mean? Was it the breath of the jungle?

We could arrive at no answer to our questions, and the next day I submitted this manuscript to Tex Grantham, as a news item for his paper. He read it through without comment.

When he had finished reading he said, "Bill, I can't run this story. I'll admit that I think it is all true, but the occult is something a modern newspaper won't touch. To show you that my decision is due to policy and not disbelief however, I am going to show you something which seems to have such a startling bearing on what you went through, that it makes my hair feel creepy."

He touched a buzzer on his desk, and a few minutes later he handed me a decoded press dispatch from the newspaper's representative in London, England. It read as follows:

> A rather mysterious happening occurred in the anthropological section of the National History Museum in South Kensington last night.
>
> The Suffolk Exploration Expedition to Central Africa had recently presented the museum with the skeleton of a gigantic gorilla, perfect except that a section of one arm bone was missing. For a month the directors have debated whether or not to supply this missing part artificially, but when the museum was opened at nine o'clock this morning the missing section of the gorilla's fore-arm was found clutched in one skeleton hand.
>
> The surface of the piece of bone had been crudely carved into an idol, but the jagged ends fitted perfectly into the fractured portion of the animal's arm.

Told by a Jesuit

OUT of the shadowy past of American settlement days comes a queer story of occult happenings, as related by one of the pioneer Jesuit Fathers.

The story concerns the death of an Indian named Sasonsmat. He was about thirty years old. Having fallen desperately ill, he was baptized without his knowledge, while in a state of coma, on the night of January 26th, 1663.

Two days later he died, and Father Le Jeune writes as follows:

"One quite remarkable thing happened a few hours after his death. A great light appeared at the window of the house, rising and falling three times. One of our Fathers saw the flash as did several of our men, who went out immediately, some to see if part of our house had not taken fire, the others to see if it were lightning. Having found no trace of this fire, they believed that God was declaring through this phenomenon the light that was being enjoyed by the soul that had just left us. The savages belonging to the cabin of the deceased saw this light in the woods where they had withdrawn, and it frightened them all the more as they thought it was a foreshadowing of future deaths in their family.

"I was then some forty leagues from Kebec, in the cabin of the brothers of the dead man, and this light appeared there, at the same time and at the same hour, as we have since observed, Father Brebaeuf and I, by comparing our notes. My host, brother of the deceased, having perceived it, rushed out in horror; and seeing it repeated, cried out in such astonishment that all the savages, and I with them, rushed out of our cabins. Having found my host all distracted, I tried to tell him that this fire was only lightning and that he need not be frightened; he answered me very aptly that lightning appeared and disappeared in an instant, but that this fire moved before his eye for some time.

"'Besides,' he said to me, 'hast thou ever seen lightning or thunder in such piercing cold as that which we are feeling now?' It was, indeed, very cold. 'It is,' he said, 'a bad omen; it is a sign of death.' He added that the Manitou, or Devil, fed on these flames."

The attempt at a naturalistic explanation, followed immediately by the construction of a theory, each according to his disposition, is very interesting.

ANOTHER savage, who was baptized Joseph, is reported to have had the experience which we should colloquially describe as "seeing a ghost."

"Since I have referred to this man," says Le Jeune (*Jesuit Relations, viii,* 137), "I will tell a memorable thing which happened to him after his baptism. The Devil appeared to him in the form of one of his deceased brothers. Entering his cabin without any salutation, he sat down on the other side of the fire opposite our new Christian and remained a long time without speaking. At last, beginning to speak, he said to him, 'How now, my brother, do you wish to leave us?'

"Our Joseph, who was not yet sufficiently equipped for this warfare replied, 'No, my brother, I don't wish to leave you; I will not leave you.' And it is said that this false brother then began to caress him. Still, he has since declared several times that he desired to go to Heaven."

Another man was, one would suppose, afflicted with paranoia. He was the son of a chief, and had lost at the "game of straws" a fur robe and several hundred beads. He was a melancholy man, who heard a voice telling him to hang himself, which he eventually did—just as our modern attempted suicides "hear voices" inciting them to crime.

MARKED *with a* CURSE 300 Years Old

They said that the hate of the ancient dead followed my family forever—that I would bring disaster to any one I loved! Was it true? Can an innocent girl be punished for the sins of her fathers?

By RITA MARTINEZ

The horror of that moment held me speechless

I WHO loved Life, yet laughed at it, swore that it should be my slave. I would do what I wished always — would never bend, lest I should break.

I remember saying this when I was sixteen to the kindly woman who was at the head of the exclusive girls' school which I attended. She surveyed my slim, young defiance — wistfully, it seemed to me. There was fear in her eyes—she had let life frighten her.

"Oh, Rita, Rita!" It was a sigh. "You are such a beautiful little madcap. I hope there may be some shining, strange escape for you—perhaps a Guardian Angel——"

I said, "You know that I do not believe in angels, Miss Ostrander—or devils. I care only for happiness—it is my god—and I shall find it in my own way—shall find it, regardless——"

I was following in the footsteps of my handsome young father, worshiping his laughing arrogance—his fearlessness. And while conforming to law always—absolutely lawless.

Our family was an old one in this young country—over one hundred and fifty years in America—with a well-established history for three centuries back of that and a legendary background that reached to the Middle Ages. A tragic, eager race the Martinez—set in a landscape of grim old castles in the mountains of southern Europe.

During my father's college years he had spent two vacations in our ancestral home. He had brought back a collection of weird tales: history and legend blended into a rude narrative of the Martinez family and the Black Ghost that walked in its wake, taking heavy toll of all who were unfortunate enough to be born or to love a Martinez.

Centuries ago, according to the story that he told laughingly, the Romero family had laid their curse upon the Martinez. To avenge a minor wrong a Martinez had stolen the lovely daughter of his enemy. Then had all the living and dead ancestors of "The Stolen Princess, the lily-white child," cursed the house of Martinez—both then and forever, until a Martinez should bring again to the grim old castle as lovely and fair a child as they had stolen away. Until that time anyone who loved or married a Martinez would suffer a terrible fate.

He joked gaily about the ghastly things he had unearthed about our ancestors in the mountains of Spain. He pointed out my pretty, placid mother as an example—did any woman have an easier existence than she?

Like Dad, I loved and petted Mother—but it was he to whom I always went with my girlish problems—and it was he who taught me my code.

"Take what you want, Rita," he said. "Life is short—let nothing stand in your way. Fear nothing—but always respect honorable weakness. Never hesitate to fight with an adversary who is stronger than yourself. Spirit will win. Fight fair—but get what you want from life. If you meet defeat at the hands of a better fighter, don't cry—never whine—and don't be a quitter—ever."

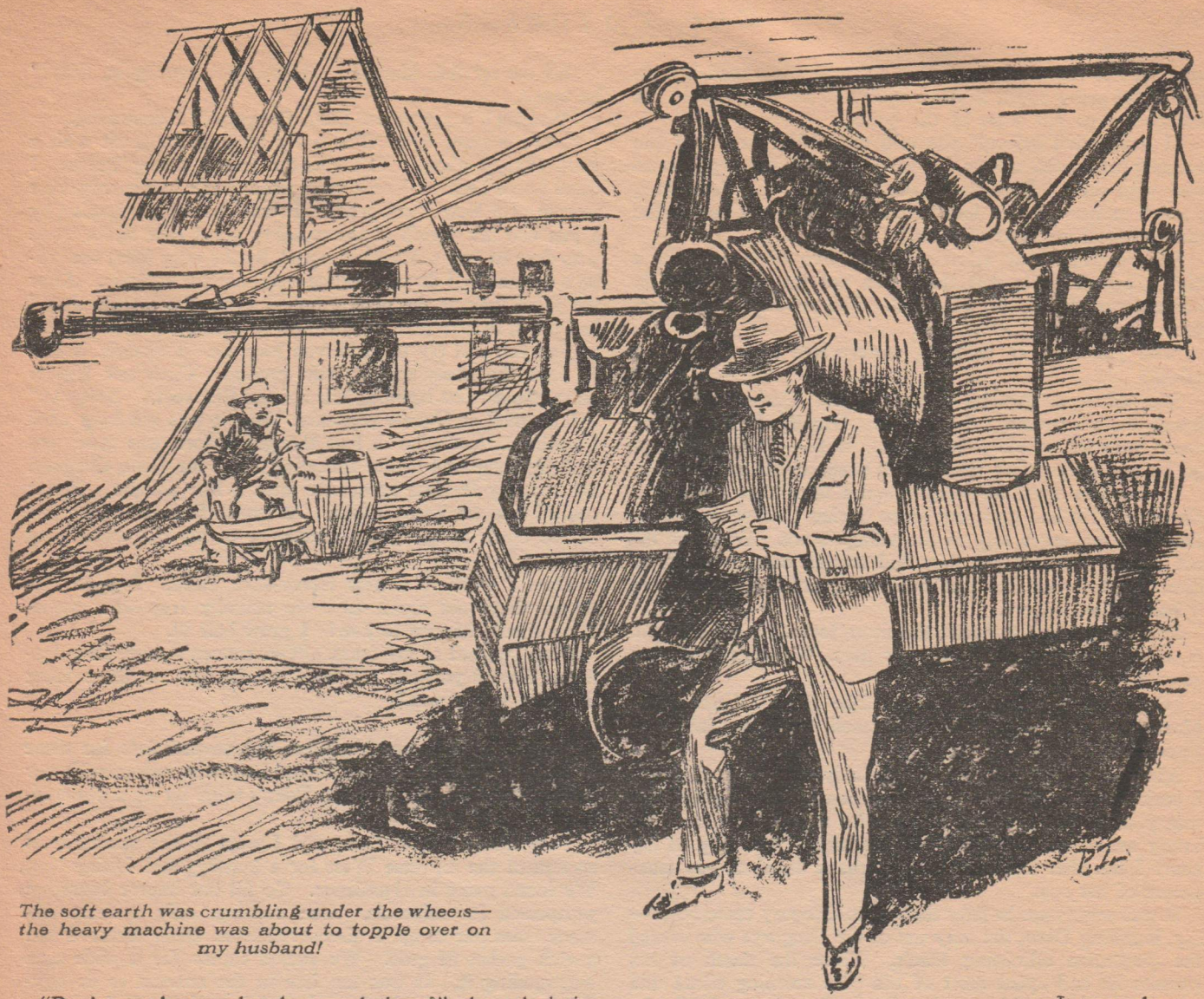
I grew up with that code—a man's code—and I was but a small person, slight almost to fragility, but I had all the fire that had gone with the Martinez for uncounted generations.

After I had acquired what learning and polish I was able to absorb at Miss Ostrander's Boarding School, I returned home. Home was a rambling old mansion at the edge of a Southern town. I set out at once to try to get the dust of learning out of my brain by having all the fun possible. I was the first girl in our set to learn to drive a car—of course Dad got one for me. I tore through the country in my bright, shiny roadster at a pace that caused the older women to shake their heads and predict some dire disaster.

DAD was loath to give up his horses—he kept a stable full of really fine ones—and on my seventeenth birthday he gave me a beautiful bay mare, a single-footer, splendidly gaited. Immediately I parked the car in a shed down by the barn and started riding. All of the younger members of my set rode a great deal. I rode with them—when I had worn them out, I went alone—and, finally, I helped myself to Dad's stables and asked one of the girls I had met several times in Klockar's Coat House to ride with me.

It was through this girl, Winnie Baker, that I learned a thing that had been kept a secret from me. As we passed along the road near home, we talked of the place—of a wing of the house that had been closed for years.

"No, I don't know why it is closed," I said in answer to her question.



The soft earth was crumbling under the wheels—the heavy machine was about to topple over on my husband!

"Don't you know what happened there?" she asked, in surprise. "It has never been used since your grandmother hung herself. Folks around here say that it is haunted—that there are strange lights there."

"I did not know that my grandmother killed herself. Another of those unfortunates who loved a Martinez," I said.

"Oh, no," Winnie declared earnestly. "She did not love her husband. She was in love with another boy—was afraid of your grandfather. It was her folks who made her marry him—he was a Martinez, rich and powerful.

"One night, when your grandfather was away, she went to a party and danced several times with the lad she had wanted to marry. Her husband went into a rage when he heard of it; he swore that he was going to thrash the other chap and left the house in a rage. When he returned, sorry and ashamed, an hour later, she had hung herself.

"My own grandmother was there, making the first little colored dress for your father. She saw your grandmother hanging to the high bed."

"Well," I said, "that is something new—I hadn't heard that."

"I shouldn't have said anything," she murmured nervously. "But I supposed you must have heard the negroes talking—they are scared to death of that wing of your house."

"The house servants are always talking of ghosts—they are such cowards. I despise them," I said.

"Grandmother says that something terrible happens to those who love a Martinez," she went on.

"There are usually plenty of people who seem willing to tempt fate," I commented carelessly, dismissing the subject.

But in my heart I felt a strange coldness—emptiness. Were we different from other folk? I wondered.

It was shortly after I was eighteen that I met Gene Watson. He had come South for the races. As the hotels in our little city were either totally or partially failures, Dad, who had met Gene before, invited him out to stay with us.

Gene was a Northerner—different from the youths that I had been reared among. It was my first violent love-affair. Before he left, we became engaged.

Dad didn't say much, but I sensed that he felt and hoped that the romance would die a natural death—and he felt that the less he said, the better it would be.

The evening before he went North, Gene said: "Rita, you and my mother are the most wonderful women in all the world—I want you to love each other. You will love her, won't you, my sweet?"

"I cannot promise to love anyone, Gene," I answered honestly. "I love you—but love is not a thing one can promise lightly."

I FOUND it easy, however, to respect and admire the charming woman who came down with Gene a short time later. At my parents' urgent invitation they spent several weeks with us. Gene wanted Dad to take him on a fishing trip down the lagoons during September.

Mrs. Watson was a delightful guest. She seemed to love our country and spent many afternoons riding about the hills, gathering up bits of handwork for which the mountain women were famed. Old Aunt Sally Harrison's cabin was her favorite rendezvous—Aunt Sally's pieced quilts were remarkable for the fineness of the work and the striking designs which she achieved.

Dad left with Gene early in September for a week's fish-

ing. A few mornings later Mrs. Watson announced her intention of going again to Aunt Sally's to see if she could not induce her to sell some of the quilts.

"I have tried before," she told me. "I'm sure that she actually needs the money for food—but she cannot bear to part with them. Perhaps—" she laughed—"if I listen long enough to her tales of folk hereabout, I can put her in the humor to sell me some of them."

She returned that afternoon with five of Aunt Sally's highly prized quilts, but there was not the satisfaction in her manner that I had expected. She answered my questions in a strange, lifeless tone.

"Did you have to listen to some weird tales today?" I asked.

She shivered slightly. "Yes, dear. Unaccountably, I found them extremely depressing. Usually I do not pay much attention to old wives' tales. But——" She did not go on and all evening she seemed preoccupied and restless.

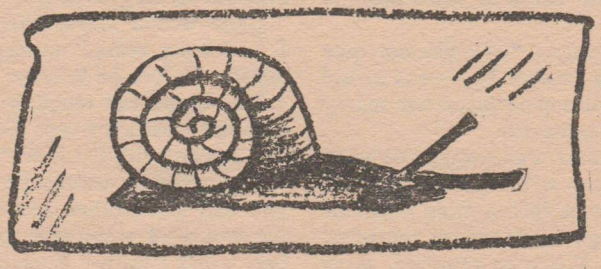
It was less than forty-eight hours later that Gene was drowned. He had gone out alone during the evening while Dad was making a trip to the village store. When he did not return by midnight they had started out in search of him. At daybreak they had found his overturned boat where it had drifted ashore.

Dad came home to break the news to us. I sat stunned. A strange expression came over Mrs. Watson's face; her gray eyes distended.

"Oh, God—my boy, my boy! The Black Ghost of the Martinez—oh, if only I had listened to Aunt Sally before——"

After all hope of finding Gene's body was gone, Dad and I took Mrs. Watson back to her home. Throughout the weary days that she had stayed with us she had been her lovely self—after her first wild outburst. But deep in my heart I felt that she feared us—perhaps hated us—as murderers of her son.

It was some months later that Dean Gregory came home—big, laughing Dean, the only son of the Gregorys who owned the plantation adjoining Dad's. Since the death of his parents he had spent most of his time roaming about odd corners of the world—Alaska, South America and Siberia. Rich, sophisticated, good-looking, he was eagerly welcomed home. I smiled to myself as I remembered my girlish passion, cherished in secret, for him. He was eight years older than I—this made him almost a deity to me. I was still a youngster when he had come home the last time.



Everyone entertained for him, but I took no part in the gaieties, for Gene's death had shocked me into a subdued state of mind. Dean came to the house several times to see Dad, but though he always asked for me, I kept out of sight.

It was a lovely evening in spring when I saw him first. I was taking my horse to the stables after a ride. My parents had begun to insist that I get out again. As I led Rambler through the gate, I heard a merry hail.

"Hello, Small Person! Where have you been hiding all winter?"

I glanced around in surprise and saw Dean Gregory looking across the fence.

"Why, hello, Dean," I answered. "I have just been thinking of you."

"Well, I'm sure glad to find you again," he said as he climbed to my side. "I had begun to fear that your retreat was permanent. Why the desire for secrecy, Rita?" He grasped both my hands. "Don't you think that your old friends want to see you? What you been doing?"

"Trying to lay the ghost——"

"Of the terrible Martinez. Has it got your goat, Rita?" he asked.

"Wouldn't it get yours, Dean Gregory?" I demanded.

"Nary a goat, Rita. I'm fairly longing for a tilt with a good snappy ghost. Tell you the truth, Young Person, I came home because I saw your photograph in the magazine section of a New York paper. It was charmingly headed by a pen and ink sketch of the naughty ghost that stalks those who dare to love a Martinez. And, by the way, Rita, the picture did not half do you justice—you are truly lovely. After the third look at the photograph, I knew for certain that I had fallen in love with a Martinez, so I hurried home at once to find you and try to make you love me. I thought it best to fight the ghost on his own ground. Can't ask him to wear himself out running half around the world. He's old."

I laughed at Dean's nonsense. But it was not long until I realized that what I had thought before was love was nothing compared to the adoration I felt for Dean Gregory. He met my fearless arrogance with a like amount. Never could I find weakness in him. At length I ceased trying and settled down to spend the remainder of my life worshiping him.

Then I woke to a new terror—for Dean. Suppose the things they told about us were actually true—that something should happen to him! I grew half ill.

Dean laughed at my fears. "Old women's stuff, Rita darling. Surely you are too free, too fearless, to let a thing like that worry you."

IT might be old women's tales—but nevertheless for three hundred years the bitter legend had been woven with our name. I would not accede to Dean's wish for an early wedding.

That summer Dad, Dean and I went to the mountainous section of the extreme West for a hunting and fishing trip. We found game in abundance. To fill our leisure hours we prospected for minerals. One evening, only a short distance from our camp, I discovered what Dean declared was a rich pocket of gold. We staked claims for a wide area surrounding it. It was too late in the autumn to do anything with it, so we filed mining claims, then left for home.

"Next year," we said, "we will go back and see what can be done about getting out the gold."

Man plans—Fate acts. Who can foresee the future?

In the long parlors of the big old house that my great-grandfather Martinez had built a hundred years before, Dean and I were married at Christmas. Even Mother was pleased. Dean's firm young hand had quieted—steadied—the restless spirit of her girl. Frankly, Father welcomed Dean as a son.

We did not care for a regulation honeymoon in Europe and it was too early for our mountain trip; so we set out for the unbeaten paths of the American Desert in the Southwest. Here we wandered for several months through New Mexico, Arizona, the Mojave, and even into Death Valley, in California.

About Easter we decided to go home, for I found that there was to be a baby. We were delighted.

"A son—like you, my husband," I said. "As beautiful, as wise and as good. Or is that asking too much of the gods? I ask nothing more. I am willing to do without the luxuries I have known, willing to work, dear, with my hands—work hard—for a life with you, for sons like you."

He held me closely. "Dear little beautiful one, I pray that life may be as beautiful, as wonderful as you deserve—always. May there be from grief, from pain, some shining, strange escape."

I started at the words. Where had I heard them before?

We went home. Dean was having the old Gregory house remodeled. It was to be ready for us on our return. Dad had wanted us to stay with them—there was plenty of room for separate households. But I had not wanted to—perhaps the ghost would not follow us to another house.

Dean had an office in town and became interested in civic affairs. He found how "the other half" were living—the sordid poverty of the mill workers—that young folks went to the bad there simply because they had no place else to go. With his eyes opened to conditions, he set about trying to help. We began by turning some of our rear lots into tennis and croquet grounds which we opened to the young people who needed them.

Then our little son was born—a splendidly healthy little chap. Life moved along joyously for a year or two. Then tragedy struck like lightning. Dad was away on a trip. A wind arose in the night and Mother was annoyed by a loose shutter in the unused wing of the house. She asked one of the negroes to fix it the next day. Needless to say, he did not do it. The second day she came over to see me and spoke of the shutter.

"IT gets on my nerves, Rita," she told me, "when I'm alone. It sounds like someone knocking excitedly."

"Stay with us tonight, Mother," I said. But she felt that she could not as Dad might come home during the night. I knew that it would do no good to urge her, so I said: "I'll send Dean over to fix it for you, Mother, as soon as he gets in." I was sure that she could never force one of the frightened negroes to go into that part of the house.

But after she reached home she decided that she could easily fix the shutter herself. She leaned too far out, lost her balance and fell to the patio below. She died an hour later.

Weeping bitterly, I turned away from the bed where she lay. The curse had claimed another victim—my own poor little mother.

A year passed. October came—almost my fifth wedding anniversary. Years of glorious happiness, marred only by the tragedy that had snuffed out the life of my mother before she had reached her fortieth birthday. Again we were planning for a baby—a daughter, we hoped, to share the holidays with us. Even Dad seemed more cheerful than he had been for a long time.

October, in our climate, is the most glorious month of the year. Dean came home at noon one day—the twentieth, it was. He had ordered another lot leveled for an extra tennis court. Our venture had proved so successful that there was not enough room for those who came to play.

"Feel up to going over later to see how the work is progressing?" he asked after he had kissed me.

"Surely. I've been ghastly lazy all morning, Dean. I'm so glad that you came to stir me up a bit. Just see all the tiny stitches I've put in this little frock—would you have suspected me of being capable of such work?" I asked, holding up the tiny dress.

My husband took it and examined it carefully. "Beautiful, Rita," he said. "Yes, my darling, I would have known that you would do anything well that you chose to do at all."

We walked slowly down the long yard, pausing often to admire an especially brilliant bit of foliage or a late flower that blossomed in the garden. The salvia, asters and chrysanthemums were gorgeous.

"Rita." Dean's arm slipped about me again. Seldom did he bestow his caresses where there was a chance of being seen. "Rita, life is so wonderful, so happy, that sometimes I'm almost afraid. I have spent so many lonely years. Even yet it seems as though I've been plunged into a happy dream—that soon I'll awaken to find emptiness—nothingness——" He shivered in spite of the warm, bright sunshine that flooded the world.

I left him at the gate and went back to the house. Half an hour later I walked over to the new tennis court, leading my little boy by the hand. I arrived just in time to witness the most terrible tragedy of my life.

A huge cement-mixing machine had been dragged across to the new court, from a house that was under construction near-by—and Dean was standing with his back to it, making notes. Suddenly I saw that the soft earth was crumbling under the wheels—that the heavy machine was about to topple over on my husband! The horror of that moment held me speechless. I could not even scream a warning. In an instant it had happened—the thing fell over on its side, crushing him down—down, into the earth.

Mercifully, he was quite dead—he did not have to suffer.

Before he was buried, our little girl was born. I called her by the name that Dean had chosen—Stephanie.

HOW I hated life—the earth, the sun, everything! Only the fact that I had been reared to despise quitters—and knew that Dean would not want it—kept me from taking my own life, mine and the children's. Life would mean only misery for them—for were they not born under a curse? Would not death, kindly oblivion, be preferable?

But—came the maddening fear—was there any certainty of escape through death? We were not cursed by the living but by the dead—the old, old dead. Even in the Way of Oblivion there was no surety of laying the Black Ghost.

In the spring, with my father and with little Dean and Baby Stephanie, I moved to the Pacific Coast. We took a beautiful place high on a hill that overlooked the sea. There I set about working over the frayed fabric of my life. Dad would divide his time between us and the work at our mines.

From the day of her birth my baby had possessed beauty—a fair beauty foreign to either the Gregorys or the Martinez. People invariably exclaimed at her loveliness. But always when I looked at her there was a strange, torturing fear in my heart. My son was a splendid little chap. I gloried in his sturdy good looks—but there was an ethereal quality

about Baby Stephanie that hurt cruelly. I wanted just a cuddly baby upon whom I could lavish my devotion—something to help me forget the anguished loneliness of life without my husband.

One morning Dad came into the nursery while I was dressing the baby. He took her up as I finished.

"Rita," he asked, "where have I seen the exact likeness of this child? I have been puzzled over it for weeks. Sometimes I have thought it was your mother—sometimes my own mother. But it is neither. Somewhere—sometime—I have seen someone whom she is like, but who?"

"Oh, Dad," I cried, "please don't say that. I have felt it, too, and it frightens me. Oh! I want her to be just an ordinary little fat, pudgy baby. But——"

"Why, child," he said, "you are nervous. There is no reason why she should not be a beautiful baby; both you and her father——" He broke off queerly, put the baby in my lap, passed his hands across his eyes.

Suddenly, into my heart leaped the fatal knowledge. I knew—oh, I knew too well! My baby was the image of the painting of "The Stolen Princess." In a gallery in Madrid long ago my father and I had seen a painting by one of the world's great artists——

I RAISED terror-stricken eyes to Dad—met his stricken gaze—knew, with fearful anguish, that he had realized the truth, even as I had.

"Dad," I cried, "what does it mean? What is going to happen to my baby! Why is she marked with the curse of the Martinez? Oh!" I shivered uncontrollably. "I am so afraid—so afraid!"

My father tried to comfort me, but I knew that fear possessed him, too. Through Mother's death, through the awful anguish of losing Dean, I had fought—fought desperately—for self-control, poise. I knew that I must carry on. There was little Dean, Baby Stephanie, to whom I owed the right to a happy, fearless existence.

I was broken, spirit and body, by my little girl's resemblance to that other baby of long ago. Desperately I clung to both children. Never for a moment were they out of my sight. I slept on a couch drawn between their beds, and every night I fought sleep as long as possible.

I was worn, old and haggard at twenty-six. Daily, little Stephanie grew more like the painting. Each sight of her tortured my heart anew—yet I could not bear to have her out of my sight an instant.

One wild October night, All Soul's Night, I sat alone in the house. The servants, Rachael and Elsa, who had come west with me, had gone to a ball given by the local colored people. I had dreaded to be alone but knew that they missed their people and friends and so had urged them to go.

Far below I could hear the wild dashing of the waves. From somewhere a buoy screamed eerily—a weird cry from the wind. I felt a mounting sense of terror—doom—as the fury of the storm increased. I went to the windows, pulled down the blinds—but that was worse. The rain beating against the windows sounded like the knocking of little fingers. I flung up the blinds again, hurriedly.

For an hour or more I stood there. Again and again I tried to tear myself away. Across the room my little lad stirred in his sleep. I caught my breath with a terrified sob.

"Oh, if there were only someone here with me! Dean, where are you? Could you not come back to earth for one little hour?"

For months nothing had seemed real. Something—some terrific force—was tearing my very soul to shreds. Baby Stephanie did not belong to me. She was a pawn of fate, with which I must pay the Martinez debt to the Romeros.

I tried to fight away from the certainty that I had no recourse. Surely I was mad. Grief had driven me insane. There was nothing—no living thing—that could force me to give up my baby.

"No living thing!" From out in the night my thought was picked up—shouted back to me. Standing there with my face pressed against the glass, I knew, inevitably, that it was no living thing that would eventually force me to sacrifice my baby. It was a thousand times stronger than earthly force. It was generations of dead and gone Romeros—a terrific legion—who on this night, when souls again have freedom to seek their earthly haunts, would find their way to me! They were coming—to demand my lovely girl child!

From somewhere I heard a clock strike—a slow tolling of the hour. *One*—like a hammer the sound fell across my heart. *Two*—slow, horrible. I tried again to tear myself away from the window—back to the bedside of Dean and Stephanie. Perhaps if I could touch their warm little bodies—*Three!* I could not move. On and on went the tolling strokes. Dear Heaven—let me turn away from the black night—into the warm brightness of the room!

Twelve! Across the blackness of the night I saw them—those old, old dead. Faces, faces, faces! Would the procession never end? Young, lovely faces—old ones—harsh, cruel visages!

"God! God!" I screamed in horror.

Then, like a petal flower afloat upon the storm—the Baby—in the arms of a sweet, sad-faced girl mother. As she drew near, she smiled, wistfully, tenderly, and seemed to speak.

I was screaming, but my cries were as voiceless, as silent, as that strange procession. My body seemed to crumple—I found peace in merciful oblivion.

Rachael found me there when she came in at two. The doctor she called said that I was suffering from shock; urged that I go to a sanitarium for a rest. But I would not leave my children. Baby Stephanie was mine only for a short time longer—I knew. Either I must obey those unheard voices, or they would take her away.

Doctor Gray questioned me as to what had caused my collapse, but I could not tell him. I knew he would call me insane. In my heart I wished it was true. Things would be far simpler, that way. It was only to my father that I could tell all that had happened.

"And," I ended wearily, "there is no use to fight—I've got to take my baby back to that land—to the Romeros. It is the only way to save my babies from a life like yours—like mine. I can stand anything—anything—if I can save them. I don't know why it is that I have to do this—but last night I knew that the end had come. I've fought against the certainty since Stephanie was four months old—I've tried to think that grief had unbalanced me mentally. Oh, Dad, I wish I could think it was only that——"

"I wish so, too, Rita—but I know it is not. We must go back to the land of our ancestors, to the land of the Basque—our people, daughter——"

A MONTH later we reached the land of the Martinez—a lovely valley in the mountains. The last Martinez had died five years ago, the old innkeeper told us. The Romeros?

"The Martinez and the Romeros were the oldest families in all the Valley, but they are gone." He shook his head sadly. "There's but one of the Romeros left. She was a great lady—beautiful as she was good. But she's dying now. A saint she was—on earth. It's now almost two months ago that she and her husband and little girl met with an accident. The baby was killed outright. The young master was little hurt—but our Lady lies dying—from her injuries and from grief for her lost baby. The great doctors who come from the city below say that she would live if it were not for her wanting the babe so terribly. It's a sad business for the Valley. If prayers will save her, she will have the prayers of both the living and the dead."

With a stifled sob I broke away from the garrulous old fellow. I knew—oh, I knew that both the living and the dead were trying to save—the Beloved Lady. The next morning, with my baby, I set out for the Upper Valley.

We wound through the estate surrounding the rambling

old house that had been built almost upon the ground once occupied by the castle of the Romeros. Everything lay hushed—a grim silence. At our swinging of the huge knocker an old man came out.

"Are you expected?" he asked.

"I—I do not know——" I said. "I must see your master."

"I am sorry—Our Lady is dying."

"I must see him, I tell you. I have come all the way from America." Little Stephanie, who had been lying in my arms, suddenly raised her lovely, sleep-flushed face.

The old man cried aloud: "Where did you get our little one? You have brought her back! But—but—she is dead." He stared in bewilderment.

"WE must see your master," I repeated. All at once I became conscious of a presence upon the balcony directly above me. I heard a hoarse cry—a wild-eyed man came running down the stairs.

"My baby—where did you get my baby?" His breath came in hoarse, gasping sobs. He tore her from my arms.

"No, no—she is mine! But I have brought her to you."

With that he seemed to recover his native politeness. "A thousand pardons, Madame," he said, bowing. "I am beside myself with grief. We have lost our baby—so recently. Your baby is so like our Larlie, it has made me forget." His voice was delightful.

"Will you not enter my house? We are sad today. My wife——" His voice faltered, broke. "But you—you must come and rest."

"Yes," I said mechanically, "we must go in. We have come seven thousand miles to find you. There is much that I must say before I go——"

When we were inside I said, "I am a Martinez—from this Valley." I waited for what he would say.

"A Martinez—one of us!" The first smile that I had seen on his said face, appeared. "Ah! I welcome you back home. I am honored that you have chosen my home—to visit. The Martinez were a splendid race. I hope that it is to stay you have returned." His words were casual, but his eyes never left little Stephanie's face. He was wondering—wondering.

"No! Oh, no!" I shuddered. "You are kind, but surely you know that the Martinez—are cursed by the Romeros. Wait until you have heard all." Swiftly I sketched the tragedy of our lives. "So, you see, to save my baby I am losing her—bringing her back to a Romero."

He spoke: "You poor child, you poor girl! I am, oh, very sad for you—for all the ache of your heart. But I believe your coming now may save my lovely girl wife. I would never, never take away your beautiful baby. I have had to lose a child as fair—I know the pain, the loneliness. But, if you will be so kind as to lend her to us—for a little—my wife will think it is our own Larlie—in her weakness. When she gains strength she will fight through. She is fine—brave. She will carry on, when she is normal again. And you—you, kind lady—neighbor—you will have brought life and healing again to the last of the Romeros. Then shall the Black Ghost forgive—and the Martinez line carry on bravely, valiantly, as becomes such a splendid people."

So a Martinez carried to the house of the enemy a girl child as lovely as The Stolen Princess. And the baby gave to the stricken young mother peace of mind—strength enough to tide her over the crisis of her illness. Eventually she grew well and strong.

Today she has another little girl and two sturdy sons. Always, though, my little girl Stephanie seems as close to her heart as any of her own. I, too, have found peace at last. Through my friendship with a Romero I have come to spend part of each year in that land. And several times she and her husband have visited us here in America. Dean is growing more like his father each day—as handsome, and as fearless and happy. How my heart rejoices as I watch my two healthy, care-free young folks! For I seem to know—now that the debt to the Romeros has been paid—that the Black Ghost will let us live in peace—forever.

"You Will Die at Twenty-Six!"

A TRULY strange story is told by Doctor A. A. Liébeault. He was a pioneer in his profession, concerning whom another prominent authority has said: "It is to the genius of Liébeault, as well as to his enthusiasm and singleness of heart, that we owe the full recognition of the part played by suggestion, verbal or otherwise, in psychical research, as well as in the cure of disease."

The following quotation from Doctor Liébeault's own note-book was printed by F. W. H. Myers in the *Proceedings* of the British Society for Psychic Research:

"Monsieur S. de Ch—— came to consult me today at 4 P. M., January 8th, 1886, for a slight nervous ailment. He is much preoccupied by a law-suit and by the incident I proceed to recount.

"On the 26th of December, 1879, while walking in Paris, he saw *Mme. Lenormand, Necromancer,* written on a door. Urged by thoughtless curiosity, he entered the house and was shown into rather a dark room. Madame Lenormand came to him and placed him at a table. She went out and returned, and then, looking at the palm of his hand, said:

"You will lose your father in a year from this day. You will soon be a soldier (he was nineteen years old), *but not for long. You will marry young, have two children and die at twenty-six."*

"Monsieur de Ch—— confided this astounding prophecy to some of his friends, but did not take it seriously. However, as his father died after a short illness on December 27th, 1880, precisely a year from the interview, he became less incredulous. And when he became a soldier, for seven months only, was married, had two children and was approaching his twenty-sixth birthday, he became thoroughly alarmed, and thought he had only a few days to live. This was why he came to consult me, hoping I might enable him to avoid his fate. . . . On this and the following days I tried to send Monsieur de Ch—— into a profound hypnotic sleep in order to dissipate the impression that he would die on the 4th of February, his birthday. Madame Lenormand had not named a date, but he was so agitated that I could not induce even the slightest sleep.

"However, as it was absolutely necessary to get rid of his conviction, lest it should fulfil itself by autosuggestion, I changed my tactics and proposed that he should consult one of my somnambulists, an old man of seventy or so, nicknamed 'The Prophet' because he had exactly foretold his own cure of articular rheumatism of four years' standing, and the cure of his daughter, the cure of the latter resulting from his suggestion. Monsieur de Ch—— accepted my proposal eagerly.

"When put into rapport with the somnambulist, his first question was: 'When shall I die?'

"The sleeper, suspecting the state of the case, replied after a pause, 'You will die . . . you will die in forty-one years.'

"The effect was marvelous. The young man recovered his spirits, and when the 4th of February passed, he thought himself safe.

"I had forgotten all this when, at the beginning of October I received an invitation to the funeral of my unfortunate patient, who had died on September 30th, 1886, in his twenty-seventh year, as Madame Lenormand had foretold. . . . I have since learned that he had been under treatment for biliary calculi and died of peritonitis caused by an internal rupture."

The SPIDER

New York's Famous Mystery of the Vaudeville Stage

DURING the mind-reading performance of Chatrand, the great magician, tragedy stalked into the Tivoli Theater in New York City.

Alexander, Chatrand's masked assistant, was seated on the stage and the magician himself was passing among the audience, soliciting objects to be psychometrized. Suddenly the latter spied a girl who represented an important clue to his assistant's mysterious past. He recognized her from a photograph.

He managed to ask her for some object, and she started to hand him the Spider Locket she was wearing.

But her escort objected—and in the midst of the figh that followed, a shot rang out. When the lights came on again, Chatrand's antagonist lay bleeding on the floor.

Inspector Riley arrived and took charge. The girl was Beverly Lane and the slain man was John Carrington, her guardian. She identified Alexander as her brother, who had been missing for two years.

The boy was still in a hypnotic trance but a pistol was found in his pocket and he was immediately charged with murder.

Chatrand, realizing that Alexander's sanity hung in the balance, decided to make a desperate move. He escaped through a trap-door beneath his illusion cabinet. He later attempted to rescue Alexander when the latter was confined in his dressing room. Under his spell the boy awakened from his dangerous trance and recognized his sister—but he also revealed a grudge against the murdered man! Then Chatrand found on the dressing room floor—the Spider Locket!

When the Inspector returned to the room, Chatrand surrendered himself. Meanwhile two men had been caught while robbing the clothes of the dead man. Threatened with summary treatment they admitted that they were searching for the locket and revealed the fact that it was to be used that night as a prearranged signal in a dope-running scheme.

Chatrand, in a heroic effort to save the boy, gave the Locket to the Inspector—but his act only increased the latter's suspicions. The Inspector announced brutally that he was going to take the magician and the boy down to Headquarters and "sweat the truth out of them!"

"WAIT a minute, Riley! You've got to listen to me!"

Chatrand flung out the words on an impulse that was almost instinctive, as one will put up a hand when a blow is coming or close the eyelids instantly when some foreign substance flies toward the eyeball.

As he spoke, he caught his breath and realized the full import of the moment. *Arrested!* He, arrested! And that poor, helpless, weakened boy, half reclining on the dressing-room chair! This burly, authoritative bully of an inspector was going to haul them down to the station-house and "sweat the truth out of them." Absurd! Impossible! It mustn't—it *couldn't* happen! But how was he to prevent it? He must change his tactics with Riley, certainly. The man was provoked into high-handedness by this air of seeming coolness that he, Chatrand, had forced himself to adopt. But now that he had spoken, what more could he say? What did he want Riley to listen to? There was no way of proving his innocence or the boy's innocence. There was only the chance, the hope, the desperate need to trap the real criminal.

By GRACE OURSLER

While the crowd in the theater gasps with horror, the unearthly face of the murdered man forms in a cloud above the medium! Is this a trick— or has the victim returned to identify his slayer?

Even as these thoughts rang through his mind in that breathless moment when Riley had swung on him inquiringly and Beverly was standing transfixed with horror, her eyes beseeching him for some solution, Chatrand felt certain that this tragic affair involved more that was serious and dangerous than Riley had even guessed.

The spider locket that Chatrand had found here in this dressing room . . . those two hapless bums and their confession of a dope ring . . . the whole affair was uncanny and weird! There was some deep, unfathomable——

But Riley cut in on these wheeling thoughts.

"I've listened to you about enough," the Inspector growled with an air of finality.

Chatrand's mind leaped into desperate action.

"Do you want to make the mistake of your career, Riley?" he demanded, so heatedly and earnestly as to save the question from brazen effrontery. "You're going to try to fasten this crime on that kid and me. And if you let this audience go, you let the biggest criminal in New York walk out of your hand just at the time you've got him!"

His eyes kindled as he marked the effect of these words on Riley. Perhaps he could kill time, perhaps get an inspiration. Nothing was too desperate to try.

Riley's hands clenched at his sides convulsively, but when he spoke his voice was calm and toneless.

"The gun on the boy . . . the locket on you . . . that's enough for me," he replied.

"No, it's not enough," protested Chatrand. "Do you think any jury would convict on such evidence as that? Don't kid yourself, Riley. You know they would not. You're up against a job here that no policeman ever faced before. That shot was fired in the dark. Any one of a hundred persons might have killed that man. You can't produce a single eye-witness. You've got to be smarter than *that,* Riley."

He was himself again. The sound of his own words, fearless and convincing in their very earnestness, lent courage. An idea was beginning to form itself in the back of his head.

"What are you talking about?" Riley demanded.

"You've got to scare the truth out of the guilty man," Chatrand announced, surprised at his own inspiration. "That's your job, and I'm ready to help you."

"Scare them?" Riley repeated, puzzled.

"THAT'S what I said," Chatrand continued, confident now of his point. "You've got to break them down with fear. And that's your only chance. Riley, listen! Whatever you may think, that kid didn't do it, and I didn't do it. I tell you now what I told you before. That shot came from the audience! The guilty person is sitting out there now, hoping to hell you'll let him go home. Once he is out of this theater, you'll never fasten that crime on anybody."

Riley stepped back as if to avoid a personal attack. Indeed, in his earnestness Chatrand had advanced step by step on the Inspector until the men were almost face to face. The Inspector thrust his hands into his pockets and regarded the tense, anxious figure that confronted him with so much obvious honesty. Maybe the man was stalling. Maybe he was just desperate, and yet. . . .

"Just what are you trying to propose?" Riley asked quietly.

"I propose that you resort to the oldest known device

to move the guilty conscience of a criminal—*fear!*"

The click of that word filled the little air-tight dressing room with an electric charge. Beverly's sharp intake of breath gave a sort of overtone to the vibrant timbre of Chatrand's voice. Riley's eyes narrowed with a shade of appreciation. Chatrand himself no longer probed or bluffed. He knew now what he wanted and he believed in its certainty of success as he believed in his love for the pale, golden-haired girl who watched him from behind her brother's chair.

"Take me out of this room," he directed sharply. "Take me back to that stage. Let me stage a spirit séance with Alexander there—a séance that no medium in all the world can duplicate."

"What do you mean?" stammered Riley. "What do you want?"

"I can't tell you in advance, Riley," Chatrand admitted soberly. "I won't even tell you whether the séance is going to be on the level or a fake. I've got to strike with surprise. But I tell you that the murderer of Carrington will never be able to stand up under the shock that I'll give him. He'll betray himself before your very eyes. If I don't prove what I say, you've still got me and you've still got the boy, and then you can take us down to Headquarters."

There was a thick, velvet silence for a moment, as Riley's brows lowered and his lips pursed into a soundless whistle.

"A spirit séance in a murder case . . ." he murmured meditatively. "Why, damn it, man! I'd be the laughing-stock of the Force."

"No, you won't!" Chatrand charged into him immediately. "If this thing works, Riley, you'll be the smartest man in the business. The papers will play you up. Why, it's a sensation. It might even make you commissioner!"

"I don't want to be commissioner," snapped Riley. "But—well, how long would this thing take?"

A wave of triumph swept over Chatrand that he found it difficult to control. He could have thrown his arms about Riley and called him his long-lost brother . . . but instead . . .

"Not more than ten minutes, at the outside," he told the Inspector with quick assurance.

"I'll try anything once," decided Riley grimly.

"Good for you!" shouted Chatrand, controlling the desire to slap the Inspector on the back.

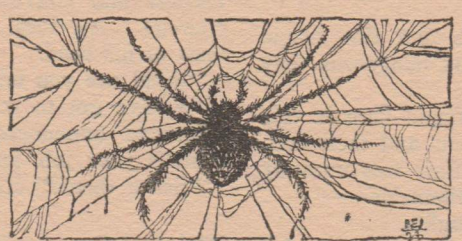
"Wait!" growled Riley, checking the enthusiasm almost belligerently. "There's not going to be any monkey business this time. Before you do your stunt, I'm going to do a little trick myself."

From his coat pocket, he drew a pair of handcuffs and advanced to Chatrand grimly.

"Turn around!" he ordered briefly.

Chatrand obeyed with a smile.

"I'm sure," remarked Riley dryly as he snapped the handcuffs, locking Chatrand's hands behind his back, "that you won't mind doing your stunt with handcuffs."



"Not at all," agreed Chatrand pleasantly. "But before you lock those cuffs won't you let me have a smoke? You know it will be quite an ordeal down there and I would like to have a cigarette now if you don't mind."

"All right, Schmidt," decided Riley after a moment's hesitation. "Give him one."

The sergeant approached Chatrand with a friendly air.

"They're in my left-hand pocket, Schmidt," the magician directed with another smile.

Schmidt took a silver case from Chatrand's pocket and put a cigarette between Chatrand's lips.

"Schmidt," Riley called at that moment, "take hold of this boy and bring him along."

"Mr. Inspector." Beverly spoke for the first time. "Let me go with my brother. He may need me."

Riley regarded the girl speculatively.

Meanwhile Chatrand found himself with a dry cigarette in his mouth and no match, for Schmidt had answered the Inspector's orders immediately and had forgotten the light. With a glance at the backs of Riley and Schmidt, Chatrand drew his right hand free from the handcuff, reached into his pocket, took out his leather lighter and lighted his cigarette.

"You can come along, Miss Lane," Riley was deciding gravely. "But there mustn't be any interference. Come along, all of you."

He wheeled toward Chatrand as he spoke, but the magician faced him with wide-eyed calmness. His right hand was again behind his back and securely locked once more in the handcuffs.

FIVE minutes later, Riley walked onto the stage with Chatrand in close tow and faced the restless, frightened audience that had been left to the care of blue-coats who were stalking solemnly up and down the aisles and refusing to answer inquiries.

At the appearance of Riley and the magician the audience quieted down to listen greedily to any news that might reach its straining ears.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Riley, his deep authoritative voice reaching the highest rafter and the farthest red-lighted exit, "I've placed this performer under arrest in connection with the crime that was committed in this theater tonight. In the meantime, he has made certain charges, involving people sitting out there among you. I don't intend to leave a stone unturned to settle this affair, and I have consented to let this man attempt an experiment. I want the full co-operation of the audience. This is his one chance to clear himself of a crime that may cost him his life in the electric chair."

This last statement made the audience stir anxiously. Chatrand turned suddenly to the Inspector.

"Mr. Riley, do you mind if I speak to the audience?"

"Go ahead," agreed Riley slowly.

"Ladies and gentlemen," began Chatrand in a low but clear, unwavering voice, "some of you here may believe in spiritualism. Some of you may be skeptics. I have no theory to expound. This is only a scientific experiment. I am the last man in the world to belittle spiritualism. I have seen too many strange things. I am fighting, not only for my own liberty—perhaps my life—but for the life of a young man unjustly accused and unfortunately placed in a most incriminating position. My object in my professional career is to entertain, but tonight, against terrible odds, I am forced to employ the secrets of psychology which every magician must know. I have persuaded Inspector Riley to allow me to attempt an experiment in psychic phenomena. I do not know what the result will be. But it cannot succeed without your help. Will those who are willing to help me by concentrating, hold up their hands?"

So compelling had been his appeal, so direct and genuine his words and attitude, that, quite to their own astonishment, more than three-quarters of the audience raised their hands.

"Thank you," said Chatrand, and then turned to the Inspector, who was at that moment handcuffing Chatrand to his own right hand and leaving the magician one hand free to work with. "I want everybody who was on the stage at the time of the shooting to be here when this experiment is being performed."

"Schmidt!" called Riley, and in answer to his imperative tone the sergeant and Alexander edged their way onto the stage. "You hear that? Nobody is excused."

"Curtain up!" roared Schmidt, and a moment later the stage was revealed still set with the appurtenances of Chatrand's magic act.

"And Schmidt," said Chatrand as the Sergeant moved to call everyone onto the set, "please see that I am not disturbed. I must have absolute quiet while I am doing this. I don't know what may happen, so I'll depend on you. You see, I am rather handicapped."

He lifted his handcuffed hand in explanatory gesture.

"All right," nodded Schmidt importantly.

"Mr. Young!" called Chatrand to the house manager who had just appeared in the wings. "Will you please have them place a lot of chairs on the stage, in a half circle? And have everybody seated."

"Certainly," said Mr. Young, more in answer to a nod of permission from Riley than to Chatrand's words. "I will have that done at once."

Already the stage was being filled with the figures of timid players, some still in their grease-paint, many with robes thrown over their costumes and all of them looking dubious and haggard. Beverly, too, in answer to a jerked thumb from the bossy sergeant, crossed to take a chair that was being placed for her. The two disreputable bums, securely handcuffed, and the quiet, tired-looking Doctor Blackstone meekly answered directions. Lytell and Fant, the comedians, still in their black-face make-up, and the agile little skaters, did likewise. All were there, quickly and quietly being formed into a semicircle that reached full across the stage.

Chatrand watched narrowly, trying to figure the full advantage of the various positions. Suddenly he bent over the footlights and addressed the orchestra leader.

"Mr. Leader," he asked politely, "will you have your boys play for me? Do you know the old hymn 'In the Sweet Bye and Bye'?"

"I think so," the musician answered dryly.

AS the orchestra began that old, old song, the audience took a deep breath and a heavy silence spread over the house. It was as if all, from the Inspector on the stage to the last usher in the aisle, were in a state of strange expectancy and apprehension.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," Chatrand began, "there is something I would like to ask you. It isn't necessary, but it would help to establish what we call the psychic chain, if everyone in the audience would join hands with their neighbors."

"Mr. Riley!" came a shrill, outraged voice, and immediately the figure of Mrs. Wimbleton rose from her aisle seat where she had at last been reinstated by an officer. "I'm a nervous woman. The last time I went to a spirit see-ants I fainted and didn't come to for an hour. I don't want any more tonight."

"You can't leave!" Riley hurled at her from the footlights.

"If it's all the same to you," the good woman insisted on the point of tears, "I'd like to go to the ladies' room."

"Sit down before we make you sit down!" shouted Riley.

Then he turned to those on the stage and addressed them with a tone of dignity that defied further interruption.

"I want you all to understand," he told them, "that I have given this man authority for the next few minutes, and I want you to do exactly what he tells you to do."

"Thank you, Inspector," Chatrand said quietly and turned to regard the scene. His mind was working swiftly. . . . There was an illusion cabinet that was to be a new and triumphant surprise for the Palace opening of his new season—it was built for effective apparitions. He could use that now for this deadly and all-important moment. Its effect under such dire circumstances would surely be tremendous—stupefying—*if* he could work it as he now planned. And perhaps, just *perhaps,* he could make some occult contact with Alexander's mind, some contact such as he had achieved on the boat during their first trip to Europe together . . . if he could only establish control. . . .

"Tommy!" he ordered his Japanese assistant sharply, hardly recognizing his dry, staccato tones. "Estelle! Bring down my illusion mirror. You two officers, please give them a hand. There, a little more to the center, please, and closer! Right. Thank you. Estelle, do you know the light cues?"

The little French girl stared at him with frightened, questioning eyes. It occurred to him vaguely that she was a pathetic figure, with her red silk kimono thrown over her startling and sensuously beautiful costume. She looked white—deadly white and worried.

"Yes, master," she faltered.

"Good. The same as we used last time," he directed and patted her on the shoulder as he sent her off into the wings. Poor kid . . . she was horribly upset. But he had no time to waste a moment of sympathy on her now.

"Sergeant Schmidt," he directed the officer calmly, "please bring that boy here. Seat him in the center chair when I tell you to do so, and seat him with his back to this cabinet so that he cannot see it."

The sergeant shuffled down and jerked Alexander about so that he faced Chatrand. He nodded complete understanding to Chatrand's orders and gave a grunt that sounded anything but respectful.

CHATRAND drew a deep breath and walked so close to the boy that their noses almost touched. Alexander's eyes opened widely and fixed themselves unflinchingly on those of his master. The Inspector watched intently, his lips grimly set and his jaw thrust outward. Each and every person seated in the semicircle leaned forward tensely.

"Alexander—quiet!" commanded Chatrand sonorously. "Now, if you will all sing—please sing with the music."

Riley motioned for obedience to this order. One frail soprano took up the melody quaveringly, Beverly leading. One by one other voices joined in, caught in the spell of the music and the strange hypnotic power of the magician.

In the sweet Bye-and-Bye
We will wait on that beautiful shore . . .
In the sweet Bye-and-Bye

"Rigid!" called Chatrand sharply.

Instantly the boy stiffened. Straight as an arrow, head erect, hands pressed against his sides, his face expressionless and hardly a sign of breath in his body, so motionless he stood.

Chatrand, pleased, breathed a sigh that was almost a prayer. Perfect! Perfect control. There was no telling what he might not be able to do with the boy now, provided there was no disturbance. . . .

"You are now going into a trance," he chanted in a sing-song voice to the boy. "Look! Gaze into this spirit glass! Gaze through this mirror into eternity!"

Slowly, Chatrand drew the boy toward the illusion mirror,

in the depths of which both of them as well as Schmidt and Riley were reflected clearly. Even as he bade the boy to gaze therein, the lights about the stage began to dim, slowly, imperceptibly, until the stage was in semi-darkness. Simultaneously with this, a complete frame of lights glowed about the mirror, brightening until they became a glaring square of light that set off the illusion box in the darkness.

The singing had stopped. Even the music from the orchestra pit had faded into nothingness. It was as if the entire theater were empty, so quiet was every soul on the stage and throughout the house.

"NOW, Schmidt," directed Chatrand in a low voice, "lead the boy to the center and seat him facing the audience. Seat yourself beside him, so that you are between the boy and Miss Lane there. Tommy! Bring the tambourine! Place it on Alexander's feet, so that if he should move we could hear the sound. Now! Will everyone on the stage please join hands, and everybody please sing again—softly."

Chatrand himself started the hymn, and the orchestra picked it up almost as if it were a cue. Strained, timid voices joined in.

In the sweet Bye-and-Bye
We shall meet on that beautiful shore——

"Now," said Chatrand clearly through what was by then a complete darkness throughout the theater, except for the frame of lights about the mirror, "if there is a spirit medium in the audience tonight, I ask his help. I warn you. No one must let go hands, no one must strike a light. While this boy is in a trance, his life is in your hands. . . ."

As he droned out this admonition, the lights about the mirror began to dim, gradually, until they were completely blotted out and swallowed in the thick blackness of the stage. A mumble of protest and fear escaped from several in the semicircle. But Riley's whispered, authoritative command was effective.

"Now the psychic forces begin to play," called Chatrand triumphantly through the darkness. "There is a tremble in the air. You can feel the vibration of the astral plane. . . . There comes a cold wind. . . ."

It was true, or else the mad hypnosis of this mad magician was more than a myth. A wave of sharp, penetrating iciness swept throughout the theater. . . .

"And if you listen," continued Chatrand in a weird, hollow tone that struck terror into the hearts of his listeners, "you can hear the distant flutter of moving figures—like the flutter of wings. . . ."

A muffled gasp from the audience came through the blackness of the theater, as from the back of the stage there appeared two luminous, white birds, flying smoothly and gracefully around the head of the magician, and then seeming to drop instantly into the well of blackness.

"And there comes a faint perfume in the air," continued Chatrand in an awed voice. "And now . . . quiet! . . . for there is coming nearer and nearer to us the door that leads to another world!"

The tambourine that had been placed on the rigid feet of Alexander suddenly seemed possessed of some evil spirit. It rose high into the air, clinking and rattling as if the devil were dancing with it in his hands. And it, too, gleamed through the darkness, now unbearably bright and now glowing with a soft unnatural luminousness as it sailed over the heads of those on the stage, then clattered to the floor.

"Good God!" came the powerful voice of Sergeant Schmidt as if the words had been thumped out of him by some unseen force.

"Sh!" commanded Chatrand. "See! See! Look now! That is ectoplasm . . . moving . . . growing. . . . Now it is like a flower . . . and now it is like a star. . . ."

Whatever the odd name that he might call it, the terrified eyes of all became fastened to a strange spark of light that seemed to issue from the very dome of the theater, to grow larger and to move with a gliding, noiseless motion, across the highest balcony, down to the lowest box, so slowly, so ungodly in the vague shapes that it assumed. . . . And even as it faded into oblivion, another apparition more startling than any that had preceded it, edged through the proscenium arch and out over the heads of the audience, now rising and now dipping until some cried out in fright that it might hit them. . . . A white, silvery instrument somewhat like a banjo, somewhat like a mandolin, more like the instruments of angels, for it was *playing*—faint, lovely music such as the angels might play. . . .

The moment that it, too, disappeared, Chatrand's voice was heard again, so far away and so unreal as to be almost a moan from a tortured soul.

"Quiet!" it begged. "For in another moment you shall behold a miracle! *For you shall stand face to face and voice to voice with the dead!*"

A murmur of hysteria spread throughout the audience! What was this? Where were they? Why didn't somebody put a stop to this. . . .

Whether by hypnotic impulse or by sheer inspiration, the leader of the orchestra saved that moment which bid fair to destroy every step that Chatrand had established so far in this unbelievable séance. The music started. The refrain of the old hymn seemed to be a soothing, comforting reassurance. Someone on the stage had the presence of mind to start to sing. The voice was strangely like that of Beverly Lane's. Others joined in, relieved at hearing their own voices once more. Then—something happened that hushed the music as strangely as it had started. . . .

Exactly in the center of the stage a gray light appeared, filling out slowly and strengthening gradually. In the center of this light there appeared a vague form above the head of Alexander. In breathless interest they watched—those hundreds of frightened souls in the blackness of the theater. *The form grew and grew, and sharpened itself into a face!* The face of a man! The face of a white-haired man with a white mustache whose dark, gleaming eyes seemed pocketed in a face of unearthly pallor. . . .

The face of the man who had been killed! Killed there that night in the midst of them! The face of Carrington!

"Who are you?" Chatrand's sonorous tones topped the murmur of those about him. "Who are you? Speak!"

It was happening! That death-head there in the unreal light in the center of the stage was moving its lips. It was speaking! Speaking in a tone so clear, and yet so faint; so distinct and yet so muffled; so weary and yet so anxious; a voice that surely no living human being could have achieved!

"I am a spirit!" it announced with abysmal sadness. *"I am the spirit of a man who has repented too late! My name is Carrington! And here you all behold me, speaking to you in the moving semblance of my body that was slain and is dead. If there were time I could prove that there is an eternity."*

THE voice paused as if too unutterably weary and ashamed to continue. The face assumed a masklike immobility and then, as if a surge of new strength returned to it, the pale, bloodless lips moved again and the yearning, tortured tones resumed their story.

"My sins have found me out! I am here to make what restitution there remains. *There is no guilt upon that boy nor upon that magician!* There was another man here tonight who had sworn to kill me! When the lights went out, he seized his opportunity and fired! My eyes are this moment boring into his guilty soul. . . ."

The head of the man turned, slowly to the right and then as slowly to the left. The tones gained in volume as the tale of the dead man continued.

"His hands are trembling. . . . His brain is bursting. . . . His conscience is yelling like a thousand fiends in Hell! But I shall name him! He *killed* me and his name is——"

A shot rang out like a burst of dynamite from Hell. A shrieking shattering of broken glass followed! The face disappeared into nothingness with a howl of unearthly pain!

Immediately pandemonium broke loose. Shrieks! Screams of terror! The hoarse, uncontrolled voice of a man on the stage, the shrill, piercing cry of a woman in the audience. Voices calling for lights! Chairs overturning on the stage! Riley's voice trying to top them all and bring some semblance of order.

Then—a flood of lights. Young, the house manager, had groped his way to the switchboard and turned on the current. People were herded together in the aisles, fighting back the policemen in their attempts to escape. . . .

On the stage, with the appearance of the lights, Riley had lost his sense of authority for one full moment! He was standing, dazed and dumb, in the center of the chaos of those about him, staring at his wrist!

To his right wrist where Chatrand had been securely handcuffed, there was a brown, thin, bony hand locked to his own! Chatrand was not by his side! Instead, handcuffed to the Inspector, stood Tommy, the magician's Jap assistant!

PERHAPS no indignity could have so aroused the full wrath of Inspector Riley as this ludicrous practical joke Certainly the resultant command of the situation that he showed in no uncertain terms and no conciliatory orders did credit to his past and his future as a worthy officer of the law. Within ten minutes he had under his complete control what had promised to be a stampede. The policemen who had been stationed outside the house and at all the exits had given their shrill calls for further help and turned in an extra riot alarm. Then they joined the squad within the theater, redoubling the force at gun point in quieting the entire audience. Those who had been hurt in the crush were taken to the retiring rooms for care. Not a small number were arrested and carted off bodily to the station house.

Meanwhile, Schmidt had taken charge of the actors and those who had been on the stage during the séance. And once more everyone looked to Riley to advise the next step in the quick conclusion of the investigation.

Only Chatrand was missing! Six officers had been sen to search for him through the cellar, the dressing rooms and the exits of the theater. Two men were even sent to his apartment, the address of which Young supplied, to take possession and stand guard until further orders from Riley.

Meanwhile the Inspector was determined upon his plan of action. They would catch Chatrand. If the man escaped to the street in shirt-sleeves and with his magician's make-up still on his face, he would have a difficult time making a get-away. No matter how long it might take to track him, Riley felt he was safe in having the boy. Alexander at least still was handcuffed to Schmidt's right hand. And the girl! Chatrand certainly had an interest in these two, too profound to risk their immediate future for his own ends. Besides, it was too impossible for him, even though he were a magician of the first water, to escape. Riley would linger about the theater just long enough to give his men time to produce the impudent fool and in the meantime he could be pulling the strings even more tightly in proving his own case. What an idiot he had been to permit the magician to trick him into such demonstration! He would have to work fast and furious now to save his own face and keep himself from being just what he had predicted, "the laughing stock of the force."

"Mr. Young!" Riley bawled peremptorily. "Did you say you had an office I could use? Well, lead the way. I have about ten more minutes work on this before I'm ready to check in. Schmidt! Put Dougherty in charge of these actors, and tell him to have them ready the minute I send for them. You keep the boy close to you and stick by the house phone. I'll be in the manager's office and I'll phone down to you just as soon as I need your assistance."

With these parting directions, Riley stalked after the house manager off the stage, down through the house, up the broad red-velvet carpeted staircase that led to the balcony and to the house manager's office which was over the front of the theater.

Mr. Young, pale and perspiring, bent over the lock and wrenched open his office door with his private key. He threw the huge door open upon utter darkness and, stepping inside, snapped on the wall switch.

"This is the office, Inspector," he announced unnecessarily.

Riley threw an appraising glance over the comfortable equipment of the huge, stuffy room, taking in the large mahogany desk on which were writing materials, telephone, calendar and a high heap of papers, the stalwart high-boy that was closed, and the array of black-framed pictures about the walls. Then his eye wandered to a broad open balcony opening from the back wall of the room and pompously framed with red-velvet drapes stiff with dust and age. As he looked, one of the curtains moved, and a figure appeared. A figure in a long black garment that covered the entire body—a figure pale of face and with white hair and white mustache.

The Inspector whipped out his gun instantly.

"What is that?" he gasped.

"Don't shoot, Riley, please! Your aim is liable to be a little unsteady and—you might hit me!"

At the sound of his imperturbable voice, speaking with a faint touch of sarcasm, Riley nearly dropped his gun.

"Gad!" whimpered Mr. Young. "It's Chatrand."

Even at that moment Chatrand was pulling from his head the white-haired wig, and tearing from his upper lip, the curling white mustache. Then, slipping out of the black smock, he tossed it on a chair and smiled ingratiatingly at Inspector Riley.

"How did you get out of those handcuffs?" Riley demanded so much like a little boy who had been deprived of his toy that Chatrand had to control a laugh. "And how did you put that damned Jap in your place down there in the dark?"

"I had to get out of those handcuffs, Inspector," Chatrand explained agreeably, "or I couldn't have gone on with my experiment."

"Your experiment was a fake!"

"It might have been a fake," Chatrand allowed soberly, "but it wasn't a failure. I want to speak to you alone."

Riley's face assumed the surly mask of a bully in complete power over his victim. He studied Chatrand a moment with a sort of malicious pleasure.

"Wait outside, Young," he ordered.

"All right, Chief," stammered the bewildered house manager and ducked through the door before they could catch a breath.

"If it wasn't for that shot—" Chatrand began the moment the door was closed.

But Riley interrupted icily.

"I DON'T want to hear anything you've got to say. Not after that monkey-business down on that stage. I've gone about as far with you as I intend to go. I thought you were on the level with that proposition of yours, but now. . . ."

"But Riley, I was on the level!" protested Chatrand.

"You stand there where I can watch you," thundered Riley. Then he stalked to the phone, and lifted the receiver to his ear with one hand while he trained his gun on Chatrand with the other.

"Hello!" he spoke into the instrument. "Can I get an outside wire on this phone? Well, give me Spring 3100! And ask Schmidt to send that damned Jap up here, and the electrician and the French girl, right away. I'm going after this thing in my own way, now, Chatrand, and I won't stand another minute's interference from you!"

"Well, you'll hear what I've got to say, won't you,

Riley?" Chatrand begged. But the rise of Riley's revolver halted his intended advance upon the Inspector.

"Hello?" Riley spoke into the phone. "O'Brien? This is Inspector Riley talking. I'm still up here at the Tivoli Theater. I've kept everybody locked in and I think I can settle the thing in another half-hour. But if anything goes wrong, I'll take everybody in the theater down to Headquarters! About a dozen wagons would do—five or six trips. Have them ready will you? We can't afford to slip up on this. It's big. I'm not taking any chances tonight."

WHILE he was talking the door had been opened by Schmidt. Into the room walked Beverly, her face marked with tear-stains, and behind her appeared Estelle and Tommy. The moment she spied Chatrand, Beverly rushed to him with a muffled cry of gladness. Instantly, Chatrand's arms closed about her and he crooned a few words of comfort in an effort to calm her.

"Miss Lane!" called Riley sharply to interrupt this precious moment. "I'll have to ask you to hold no conversation with that man, if you please. Be seated there, on the couch."

One more whispered word of courage Chatrand managed before he helped Beverly to the red-velvet divan, where she sank gratefully, gulping back her sobs and dabbing at her eyes heroically.

"Schmidt," Riley snapped. "Stand guard over that magician. Poke a gun in his ribs if you have to. Handcuffs won't hold him, but powder and lead are something else!"

"Why won't you listen to me, Riley?" cried Chatrand angrily as Schmidt stalked up to him with his most important swagger. "It'll only take a minute."

"That's enough!" shouted Riley. Then he turned to the Jap.

"What's your name?" he shot out at the terrified little Oriental.

Estelle, at the sound of the Inspector's voice, flinched visibly. She crossed the room and seated herself on the divan near Beverly, trying to flatten herself against the cushions as if pleading with them to envelop and hide her.

"My name, Honorable Inspector," said Tommy in a clear treble, "is Banzai Animo Hati Tashi Hawa Kawa Torraki Bati Hatsumama."

Riley dropped back a pace.

"Well," he growled, "what does the French girl call you?"

"'Hey, you!'" replied the Jap in high disgust.

"What do you know about this murder?" Riley tried.

"Of this murder," the Jap announced in his flat, unemotional voice, "I know nothing whatever at all, et cetera."

"Where were you when the shot was fired?"

"I was in the chamber of dressing," Tommy explained.

"Where?"

"In his dressing room!" Estelle rolled her *r* in scorn as she interpreted the Jap's idiom.

"Is this woman your wife?" Riley asked with a jerk of his head at Estelle.

"No," the Jap shook his head. Then he took a look at Estelle and added gratefully, "Thank the powers."

"She's just your stage partner?"

"Yes. Stage partner."

"Did she kill Carrington?" probed Riley.

"If she not like him!" Tommy shrugged his shoulders.

"If she not like him?" repeated Riley, taken aback.

"Yes, Honorable Inspector."

"Did she ever threaten to kill anybody else?"

"With extreme frequency, Honorable Inspector!"

"Who did she ever threaten to kill?"

Tommy thought a moment and then began taking toll of his fingers through a patient recital.

"The manager of the theater in Poughkeepsie, a porter on a train, a hair-dresser in Washington and mostly me!"

Again Riley felt baffled. But he made one final stab at cornering this naïve Jap.

"Now you tell me," he snarled, "what I want to know. How did you get handcuffed to my wrist when Chatrand got away during the spirit séance?"

Tommy drew himself to a pitiful dignity and stiffened.

"I no speak English," he said quietly.

"You won't tell?" stormed Riley with a threatening rise of his hand.

"Riley!" cried Chatrand heatedly. "You're scaring that poor fellow to death. It wasn't his fault. He was standing next to me, and it all happened before he knew what it was all about. That's his one virtue. *He* never asks foolish questions!"

This last insinuation turned Riley purple with rage. He wheeled on Chatrand fiercely.

"If you say anything else to me," the Inspector's voice was like sharp steel, "while I'm trying to get at something here, I'll gag you! I swear to God, I'll gag you!"

"Come on, get back there against the wall!" Schmidt ordered, poking the cold tip of his gun against Chatrand's white shirt.

Chatrand fell back disgustedly.

"Where's that electrician?" Riley demanded when he had regained his aplomb and had treated the entire room to a glare of demoniac fury.

"Yes, sir," stammered the Irishman in overalls as he crossed to face Riley with an open and honest face that was bursting to tell a story.

"What's your name?"

"Maloney."

"You're the electrician?"

"Yes sir, but I write movie scenarios between shows," Maloney explained proudly.

"I suppose you were writing scenarios while they turned out your lights," mocked Riley, "and a man was shot to death!"

"I was not!" Maloney defied him.

At this, as if she could no longer control herself, Estelle leaped to her feet and opened her mouth to speak.

"You sit down, you!" shouted Riley at her with a voice that fairly knocked her back onto the couch. "Now, listen to me, Maloney. You were the electrician. Why weren't you on the job? Are you in the habit of allowing people to stand near your switchboard? It looks awfully funny to me."

"I'll tell you the truth, Mr. Riley," Maloney broke out in voluble confusion. "I fell for this French dame here. And I was just talking to her near my switchboard, when I saw her jump forward——"

"I fall, I tell you!" cried Estelle desperately.

"She didn't fall!" insisted Maloney heatedly. "She only made out she fell. She had seen me work the lights and she knew what switch turned off the lights and she turned them off—deliberately! And that's the truth, Inspector."

RILEY looked from Maloney's watery eyes to the crouching and terrified figure of Estelle on the couch and drew his own conclusions.

"That will do for the present, Maloney. You wait downstairs until I call you again, and you too, you damned Jap!"

In silence, Maloney and Tommy shuffled to the door and sought grateful refuge in the corridor beyond. As the door opened, the strains of lively music floated into the manager's office. It was evident that Mr. Young had found it necessary to provide some entertainment for the suffering public that occupied his seats.

As the heavy door swung to, Riley measured his pace and crossed menacingly to where Estelle sat watching his every move with eyes that bulged with terror.

"*The time has come,*" he leaned forward and planted each of his words into the very face of the French girl. "The time has come for a show-down between you and me. What did you turn off those lights for?"

"I fall!" insisted Estelle hoarsely.

"Can that now!" Riley's every tone was a threat. "Tell

me the truth. Come on—loosen up! Why did you do it?"

"I tell you the truth!" whimpered Estelle in anguish.

"Do you know I can send you to the chair?" Riley asked her quietly.

"To the chair?" she repeated brokenly.

"Yes, the electric chair; that fries you to death!"

"Mercy, Mr. Inspector," the girl cried hysterically.

"Better tell the truth!"

"I tell you, *I don't know anything!*"

"That's a hell of a way to go after a girl, Riley!" stormed Chatrand fiercely from his end of the room.

"THAT'S enough from you!" Schmidt pushed his revolver deeper into the magician's ribs. "You keep out of this."

But Riley was oblivious to the attempted interruption. He did not even notice Beverly as she got shakily to her feet and backed away from him in breathless fear. He had the French girl where he wanted her and he did not intend to lose his ground.

"Did you know Carrington?" Riley was flinging at the girl swiftly.

"No! Nevaire!" she panted, glad to answer directly.

"Are you in love with the man who did the shooting?"

"No! I am just sorry for him!" Estelle cried. "I do not want him to do it. I think if I can turn out the lights. . . ."

The words were a piercing scream as, realizing what she had said, Estelle leaped to her feet and turned upon Riley with all the fury of a wild-cat.

"I don't know *who* shot that man!" she wailed.

"Oh, yes, you do," Riley asserted triumphantly. "I trapped you that time."

"I said nothing!" protested the girl.

"You admitted you knew who did the shooting. You said you were sorry for him. You said you didn't want him to do it. That's why you turned out the lights. You can't wiggle out of that. You know who did it."

"I don't know anything," repeated Estelle between her sobs. She fell on her knees before him, her beautiful face thrown back in tortured appeal.

"The hell you don't!" snarled Riley as he bent over her threateningly. "Come on, now. Open up the whole works if you want to save your own life. You don't want to go to the chair! Not a nice girl like you! You don't want to *fry* to death!"

He grasped the girl's head and strained it backward until she could scarcely breathe.

A moan of horror escaped from Beverly's pallid lips and she leaned against the wall as if to keep from fainting.

But Chatrand could not stand another moment. He strained forward in spite of Schmidt's gun and without seeming to notice a rain of blows that Schmidt inflicted angrily on his face and chest. He strained forward and called—called out impetuously at the top of her voice.

"Don't you believe him, Estelle! He can't do that! And don't tell him anything! He can't hurt you!"

"What the hell is the matter with you?" stormed Schmidt as he succeeded in nailing Chatrand against the wall with his knee and almost squeezing the breath out of him.

But through all this Riley was following his brutal course with Estelle—doing things his own way.

"You don't want to go to the chair," he was thundering down into Estelle's upturned face. "Not a nice girl like you! Not you! Burn the eyes out of your head—not you! Scorch your tongue black—not you! Burn the hair off your scalp——"

A sharp, piercing scream of insane terror cut short his sentence, a scream that was inhuman in its rasping shrillness.

"Mercy!" cried Estelle brokenly. *"I will tell you! I tell you everything."*

"Come on, then!" ordered Riley quickly. "Tell me."

"I faint——" choked Estelle, with an inert lunge toward the floor.

But Riley was too swift. With one gesture he stooped and swung the girl to her feet, shaking her with each word that he spoke.

"No, you don't!" he snapped. "Come clean now, and you can live! Lie to me, and I'll burn you alive in the electric chair."

"All right, I tell you," Estelle managed faintly.

"Who shot Carrington?" Riley shouted at her.

Estelle tried to wet her lips. Her hands went to her temples and she stared at the Inspector as if his face filled the room and it were the only thing she could see.

"I was watching in the weengs," she began brokenly. "Just as Meester Maloney said."

"Yes," Riley prompted as she faltered.

"I see that Monsieur Chatrand is having an argument . . . out in the audience. . . . And then I see something terrible. I am the only one who see that! It is—it is another man reaching for his gun! I say 'I must *queeck* turn out the lights before he can shoot'."

"Who was that man?" Riley snapped.

"I have——" Even in her weakened condition Estelle was making one last effort to guard her secret.

"Who was he?" repeated Riley with a quick threatening gesture of punishment.

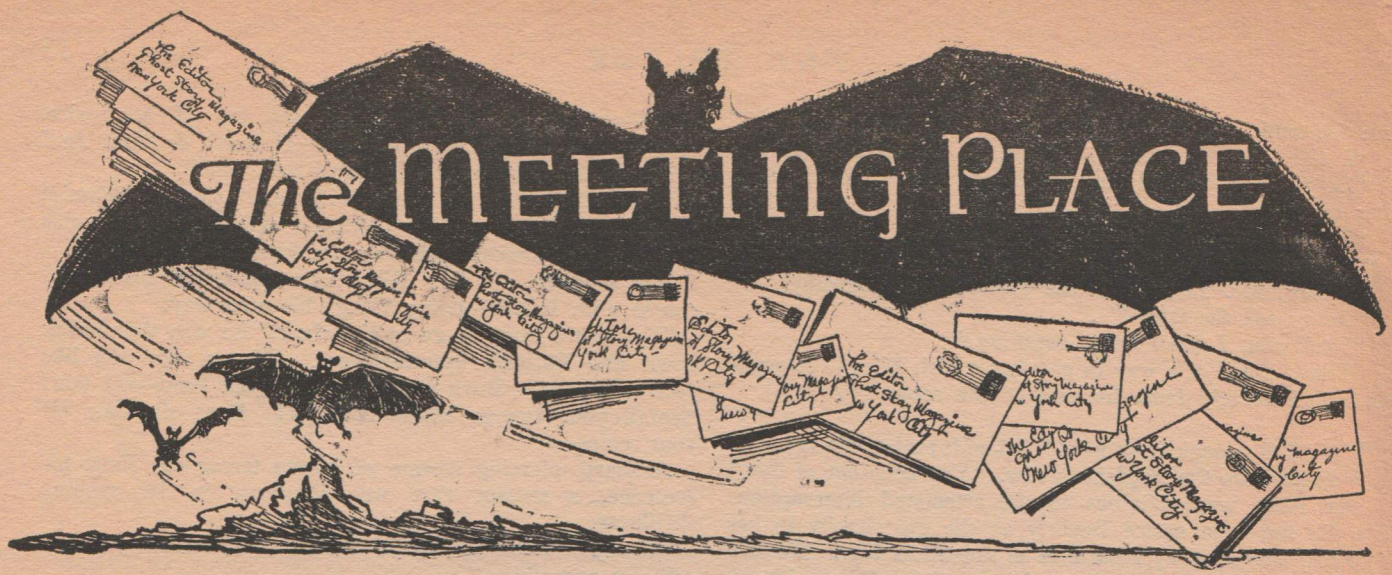
Estelle drew her breath sharply at his approach and her eyes flew open again, in terror.

"It was—" she sobbed—*"it was the mind-reader's assistant! Alexander!"*

"Oh, he didn't! He didn't!" cried Beverly shrilly.

"That's a lie!" Chatrand shouted from his corner and with a magnificent effort broke from Schmidt's grasp and stalked up to Riley. "That's a damned lie."

Chatrand has failed—the Law is ready to claim Alexander as its victim—but the magician has one more trick to try! Can he persuade Riley to let him put his astounding scheme into action? And if so, will the experiment have the desired effect? Is there any way to force the killer to betray himself? The startling conclusion of this great story will be published in the next issue—on all news stands June 23rd



Dictated by Spirits

An Editorial by ROBERT NAPIER

ELSEWHERE in this issue Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gives an answer to the question, "Can the Dead Help the Living?" In the course of his stimulating discussion he touches upon the problem of whether or not it is possible for a living writer to make contact with the minds of the illustrious dead and to gain inspiration, knowledge and a new ideal of beauty from communion with them.

This is a fascinating subject and deserves thorough study.

It is, of course, a matter of record that William Blake, the famous English poet, believed that all his poems were dictated by angels. It is also well known that *Kubla Khan,* one of the most beautiful poems in our language, was composed in a dream. Coleridge, the author, woke up with the whole amazing composition in his head and promptly sat down to record it. But he was interrupted in the middle by a man who called on business—and he was never able to remember the rest of it. *Kubla Khan* stands today as a fragment, but it is recognized as one of the masterpieces of English literature.

Only a few years ago an unusual incident of the same sort occurred. A Mr. Henry Hammond was making a study of dietetics and health in the British Museum Reading Room. One day he was seized with a brainstorm and suddenly found stanzas forming in his head quicker than he could record them. The result was an astounding poem called "The Mad World's Dream."

Mr. Hammond sent the poem to George Bernard Shaw, the great playwright, who wrote to him as follows:

> "I cannot account for these verses. They were evidently written about one hundred years ago; and how they turned up in your head is past understanding. Why don't you send them to a magazine and suggest that its readers be invited to identify them? If they are original, they are marvelous."

Subsequently a great hubbub was raised about the poem and the British *Sunday Express* offered $1,250 to anyone who could prove that Mr. Hammond was not the author. The reward was never claimed.

Do these instances show spirit control? The skeptic will retort indignantly, "Of course not! They merely show the activity of the subconscious mind, which is at work without the knowledge of the conscious intelligence."

For my own part, the whole thing seems marvelous enough, no matter how you explain it. The production of elaborate and complicated poems in

trance (like Mr. Hammond) or in a dream (like Coleridge) certainly shows something that is different from, and greater than, the workings of the normal mind.

Even more remarkable than these cases, however, is the work of Mrs. Pearl Lenore Curran of St. Louis, who has received innumerable poems and two complete novels in the form of "spirit messages" from Patience Worth, an Englishwoman who lived and died in the Seventeenth Century. Mrs. Curran herself is not an educated woman but these literary products are of such excellence that they have received the praise of men like Edgar Lee Masters, William Marion Reedy, Henry Holt and others. Her case has been investigated thoroughly by a number of well-known scholars but no one has yet been able to solve the mystery.

Space will not permit me to give a full account of Mrs. Curran's occult experiences in this editorial—but her case is so remarkable and intensely interesting that GHOST STORIES is going to publish a complete report of it next month. You will find that Mrs. Curran's story is a unique human document of absorbing interest to everyone who is baffled by the problem of man's contact with the spiritual world.

READERS are invited to send brief accounts of personal experiences with the occult to The Meeting Place. The correspondent's full name and address must be signed to each letter but we will print only the initials or a pseudonym if it is requested. Answers to other correspondents' letters will also be printed.

Here is a chance to get in touch with persons all over the world who are interested in the supernatural!

Strange Experiments with Ectoplasm

F. BLIGH BOND, who attained international fame several years ago when he located the buried abbey at Glastonbury, England, by psychic means, has recently advanced a very interesting theory concerning so-called "spirit photographs." He believes that such pictures are caused by that mysterious substance called "ectoplasm," which is exuded by the medium, and that there is no real reason to believe that the spirits of the dead have any share in producing them.

In his belief, the darkened interior of the camera constitutes a small cabinet in which the ectoplasm can build itself up, taking whatever shape the medium desires and condensing into a form that will be manifested on the photographic plate.

In order to test his theory Mr. Bond began a series of experiments with Mrs. Deane, the photographic medium at the British College of Psychic Science. The first day he took a piece of chalk and marked off twelve squares of equal size on the surface of a blackboard; he then drew two intersecting lines in the square in the lower lefthand corner of the diagram. He informed the medium that he intended to photograph the blackboard and that he wanted a definite image of a circle to appear in the photograph exactly where the two lines intersected. He himself took the pictures, merely allowing the medium to rest her hand lightly on the top of the camera during the exposures—and afterward he himself developed the films. There was no opportunity for fraud.

The first plate to be developed showed only the blackboard with its twelve squares. The second plate showed an irregular patch—a sort of localized fog—over a part of the square in the lower lefthand corner. The third plate revealed a small, circular spot of intense blackness, exactly over the intersection of the crossed lines! The circle was perfect in form.

A second experiment resulted in even more amazing results. Mr. Bond brought a picture to the studio and hung it on the wall. He then stated that he was going to photograph the room and that he wanted an image—the exact character of which he did not specify—to appear inside the frame of the picture he had placed on the wall. This plan was adopted by the investigator in order to preclude the possibility that pre-exposed photographic plates could be used. Obviously the plates could not have been prepared beforehand, for no one knew that Mr. Bond was going to bring a picture with him, nor did anyone know where he would hang it on the wall.

When the three negatives were developed, a well-marked cloud of small size, irregular in shape, appeared on each one. In the first two the cloud was not definitely centered within the picture frame—but in the third one this difficulty was overcome and the cloud appeared exactly in the center of the frame.

THESE careful experiments seem to me of great importance. They give new and convincing proof of the existence of ectoplasm, or *thought substance*, which in some wonderful way issues from the body of the medium and is controlled by the medium's mind. It is proof that the power to project a mental image—and to make that image leave its impress on a material object—does actually exist.

The art of "spirit photography" is practised by many persons in America, including a number of the readers of GHOST STORIES, and it is hoped that further experiments along this line will be carried forward. No form of scientific research is more important than such efforts to discover and to test the unsuspected powers of the human mind.

New York City. D. G.

Editor's Note—Any reader of GHOST STORIES who is performing experiments with spirit photography—or any other form of mediumistic research—is cordially invited to report his results in these columns.

The Desperado Comes Back

Luray, Virginia, is the scene of a new ghost panic.

Two years ago "Doc" Alger, Page County desperado, was killed by his sister-in-law while he was trying to force entry into her house in Richards' Hollow. He was garbed in a sailor's uniform.

Recently a report spread like fire that his ghost had been seen going from door to door of the house where he had been shot.

A half dozen incredulous citizens decided to disprove the story. In accordance with their plan they stationed themselves in different parts of the yard and began their vigil.

At eleven o'clock—the hour when Alger was shot—a mysterious figure came through the gate and made its way to the house. When it reached the front door, it seemed to fling itself against it. Then the apparition glided around the house and made a similar effort to break down the rear door—the door where Alger received his fatal wound.

At this moment the watchers made a concerted rush toward the intruder—and they declare that he vanished as they attempted to lay hands on him.

Another group held vigil the following night only to witness a repetition of the weird drama. Every attempt to capture the creature was fruitless although the watchers managed to completely surround the Thing.

Baltimore, Maryland. G. J.

A Ghost That Prevented a Burglary

After reading the experiences of others in the April GHOST STORIES, I decided to send you the following true experience of a friend of mine.

This friend is a widow and she owns a grocery store which stands right next to her home. One night she was sleeping soundly when she was suddenly awakened by a voice near her bed. As she struggled out of unconsciousness, it seemed that her husband was standing beside her and that it was his voice that was speaking. At any rate, she caught the words distinctly.

"Honey, look at the store," the voice called.

This message was repeated the second time and, still only half awake, she jumped out of bed and ran to the window. She got there just in time to see a man raising the window of the store and climbing in.

She woke other members of the family and they phoned the police, who came at once and caught the burglar robbing the cash register.

My friend went back to bed that night, knowing with infinite joy that her husband's spirit stood guard over his home.

This story is absolutely true.

98 West Bowery Street, MAUD V. BATES, R. N.
Akron, Ohio.

Mutiny in the South Seas

The odd beliefs of the Chinese have always exercised a strange fascination over my mind, and so I was particularly interested in recent newspaper reports of the haunted cruise of the motor ship, *Carriso,* owned by the Rolf line of San Francisco.

This ship sailed from the Gilbert Islands in the south seas, carrying a crew of Shanghai Chinese, and it had hardly left port before the crew became crazed with fear. Apparently the trouble had begun on the trip south when one member of the crew leaped overboard leaving a message that he "would return in five years." At any rate, the Chinese were firmly convinced that the ship was tenanted by devils and they refused to obey the commands of the white officers. The situation was rendered worse when the boat passed through miles of boiling water. The officers believed that this phenomenon was due to a submerged volcano.

When the situation became desperate, the master radioed to Honolulu for help in quelling the mutiny. However, peace was restored when one of the Chinamen "saw" the devil jump overboard. Thereafter everything went well, and the *Carriso* arrived safely in Honolulu.

San Francisco, California. M. M.

A Woman Who Lives Without Food

I would like to call your attention to the remarkable case of Teresa Neumann, who has been for six years under the care of an ecclesiastical tribunal appointed by the Bishop of Regensburg.

This girl was born in Germany on Good Friday, 1898. At the age of twenty, after a perfectly normal childhood, she was injured while helping to fight a fire in her native village of Konnersreuth, in Bavaria. A lingering illness set in, accompanied by paralysis. Later she became totally blind.

On April 29th, 1923, there was a sudden change. According to her story, she heard a voice say: *Teresa, would you like to get well?*

Teresa, not knowing who was speaking, said simply: "I want God's all-holy will. Whatever He wants, that will be best for me."

Soon after the voice said, *Teresa, you can walk. Get up out of bed and walk.*

To the amazement of her family she immediately got up and, in spite of having been bed-ridden for so long, walked across the room.

This happened on the anniversary of the Beatification of the "Little Flower," St. Teresa, for whom she was named.

Two years later the girl as suddenly recovered her sight.

This occurred on May 17th, 1925, the anniversary of the canonization of St. Teresa.

A third change came in the Lent of 1926. On this occasion Teresa claimed to behold a strange vision. She saw Our Lord in the Garden of Agony. That night there was a deep wound in her side.

On the following Friday she again saw a vision of the Passion and gradually there formed on her hands and feet the marks of the wounds of Our Lord.

Every Friday night since that time, according to the persons who have kept watch over her, the wounds have bled.

Since 1923 Teresa has had no appetite for food and since 1926 she has apparently ceased to drink anything at all. Yet, apart from her sufferings each Friday night, she is perfectly normal.

Doctor Seidl, the head of the tribunal investigating her case, made a complete report to the Catholic Medical Association at Rotterdam. He cited instances of Teresa's loss of weight and the recuperation of that weight within a few days in spite of her total abstension from both food and drink. He was unable to offer any natural explanation.

During her visions it is reported that Teresa speaks in Aramaic, the ancient language of Palestine, although she has never had the slightest opportunity to study this language. Doctor Wudst, a famous German scholar, has sat by her side on many occasions, taking down her words as she spoke them.

One day she uttered a phrase that Doctor Wudst could not understand.

"Teresa," he said, "this is not possible. There are no such words."

"That is what they say," Teresa answered.

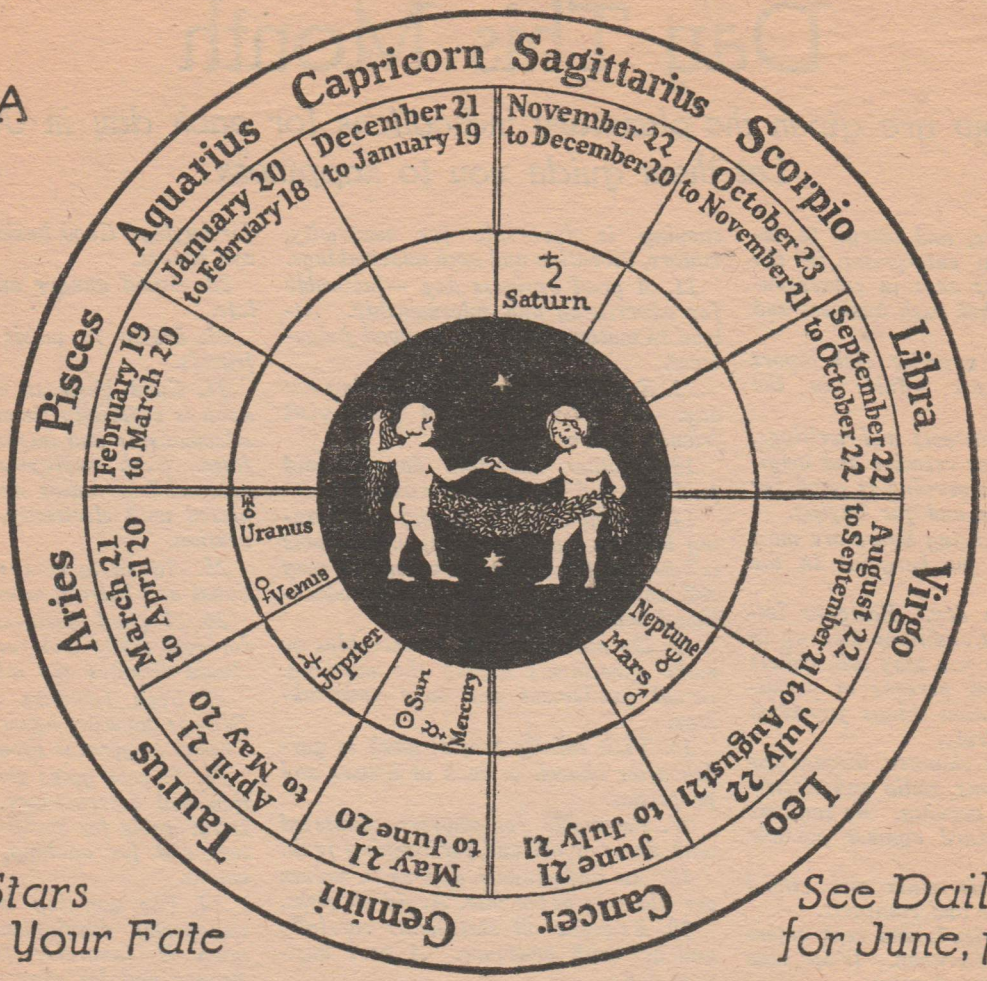
Doctor Wudst was puzzled and went back to his house to look through his books. In one of the oldest dictionaries he came upon the identical phrase that Teresa had uttered.

Many facts concerning this amazing case were brought back to this country recently by Bishop Schrembs, of Cleveland, Ohio, who attended the Catholic Medical Association at Rotterdam; and Harry Price reported the case in full in the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research.

Chicago, Ill. H. I. P.

Were You Born in June?

By STELLA KING



Let the Stars Indicate Your Fate

See Daily Guide for June, page 80

MAY flowers and June roses are in bloom when the child of Gemini is born. The twin stars Castor and Pollux watch over his destiny and the youthful Mercury guides his course through life.

According to the old Grecian story, Castor and Pollux were twin brothers of Helen of Troy and of Clytemnestra, who murdered her husband when he returned from the war that Helen had caused. Of this famous family, Helen and Pollux were immortal, whereas Clytemnestra and Castor were mortal. Castor was slain, but Pollux pleaded so hard that he might share his immortality with his beloved brother that both were placed among the stars as the Heavenly Twins. Pollux was renowned as a boxer, Castor as a tamer and manager of horses; and it is said that the brothers appeared on white horses to aid the Romans in the battle of Lake Regillus.

The meaning of this story is that those who are born under the rule of Gemini are complex, many-sided people, often with two distinct sides to their character. They are clever and versatile, with a nodding acquaintanceship with a great many subjects.

If you are a Geminian, you probably learned things easily as a child. Quite possibly you were the cleverest of your family. Your mind is peculiarly sensitive and your nervous force easily becomes depleted. Like the rose, you must have definite periods of rests if you are to do your best work; otherwise, you make mistakes and your work deteriorates, just as the rose becomes smaller and less beautiful unless it is properly pruned and tended. Change and variety in your work are really necessary, but you have to train yourself to concentrate upon whatever you are doing at the moment, as Gemini's thoughts have a way of wandering into day-dreams.

When you begin to feel tired, it is better for you to relax a few moments or shift your attention to some other task. You will then return to your work refreshed and will be able to continue it without undue fatigue and without making mistakes. You will also find that you will accomplish much more in a given time as you will be able to work more efficiently. Also, your energies will not be so scattered and you will become more positive.

THE duality of your sign is shown in many ways. In your friendships you include many different types that seem to have nothing in common, but each satisfies something in you. In those you love, you are able to see both faults and virtues. In your work, you may carry on two distinct branches or even hold two positions; or you may have a hobby which gives you the change of occupation demanded by your temperament.

With such a temperament, it is not difficult to understand why so many Geminians find it almost impossible to finish what they have begun. Always there seems to be something else crying out for their attention and, in any case, they do not like too much detail. Routine is a weight of lead round the feet of Gemini, who longs for change and variety—and, under too strict and rigid rules, the true Geminian simply goes to pieces nervously. There are different types of people in the world and all are (*Continued on page* 80)

What the Stars Foretell for Every Day This Month

Below are given the planetary indications for each day in June. Let them guide you to happiness

1. Make changes, and attend to inventions and new enterprises in the morning. Exercise care in correspondence and travel, but push business and financial matters.

2. Take outdoor exercise. Ask favors and settle domestic affairs in the evening.

3. Attend to contracts and writings. A favorable day for creative and original work. The late evening is good for business discussion and for buying.

4. The early morning hours are most favorable. Look for bargains in the morning.

5. An uncertain day. Postpone important matters. Conditions pick up in the evening, when you may sell, collect money or interview persons of prominence. Set in motion things you wish to materialize quickly.

6. Travel, make changes, discuss automobiles, inventions, radio and electrical matters in the evening. Be cautious in buying and guard against possible misrepresentation.

7. Write advertisements and attend to correspondences and contracts.

8. Visit your friends and seek entertainment in the afternoon. Wear new clothes. Transplant flowers.

9. A day favorable for general happiness.

10. The early morning is very good for business and financial affairs and for selling. Avoid mistakes through carelessness in the afternoon. The evening is favorable for electricity, motors, invention and new undertakings.

11. A good business day —favorable for advertising and salesmanship. Attend to matters that require good judgement.

12. Stick to routine duties during the day. Seek entertainment and visit friends in the evening.

13. Another uncertain day. Avoid publicity and domestic discussion.

14. Probable delays during the morning but you may buy cheaply. Business is better in the afternoon when you may sell, collect money and attend to educational and legal affairs.

15. Do not enter into partnerships or make agreements during the morning. Avoid excitement and new undertakings.

16. Visit elderly people, work in garden after church or look at houses and properties.

17. Favorable for matters connected with dress or art and for canning fruit.

18. An unfortunate day when values are likely to depreciate. Avoid all risks.

19. Examine all statements carefully and act with prudence. A poor business day.

20. Expect sudden recovery in prices, with unexpected developments. Favorable for invention, promotion and psychic matters.

21. The morning is good for work demanding energy and concentration and for buying. Good business day. Do not ask favors.

22. Avoid danger and do not speculate.

23. Listen to music and visit your friends.

24. Good business day. The afternoon is especially favorable for finance, salesmanship and important business affairs. Seek employment, buy and sell automobiles, radios and anything connected with electricity, railroads or invention.

25. Attend to correspondence, educational and literary work; and travel.

26. A good business day, favorable for real estate and for buying to hold. Avoid disputes and take no risks.

27. Seek publicity and employment. Discuss domestic affairs and ask favors. Things in general should go well.

28. Expect gains through determination and perseverance. The afternoon is favorable for social and artistic matters and for cooking, dressmaking, et cetera.

29. The morning is uncertain, with unexpected developments. The afternoon is favorable for business and finance and for general success in undertakings. The evening is unfavorable for domestic concerns or publicity.

30. Spend the morning quietly and avoid discussion. Read, write letters, motor, or visit relatives in the afternoon.

Were You Born in June?

(*Continued from page* 79)

not intended to be the same or to be able to support the same conditions. The Geminian child should be trained to give his whole attention to whatever he is doing and to finish it, but he should not be forced to stick to one thing too long.

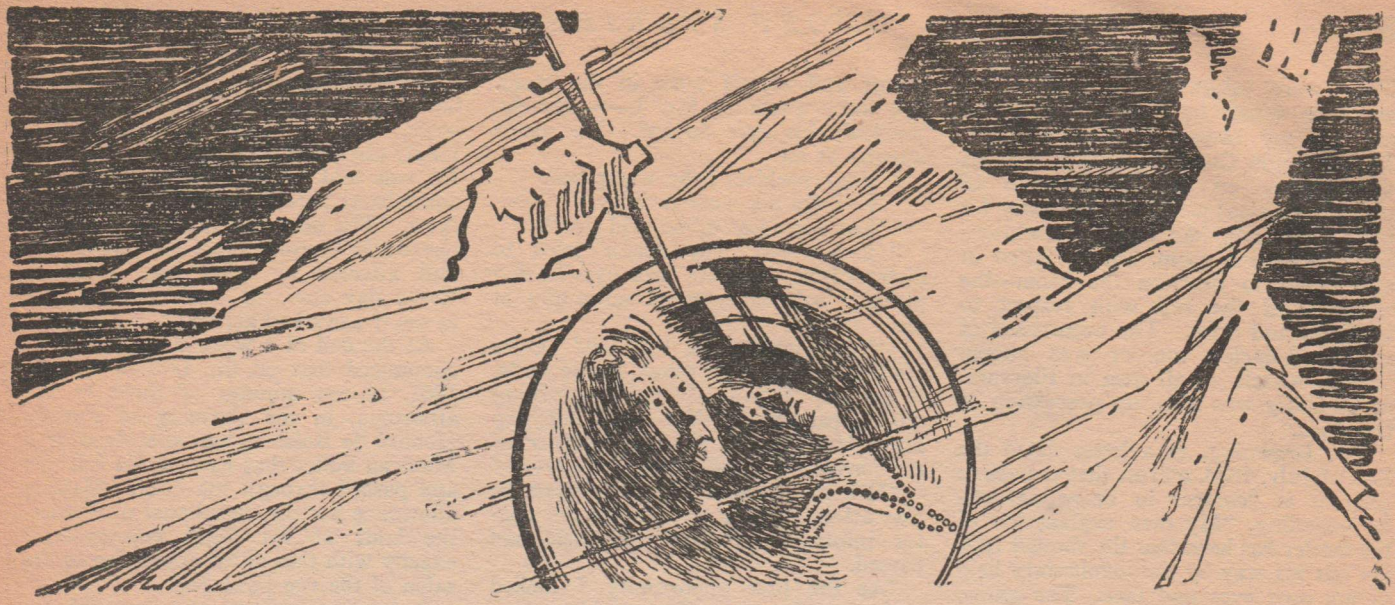
Like Pollux the boxer and like Tunney, who is a Geminian, the child of Gemini is clever with his hands and should be encouraged to help in the home or in the garden, to do wood carving, or to draw. He is a natural student and will read and study if interested in the subject and left to his own resources. There are few things that the Geminian cannot do—but, to make a success in life, it is necessary to devote most of one's time to one particular thing and this the Geminian child must be made to understand.

Mercury, the ruler of Gemini, is the planet of youth. In most Geminians there is something youthful and refreshing even when the years begin to tell upon them. They have a multitude of interests, and because there is so much to learn and so much to see, the zest of life continues.

This planet also rules the mind, which is the instrument of thought. In some individuals, the instrument is a good one but the thought or directing force is perverted—and the result is a clever thief or criminal. There are other cases in which the instrument is a poor one and the thought is good; we then have the well-intentioned but foolish person who is his or her own worst enemy. Any person can do a great deal for himself by controlling his thoughts—and by maintaining our physical and nervous balance we can at least make the most of the mental instrument we have been given. When the nervous force is depleted, one of the first things to suffer is the memory.

The North American Continent is under the rule of Gemini and the American people exhibit many characteristics of this sign. Was it the dislike of daily routine and innumerable household duties that led to the invention of such appliances as the vacuum sweeper, electric washing machine, *et cetera?* However that may be, the restless spirit of youth seems to pervade American life today and the adaptability of the American business man, as compared with his more conservative European competitor, assuredly laid a solid foundation of prosperity. The prevalence of nervous breakdown among both men and women and the high mortality in childbirth may also be attributed to

(*Continued on page* 95)



SPIRIT TALES

John Singer Sargent Returns— and Other True Stories

By COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

HAS the ghost of John Singer Sargent, famous American artist, returned to haunt the Chelsea structure in London where he died nearly four years ago? Occupants of the house believe it has.

Frequently his footsteps are heard by Alfred Orr, his American artist friend, who took over the studio. The sounds descend from the second-floor workroom to the ground-floor room in which Sargent died and which now is used as a bedroom by Mr. and Mrs. Orr. The latter is certain she recognizes the footsteps as Sargent's because of the heavy tread, for Sargent was a tall and heavy-set man and had a distinctive walk known to all his friends in the Chelsea artists' colony.

"I'm not a spiritualist and neither am I a skeptic," said Mr. Orr recently. "Anything is possible. Both Mrs. Orr and myself have heard footsteps and we often seem to sense Sargent's presence in our bedroom leading to the stairway, now sealed up, which Sargent used in going to the studio next door.

"The most mysterious thing about the whole business," he continued, "was what happened one night when I was in bed. I heard footsteps and at the same time distinctly saw the knob of the bedroom door turn all the way around and then back again. I jumped up and summoned the butler. We searched the house from top to bottom but found nothing unusual."

Mr. Orr has no other explanation for the mystery than that Sargent comes back to the studio in which he rose to fame and in which he died while painting a portrait of Princess Mary.

"Sometimes when I hear footsteps," said Mr. Orr, "I call out, 'Come in, Pop'—he was known as Pop Sargent to us. Then the sounds cease and we do not hear them again for several weeks."

The Adventure of the Skeptical Poet

THE great English poet, Robert Browning, was renowned as a skeptic; yet there was one psychic adventure in his life of which he never tired of telling. Originally this was given to the public in a letter published by Mr. Knowles in the *Spectator* of January 30th, 1869, as follows:

"Mr. Robert Browning tells me that when he was in Florence some years since, an Italian nobleman (a Count Guinasi, of Ravenna), visiting at Florence, was brought to his house without previous introduction, by an intimate friend. The Count professed to have great mesmeric or clairvoyant faculties, and declared, in reply to Mr. Browning's avowed skepticism, that he would undertake to convince him somehow or other, of his powers.

"HE then asked Mr. Browning whether he had anything about him, then and there, which he could hand to him and which was in any way a relic or memento. This, Mr. Browning thought, was perhaps because he habitually wore no sort of trinket or ornament, not even a watch-guard, and might therefore turn out to be a safe challenge. But it so happened that by a curious accident he was wearing under his coat-sleeves some gold wrist-studs, which he had quite recently taken into wear, in the absence (by mistake of a sempstress) of his ordinary wrist-buttons. He had never before worn them in Florence or elsewhere, and had found them in some old drawer, where they had lain forgotten for years. One of these studs he took out and handed to the Count, who held it in his hand a while, looking earnestly into Mr. Browning's face, and then he said, as if much impressed:

"C'e qualche cosa che mi grida nell' orecchio, 'Uccisione, uccisione!'" (There is something here which cries out in my ear, 'Murder, Murder!')

"And truly," says Mr. Browning, "those very studs were taken from the dead body of a great-uncle of mine, who was violently killed on his estate in St. Kitts nearly eighty years ago. These, with a gold watch and other personal objects of value, were produced in a court of justice, as proofs that robbery had not been the purpose of the slaughter, which was effected by his own slaves. They were then transmitted to my grandfather, who had his initials engraved on them, and wore them all his life. (*Continued on page* 82)

They were taken out of the night-gown in which he died and given to me, not my father. I may add that I tried to get Count Guinasi to use his clairvoyance on this termination of ownership, also; and that he nearly hit upon something like the fact, mentioning a bed in a room, but he failed in attempting to describe the room—the situation of the bed with respect to windows and door. The occurrence of my great-uncle's murder was known only to myself, of all men in Florence, as certainly was also my possession of the studs."

Mr. Browning, in a letter dated the 21st of July, 1883, affirms that the above account is "correct in every particular"—adding, "My own explanation of the matter has been that the shrewd Italian felt his way by the involuntary help of my own eyes and face. The guess, however attained to, was a good one."

We think that in this conjectural explanation the illustrious author of *Sordello* has done imperfect justice to his own power of concealing his thoughts; and we fancy that his involuntary transparency of expression would not have enabled the wily Italian to "feel his way" to murder. But of course such cases are more complete when agent and percipient are at a distance which exclude involuntary hints.

A Mysterious Necklace

THE following story was sent to us by Ella M. Buckton, who vouches for its authenticity:

"A woman's intuition, combined with a post at the frontier between life and death—I am a trained nurse—has inclined me to credit some happenings as supernatural. Science, after all, is concerned with the material functions of the brain and body. When those functions are so far weakened that the spirit is almost released from its normal prison house, isn't it possible that it may see and do more than can be accounted for logically? I can explain the strange case of Mr. J—— in no other way.

"It was a private typhoid case in a richly furnished home outside New York. The patient was a cultivated gentleman who had traveled extensively, and his home was filled with the most interesting relics—many of them from the East. Perceiving my interest in his beautiful things, he had presented me, to my discomfiture, with a magnificent jade necklace which he said had peculiar properties and would bring luck if I did not take it off. To humor him, I resolved to wear it, at least for the time.

"In the stress of the crisis, some days later, it disappeared. I searched everywhere in much distress and forbore to mention it to him. Fortunately, I thought, he was in no condition to note its absence. He was in a sort of coma and at intervals subject to hallucinations. The doctor called it delirium, but what he said made strange sense. He talked at times in foreign tongues and kept insisting he was the incarnation of some Eastern seer.

"As the crisis approached, both the doctor and myself were in the room. We were watching Mr. J—— closely. Suddenly his eyes opened. He stared intently at me.

"'Your necklace!' he whispered.

"'I—I did not wear it today.'

"'You have lost it,' he said simply.

"'Y-yes——' The doctor tried to distract him. The big wide eyes in that pitifully pale face stared uncannily at me.

"'You should have told me.' Over his features passed a sweet, gentle smile. 'I see all. It is——' He was talking with great effort. We could not stop him. *'It is under the right corner of the bureau in your room upstairs——'*

"His eyes closed. In a moment he was asleep. After an interval the doctor informed me that the crisis had passed.

"At the first opportunity I looked under my bureau. The necklace was there. He had not left his bed. On his recovery he had no recollection of the incident."

The French Surgeon's Story

AUGUSTE NELATON (1807-1873) was a French surgeon of very high reputation and connections. He was hastily called one evening to the house of the Baroness de Boislève, and subsequently he gave the story which follows, to the French Academy of Sciences.

On March 17th, 1863, at Paris, in an apartment on the first floor, Number 26 in rue Pasquier, back of the Madeleine, the Baroness de Boislève gave a dinner to a number of persons, among whom were General Fleury, Equerry in Ordinary to Napoleon III; M. Devienne, First President of the Supreme Court of Appeals; and M. Delesvaux, President of the Civil Tribunal of the Seine. During the repast there was special discussion of the expedition sent to Mexico the previous year. The son of the Baroness, Honoré de Boislève, a lieutenant of light cavalry, was with the expedition, and his mother did not fail to inquire of General Fleury if he had news concerning it.

He had none. No news—good news. The dinner ended in good spirits, the diners remaining at the table until 9 P. M. At that moment, Madame de Boislève arose and went alone to the salon to serve the coffee. She had hardly reached the salon when a terrible cry alarmed the guests. They dashed out of the room and found the Baroness in a dead faint, lying on the carpet.

On being restored to consciousness she told them an extraordinary story. While crossing the threshold of the salon, she had seen, at the other end of the room, her son Honoré standing in his uniform, but without arms and without cap. The face of the officer was of a spectral pallor, his left eye was changed to a hideous opening, blood was trickling down his cheek and upon the embroidery of his coat collar.

The terror of the poor woman had been so great that she thought she was dying. They endeavored to reassure her, explaining that she had experienced a mere hallucination, a waking dream, but since she found herself extremely weak, they urgently summoned the family physician, the illustrious Nélaton. He was told of the strange adventure, administered calming drugs and withdrew. The next day the Baroness was physically restored, but her mind was still affected by what had occurred. Every day she sent to the War Office to see if news had arrived.

At the end of a week it was officially announced that on the 17th of March, 1863, at ten minutes of three in the afternoon, in the storming of Puebla, Honoré de Boislève was shot dead by a Mexican bullet that entered his left eye and passed through his head. Making allowance for the meridional difference, the hour of his death corresponded exactly with that of his apparition in the salon of the rue Pasquier.

A precise, written statement of the affair, wholly drawn up by the hand of First President Devienne, and signed by all the guests at the famous dinner, was presented by Doctor Nélaton to the Academy of Sciences.

A Dream of Murder

WHEN one person has a remarkable dream, it is considered—remarkable; but when three people in different localities each have a dream, and each dream coincides with and corroborates the other, then it is—triply remarkable.

Thus may be described an experience of Henry Armitt Brown, a "scholar, orator and lawyer," in whose biography—by James M. Hoppin, a professor of divinity and art in Yale University—it is recorded in the form of a letter written by Mr. Brown to a clerical friend of the family.

"Reverend and Dear Sir—After many delays I send you a short account of the dream which excited your interest last summer.

"In the fall of 1865 (I think it was in the month of November), while I was studying law in the city of New York, I retired to my room about midnight of a cold and blustering evening. I remember distinctly hearing the clock strike twelve as I lay in bed watching the smoldering fire until drowsiness crept upon me, and I slept.

"I had hardly lost consciousness when I seemed to hear loud and confused noises and felt a choking sensation at my throat, as if it were grasped by a strong hand. I awoke (as it seemed) and found myself lying on my back on the cobblestones of a narrow street, writhing in the grip of a low-browed thick-set man with unkempt hair and grizzled beard, who with one hand at my throat and holding my wrists with the other, threw his weight upon me and held me down.

"From the first I knew that his desire was to kill me, and my struggles were for life. I recall distinctly the sense of horror at first, and then that of furious determination, which took possession of me. I did not make a sound, but with a sudden effort threw him half off me, clutched him frantically by the hair and in my agony bit him furiously at his

(*Continued on page* 92)

The Invisible Man at the Helm

(*Continued from page* 36)

So they painted "Ruth McKelvie" along her bows and across her stern in fine gold letters. Then they stepped a mainmast into her and later a foremast and bent on her bleached new canvas sails.

A white, eager gull she went down to Georges early in May on her maiden trip, as pretty and able a fishing schooner as ever left the Highland Light to stern. George Suttle was her mate. Tripper Tarboy squatted at her windward rail and painted white numbers on the trail tubs. Two or three others who had been with Jess Tiverton on the *Blue Belle* were also along; the remainder long since had shipped on other vessels, for a fisherman cannot allow sentiment to interfere with the appetite of his family.

THEY had ten days of fair fishing and iced upwards of one hundred thousand pounds before bad weather struck in. Then it blew three days steadily out of the northeast and the sun failed to break through the low-lying, driving clouds. On the afternoon of the third day it fell a flat calm for an hour and a new breeze followed out of the southeast.

Jess had been below the greater part of the afternoon, but he came on deck before the wind shifted. Mark what he said to Suttle.

"We been talking it over down below and we think it's going to come a blow. Let's get for home."

"Talking it over," Suttle began. "Who you been——" He stopped suddenly. Something in Jess Tiverton's eyes made him hold his tongue.

The mate went forward and passed the word. Not until they were laying off for Boston did he seek old Tripper out.

"He said they'd been talking it over and had decided it was going to blow. What do you think of that, now? Who'd he been talking it over with?"

No man to intrude, Tripper; the years had taught him discretion.

"It's none o' my business and little o' yours," he answered. "You let Jess be. He's missin' that boy some."

"You should have seen his eyes when he told me to get sail up," Suttle protested. "It was like I wasn't there."

"Maybe you wasn't. Maybe you wasn't there. For him, anyway. We'll do as we're told and leave Jess be."

An hour later it became apparent that he from whom Jess Tiverton took advice had displayed good sense. It blew a screaming late May gale out of the southeast all night, but the storm found the *Ruth McKelvie* in deep water. A Gloucester ship went on the shoals that night and four men were drowned; a Gay Head fourteen-tonner lost her single mast and helmsman; other vessels came to grief in lesser degree.

The *Ruth* made heavy weather but her reefs were in and her dories stowed and she ran off that blow like geese flying down wind from the futile guns. Jess Tiverton sailed her himself; he held her wheel in water sometimes to his waist.

"Sail her, Sonny, sail her!" he cried above the noise of wind and sea.

Once he turned his head to where Suttle stood just at his elbow. "Tell George," he shouted, just as if George wasn't there—"Tell George he better spike in his jib or the sea'll carry it out. What do you think?"

George Suttle knew better than to answer. That question was not meant for him. It was Old Jess at the wheel, Young Jess by his side.

That voyage marked the beginning of as queer a story as ever was repeated in the North Atlantic fishing fleet, the story of Jess Tiverton and his mate, Young Jess, who had drowned on his first trip to sea. George Suttle continued to sail aboard the *Ruth McKelvie*, mate in name only, because there had grown in his heart over a long period of years a great and sure love of this captain whom sorrow had claimed. He continued to occupy the cabin with Jess, although he knew that for the *Ruth's* master another slept there also.

Never, following that maiden voyage of the *Ruth McKelvie*, did Jess Tiverton address an order directly to Suttle. He spoke always to an unseen third person.

"Wind's laying off and we got ballast. Don't you think you better get George to shake a reef? Carry it, can't we?"

And George Suttle would wait a reasonable length of time and pass the order along.

It came, as it was sure to come where such a situation existed—misgiving in place of trust, doubt dispelling confidence, incredulity displacing stoicism. Aboard his own ship they began talking about Jess Tiverton. Young fellows who had no understanding of the cross he was bearing.

"ME? I think the old fellow's nutty, if you ask me. Mumblin' all the time to himself and never speakin' outright to his mate. What's he got a mate for, anyway?"

And: "Believe me, I wouldn't stand for it if I was in Suttle's boots. No sir, not me."

They went on thus, but when wrinkled Tripper Tarboy was around they kept their mouths closed.

"Put a lock on your tongue, young feller, or I'll sure hand you one," he'd threaten them. And they would, too, for the old man's fists had lost none of their weight and speed.

But though old Tripper's threats served the purpose when he was about, they could not hope to put an end to the talk altogether, and the story was not slow in traveling. Crews visit while ashore; the word was spoken among other boats. Men of the fleet who had known Jess since long before the *Blue Belle* met her fate expressed sympathy for the man. There were others who saw in the situation an opportunity for unkind, sacrilegious jest.

One day at the wharf Jess was hailed by Torrey Lamberts, a New Bedford motor swordfisherman.

Lamberts called: "I hear you got two mates aboard that vessel of yours, Tiverton. How's to lend me one? I need a good man."

THERE was no reply forthcoming from the *Ruth's* master. But he went chalk-white and his fingers clenched.

A month later Jess Tiverton took his new boat on the Nantucket shoals in the dead of a pitch-black night and a gale of wind that blew her jib out, and rescued a half dozen of the crew of Torrey Lamberts' ship, which had gone ashore with a stalled engine in the storm. Lamberts himself was drowned.

But it was the manner of the *Ruth's* going to the rescue, rather than the rescue itself, which afforded a topic of conversation. Jess Tiverton's vessel was caught with others in shoal water when the storm broke without fifteen minutes' warning. She had, however, ample opportunity to get rigged and into deeper soundings and was well into twenty-five fathoms when Tiverton came to Suttle, who was at the helm.

"He says he sees flares," Jess called above the storm. "They'll be a couple of miles off your starboard on the shoals. We better run in, he says."

So they ran her in while those of the crew who were skeptical of their captain's mentality cursed him for a fool. Even George Suttle's faith was strained that night. No lights showed; there was no sign of any vessel in distress, but Jess gripped Suttle by the arm.

"It's Torrey Lamberts and his *Sleepwalker*, you say! Well, we'll get them just the same, Sonny."

The lead showed six fathoms of water when they made out her single masthead light. She was hard on, with the seas breaking over her, but Jess took the wheel away from his mate and brought his own vessel in as close as he dared. Then he floated two dories, on lines, down wind to the beached swordfisherman. One of them was swamped. The other brought back six of the *Sleepwalker's* crew.

When the *Ruth* was safe in deep water again, George Suttle turned to one of the rescued men and asked: "How long had you been burning flares?"

"We didn't burn no flares," came the answer. "We didn't have none."

None asked Jess Tiverton how he knew there was a vessel in distress. No man inquired from Jess Tiverton from whom he learned it was Torrey Lamberts' boat there on the sands. Tripper

Tarboy shook his head when Suttle told him the facts.

"It's as I told you. I've heard o' such things before. The boy is with him all the time."

There were others who thought the same after that rescue, but who refused to accept the belief with Tripper's complaisance. The *Ruth* lost eight men of her crew when the voyage ended.

"He's a madman," one of them said in explanation. "He risks your life and his own on some mad twist of his brain and because he happens to be lucky once is no reason you won't go to Davy Jones the next time."

HARBINGERS of bad times, those words. For the *Ruth* began to experience difficulty signing crews. One-trip men are neither satisfactory nor satisfied fishermen. All men of the sea are superstitious and fishermen are no exception; not many could bear the thoughts of their lives entrusted to the wisdom of a mate they had never seen.

"It's a hell ship he'll make of her," some said. "Another *Night Hawk.*"

The Ruth's trips became of increasing duration; her hauls smaller. The boat was hardly paying; not paying well enough to keep a steady crew under normal conditions. Such a situation is not allowed to exist for long without some word from those chiefly interested financially.

Tempor was in Boston at the conclusion of one of the *Ruth's* unprofitable trips and held a conference with Jess Tiverton in the cabin while the ship was being unloaded. It lasted upward of an hour and when it ended Tempor left the ship alone.

George Suttle, going below, paused outside the closed cabin door at the sound of Jess Tiverton's voice.

"They're finding fault with us, Sonny. Perhaps they've reason to, but it ain't your fault. It's mine. But I'll give you a little more time and you'll be ready."

Suttle heard no more, for he turned on his heel and left. That night the mate had another talk with Tripper Tarboy, but found little solace in the old fisherman's words.

"Tempor's right," Tripper said. "You and I know the reasons for his actions right enough, but others don't. And every crew's a worser one and we ain't pullin' the fish. It's lookin' blacker."

To the story of Jess Tiverton there remains but one more episode, the last trip he made as master of the *Ruth McKelvie.* Autumn fishing passed with conditions going from bad to worse and the *Ruth* went down the harbor one morning late in October with as rough and poor a crew as ever sailed on a Banker out of Boston. Hangers-on about the wharves, most of them, fellows who were down-and-out and saw a bed and food aboard the ship. The longer the trip the better they would like it. Fellows who had heard the stories of Tiverton's eccentricities, yet took the jobs because they needed jobs badly, not because they had a glimmer of understanding of the captain's sorrow.

"Imagine those rats forward aboard the *Blue Belle* in the old days," said Suttle disgustedly to old Tarboy.

"You've little call to kick," answered Tripper, taking a liberty born of long years and of friendship. "I have to sleep along with 'em."

On the trip down some of them overheard Jess talking to himself, and one, a burly Swede shipping his first trip, made free to mock him behind his back. Suttle overheard and swung once with his big right fist, setting the fellow down and knocking a tooth out.

"I'll teach you manners to your captain," the mate gritted. "You won't ever stand knee-high to him if you live a thousand years."

That ended that, and the others took cognizance, yet it was the first time George Suttle had used his fists aboard any boat in nearly twenty years; there is in the fishing fleet small necessity of brutality. His action was a bad sign.

The Swede was a vindictive sort and he made small talk in the forecastle, and such was the crew that he soon had organized a little clique of trouble-makers.

The vessel had fair weather until she made easterly of Sable Island on the outside run, when a cold northerly blow set in for two days. Followed another spell of clear days with a bit of excellent fishing for a change and then an easterly wind, accompanied by fog. When the shroud lifted there was a full week of fine, calm weather and Suttle drove the men in the knowledge that Jess Tiverton's *Ruth* needed a good trip in order to set her master right with the owners. He recognized the difficulties of overcoming any handicap with such a crew as was given him, but he did his best with men who took no interest in the size of their shares.

He drove them and they cared not for the driving. The Swede and his dory mate pulled the smallest hauls; others, influenced by the fellow, soldiered at their work and accomplished as little as possible without incurring the anger of the mate.

THEY awakened one morning to a light drizzle of rain, a flat calm of sea and a promise of fog. The rain ended at noonday and the fog set in; the dories which had been ordered to work close at hand came over the side.

Jess Tiverton went to his cabin and stayed there and because he hesitated to intrude, Suttle ate his dinner alone. Later he played cribbage with Tripper Tarboy and they had, as usual, some talk of the captain.

"It's a fog like this'll take his memory back," said Tripper. "He'll be makin' bad weather of it there alone. Maybe you better go in with him."

With the dusk the fog set in heavier than before and Suttle named the watches, doubling them, for every two hours. He retired early, leaving the captain reading half aloud by the light of the big lamp swinging from the center of the ceiling beam.

Suttle fell off to sleep quickly enough, for Tiverton's reading was a habit of long standing to which he had become accustomed. He was not due on deck himself until one o'clock, and his was the faculty of being able to waken at any hour he chose.

Jess Tiverton's voice brought him sitting up in his bunk. The lamp, still lit, was dying and beneath it and within its sickly, shifting glare Jess stood staring past the shadow of his own bunk.

"Quick, Sonny! Quick now!" he cried. "Call all hands and get sail on her!"

Suttle swung his feet onto the floor. "What's up?" he asked.

Jess Tiverton never looked at him. "All hands!" he shouted again. "Get her anchor broke oot!"

SUTTLE glanced at the clock nailed beside his berth. Its hands showed five minutes of midnight. Midnight, and a wool fog, and a skipper calling for all hands and sail!

The mate looked once more at Jess Tiverton and had a flashing thought of Torrey Lamberts. He pulled on his boots and ran on deck where the watch was smoking and using the fog-horn to good effect.

"All hands!" he roared. "Rout 'em out and set her jib to break her anchor out. We're moving in a hurry!"

The spark of a cigarette butt went spinning over the side and somebody drawled, "God's sake! Listen to the man."

Suttle paused, undecided whether to knock the man down, and then made a rush for the forecastle, half tumbling down the ladder and shouting as he went. Men crawled out of their bunks, cursing, and the mate felt Tripper's hand upon his sleeve.

"What's wrong?" old Tarboy asked.

"You know as much as I do. Jess is carrying on again. He says all hands and sail on her in a hurry."

The big Swede paused in the act of pulling on his sou'wester and remarked, "Ay ban tink he captain baffy." He got no further because Suttle hit him again.

Somebody in the half darkness said, "To hell with Tiverton and his crazy notions. I'm goin' back to sleep." Tripper Tarboy's hand reached out and caught the man by the throat.

"Git up, you scum, or I'll bash your head," threatened Tripper.

On deck again Suttle found the watch, aroused, setting the jib. Only a faint breath of a breeze but the sail filled and carried the bow around, breaking the anchor loose. They had it in.

Jess Tiverton was on deck then. They heard his voice, a new note in the fog: "Tell 'em to get mainsa'l up, Sonny. Tell 'em quick, now. Hurry!"

Most of the crew stood dumb, aghast at the madness of it. A young voice called, "Pipe down, you old nut!" but Jess Tiverton did not hear.

They got her mainsail up, Suttle and Tripper doing most of the work and Tripper wasting a lot of breath to swear at the good-for-nothing crew. The big sheet filled and the *Ruth McKelvie* started to lay off.

Then, right above the schooner's deck and a little off her port side, there came the weird scream of a liner's siren and a hundred lights snapped out of the fog! She came rushing toward the *Ruth*, was off her stern for a moment, on the starboard the next. And was gone! They felt the breath of her as she passed scant feet away. Scant feet to spare.

From the time that racing liner shot out of the fog until she had disappeared again in the void—a matter of less than a minute—no word was spoken aloud aboard the *Ruth McKelvie*, nor was the fog-horn sounded. Men who had mocked Jess Tiverton were in turn mocked by that silence.

As the *Ruth* dipped forward in the wash her captain's voice rang clear along the ship: "You did a nice job, Sonny. I guess you're ready."

The vessel didn't drop anchor again that voyage. Old age had caught Jess Tiverton that night. He was an old, old man.

"WE'LL go along in, George," he told Suttle. "I've sailed my last trip to sea and I guess you and Young Jess can look after her alone now. And do a better job." He laid his hand on Suttle's arm and his voice was that of a pleading, old man. "We ain't been making good trips, George. All on account of me and my goings on. I've known all along. But I had to be sure he was ready to take her over. I had to be sure, didn't I, George?"

George Suttle answered, his own voice a little shaky: "I guess you ain't got no cause to worry."

That is why, between his stories at the new Fish Pier, if you ask old Jess Tiverton about himself he will mumble and look off up the harbor and out to where the green water merges with the deeper blue of the sea itself. His boy, Young Jess, is out there with George Suttle on the *Ruth McKelvie*. Young Jess is the skipper now. He's a-sailin' of her.

The Mystery of the Spirit Painters

(*Continued from page* 56)

problem of the origin of certain forms of human knowledge.

The lecturer then passed to the work of the other painter-medium, Marjan Gruzewski.

This was a Polish gentleman of fortune, who was born in 1889. His family were landed proprietors in comfortable circumstances. He had had a peculiar history, and it was necessary to tell in a few words what his childhood was like, because it formed the psychological background of his later achievements.

When he was a child, what was called the conscious exercise of thought was of very little value to him, but, on the contrary, his subconscious mind had a very strange vitality. The importance of the subconscious in his life showed itself in many ways, first by hallucinations and phantoms—phantoms which no one saw but himself. His childhood was dominated by fear.

WHEN he went to school a very curious thing happened. On using his hands to write, he found that he could not set down what he was told to write or what he wished to write. His hand wrote something quite different and quite foreign to what would be expected of a child of his years. If he tried to write what he wished to write, the pen would drop out of his hand. It was, therefore, not possible to educate him in the ordinary way.

One could say of his childhood that his conscious thought was very weak, and, on the other hand, his subconscious activity very vigorous. Until he was seventeen he had never heard of spiritualism. The subject had been concealed from him on account of his singular nervousness.

He first heard of the existence of spiritualism from one of his cousins. He was at first skeptical and, when the subject was pressed upon him, he became angry. But he had a brother and sister who believed in it, and they persuaded him to have a sitting.

At the very first sitting, as frequently happens with people whose subconscious is anxious to express itself, there were manifestations; a table moved in uncanny fashion at the touch of his hand.

He was discovered to be a medium for telekinesis and teleplastics, as well as a poetic improviser and an actor when in the somnambulistic state.

After a very few sittings, according to the evidence of people who knew him at the time, he gave marked proof of supernormal knowledge. At the séances in which he was a medium, there occurred movements of objects, and also, it appeared, materializations. The lecturer, however, said that he could not vouch for these things: this was only what he had been told. But Gruzewski did undoubtedly produce spontaneous poetry in the trance state, and theatrical scenes. In such a state he appeared to be a remarkable actor.

It was only when he was nineteen or twenty that people began to observe in his subconscious activity very striking gifts as a painter. Up to that time he knew nothing whatever about designing or painting. Wishing to find a means of proving that he himself was not the author of the things which he produced in the somnambulistic state, a friend asked him to do something that he had never done before; namely, to paint or draw. He was provided with sheets of paper on a table, and it was suggested to him that he draw some of the happenings in the astral world.

The lecturer showed one of the drawings thus produced in the space of four minutes, while the medium's eyes were closed.

It was followed by other drawings made in the same way and with equal quickness. In some of the paintings which followed, historical subjects and fantasies were strangely interwoven.

FOR example, he had drawn a representation of the death of the lover of Mary Stuart, and this was surrounded by grinning faces and other spectral forms.

In the space of eight years Gruzewski produced some hundreds of pictures. The use of the brush on canvas followed the use of the pencil on paper, and all the work was stamped with the same character. All of it was done in a state of trance and in full daylight.

Among the examples of his work shown by the lecturer were portraits of people (whom the medium had not known) who were dead, and the portraits were said to be remarkable likenesses.

The lecturer also drew attention to the fact that this man, who had never learned anatomy, was able to render in an extraordinary way the modeling of the human form. The revelation of the medium's skill in anatomical representation was as remarkable as his facility for painting and drawing.

ONE portrait, done from memory, was of the celebrated Polish poet Mickiewicz, who died in 1855.

In 1919 Gruzewski was obliged to leave the town of Vilna, where he lived, because of the Russian invasion, and he took refuge in Warsaw with an old dependent of the family, and there the experiments were continued under sympathetic supervision, Gruzewski being set to work under all manner of difficult conditions. Portraits and scenes were produced without number.

One remarkable picture which was shown followed a suggestion to Gruzewski that he should endeavor to represent in a composition the two movements of the world, its movement in space, and its movement on its own axis. Again the lecturer drew attention to the extraordinary knowledge of anatomy shown in the rendering of the figure in this composition.

Another work was the representation of the Sphinx with other faces around it.

It was then desired to test Gruzewski further, to make him paint a living model; and the picture in oil, executed in trance, showed the person he was asked to paint, but in addition the shadowy heads of certain other painters who, he claimed, had had relations of some sort with the principal figure in another existence. Demon faces and other weird forms appeared in some of the compositions. Most of the pictures appeared to have been very rapidly executed, in a matter of a few minutes.

In one case the friend who had taken Gruzewski in hand told him that he had

dreamed that he was assisting in the Roman games in the days of Nero and that he saw a superb athlete throwing the discus. He suggested to him that at a certain hour on the next day he should reproduce the picture. Surely enough, on the next day, without being reminded, the medium fell into a trance and produced a picture which was exhibited.

ANOTHER picture was an incident from one of the dramas of Mickiewicz, and yet another was an oil painting reproducing the idea of Chopin's *Funeral March*. He was also asked to paint the beasts of the Apocalypse. All of these pictures were done very quickly, although some extraordinary symbolism was shown in the background, and the fancy and imagination of the whole work was marvelous. Even the most elaborate works never took him more than two hours altogether. For some of the works he required more than one sitting.

As soon as a séance had lasted for forty minutes Gruzewski said he was exhausted and could not go on. In the action of painting his whole body appeared to contract, he lost consciousness, his hand worked with exceeding quickness, and his breathing became rapid and audible. Each stroke he placed on canvas was quite definite, and needed no subsequent correction.

In his figures and scenes he represented things which he stated to belong to a former existence. That being so, of course, it was impossible to test their truth or untruth. He gave his delineations the name of psychic portraits. He declared that in his trance he saw people with an appearance different from their normal one. He saw around them an aura of "atmospheric fluid," and sometimes he saw very strange materializations, which he duly represented.

Last July, Gruzewski went to Paris and carried out certain experiments at the Institut Metaphysique. This work consisted of designs made in complete darkness and portraits painted in the somnambulistic state. He was made to work under conditions in which the normal person could not work; this was done in order to make sure that his productions were not due to some unsuspected talent in himself.

The lecturer tried to get the other medium, Lesage, also to work in the dark, but under those conditions Lesage could not produce anything which was of any value.

When Gruzewski was set to the task of drawing in the dark, his productions were certainly inferior to those he made in good light, and with his eyes open, but he proved that he could work even in the dark, and the results of three such sittings were shown on the lantern screen.

These were sketches, not finished drawing, and each of them was made in two or three minutes.

In spite of these difficulties Gruzewski produced pictures which were truthful in their detail and also well balanced in their general scheme.

At one stage in this experiment a red light was let into the ceiling, and when this was done, although it cast no illumination whatever on the table on which the medium was working, there was a decided improvement in the drawing.

He apparently drew better under red light, even though the red light never reached the table where he was working; in full daylight he did better still.

THE brother of Gruzewski said that he could execute a portrait of some unknown person if he had some possession of that person near him. Accordingly, the lecturer went to a friend of his, who was unknown to Gruzewski, and borrowed an article of clothing which he put into the hands of the medium.

Under the red light Gruzewski in four minutes produced a portrait, but it was not the portrait of the person from whom the garment had been borrowed; nor was it the portrait of anyone known to him. That experiment, therefore, was not a success.

Other portraits were shown of people who had visited the medium, and the lecturer declared that they were faithful likenesses.

Here again many of these had sketches in the background which might be supposed to indicate scenes from the past life of the subject, or associations with him.

In conclusion, the lecturer said that in the case of both of these mediums there was a kind of gift which made its appearance all at once, and although, in the case of Gruzewski, there had certainly been progress, yet the achievement at the very beginning was remarkable. Here was a man manifesting not only a disposition towards art but also diverse technical knowledge, including a knowledge of anatomy, which he had not learned, and of which his conscious intelligence showed no trace.

ALL the work was done in a state of unconsciousness. Gruzewski never drew except in a trance.

It was not rare to see drawings which were done subconsciously, but certainly it was rare to see subconscious drawings and paintings which had reached the level of artistic achievement of those shown in these cases.

These men had no hesitation in believing that their hands were the instruments of spirits. It was certainly true that in this field of experiment as in others, if one sought for trickery one would find it, but the lecturer submitted that this was not the way in which truth was to be approached.

Here were men undoubtedly who were capable of far higher levels of production subconsciously than consciously.

That might be true of very many people, and those who assigned limits to human achievement without taking into account the subconscious, were guilty of presumption.

Doctor Osty added that next year a book would be published in France containing a full account of this and other work, and he hoped that it might find English readers.

Can the Dead Help the Living?

(*Continued from page* 47)

following the proper medical treatment? Should a boy be sent to college? Should certain agreements be entered into? And a hundred like them.

Isn't it important that we should learn whether such matters can be discussed by the dead? And bigger than those trivial queries is this greater enigma: Can we reach by spirit power the secret springs of inspiration?

This question can be made clearer by examples.

Is it possible, for instance, for a musician, musing over the keys of his piano, to get in touch with higher planes; to tap the source of all melody and all harmony, and, under his eager fingers, weave new and far sweeter music than he had ever before been able to compose?

Or, can the painter, brooding above his canvas, reach out and seize a spirit hand that shall guide his brush for him and fix permanently in pigment a more glowing vision than the artist had before been able to produce?

CAN the poet, harkening to the whispers of a spirit guide, write down such metrical loveliness as he had never previously been able to capture?

Can the sculptor, fingering wet clay and chiseling his marble; the author, spinning the web of his plot; the engineer, dreaming in visions of lacy steel arches across unconquered canyons; the chemist, mixing his experimental compounds—can these creators and craftsmen learn from the wiser dead the secrets veiled to their mortal eyes?

And finally, can all the young men and all the young women of the world, whose hearts are beating high with hope and ambition; who are struggling to find and express themselves; those millions who are not blessed with any special artistic or mechanical gifts, but who do want to bring out of themselves the very highest of which they are capable—can they get help for their problems? Can they be shown how to live larger lives, through contact with the spirit world?

All these questions were whirling through my head as, in company with Mr. P. J. Nolan, an Australian journalist, I started out one bright breezy morning to meet Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

On our way to the hotel where the novelist was stopping, I was distinctly curious as to the type of man he would prove to be. On this subject, my companion was discreetly silent, though I did not surmise at the time that he was planning a little surprise of his own.

As we walked down the corridor approaching the Doyle suite in the hotel, we met a group of youngsters romping in boisterous glee as they raced past us, down the hallway. These were the Doyle children, so often photographed with their parents. In their wholesome and good-natured sport they were something of a prophecy of the man we had come to meet.

For, when presently we were received by Sir Arthur, we found a man to the last degree removed from the type we call mystic. Instead we shook hands with a lusty, manful Britisher with a lion-like face of rugged dignity, to which his drooping mustache added a touch deceptively languid and casual. There was a jovial, good-natured and friendly quality in his smile of greeting.

The rubicund glow of his face was not that of a man enveloped in the remote mists of the exotic. Instead it spoke of good living, and a decent enjoyment of the life which begins in England on Friday and ends on Monday, and also of constant muscular exercise; Sir Arthur is an expert at cricket and boxing.

THE one touch of severity in his face is a perpendicular kerf, like the channel cut by a saw, in the center of his forehead—the certain impress of years of concentrated thought. As he came toward us, he moved with a deceivingly indolent slouch, masking a vitality, which, in view of all his activities, must be tremendous. From behind his horn-rimmed spectacles his serene blue eyes looked at us steadily. They were clear and calm and kind. They were not eyes which seemed to have beheld hermetic mysteries or looked upon infernal phenomena—merely wide-awake, discriminating and again friendly eyes.

About him there was a granite sense of poise and strength. Here, one would say, is a man big enough to grapple with big problems; a vigorous and bracing personality. If one were not previously apprised, one would never imagine him a spiritualist. More than anything else in the world he suggests his original character of family physician. In no setting would he seem physically more appropriate than standing by the bedside of a patient and asking for a glass of water and a spoon.

At the very outset of the interview, Sir Arthur gave us an astonishing demonstration of his memory. As he shook my companion by the hand, he exclaimed:

"Why, I have met you before! Your name is Nolan! Where did I see you last?"

"I interviewed you in Sydney, Australia, two years ago," explained Mr. Nolan.

"That's right! I remember you perfectly!"

In spite of the many thousands of people he has met since then, Sir Arthur was able instantly to recall that half-hour conversation with a stranger on the other side of the world. Mr. Nolan had said nothing about it, and I think he was as surprised at Sir Arthur's ready identification as was I.

Sir Arthur then proceeded to introduce Lady Doyle, a graciously charm-

ing woman, who is as interested in spirit phenomena as her husband and quite as completely convinced as he of the authenticity of their experiences.

These preliminaries concluded, Sir Arthur flung himself down on a divan, where, with his hands locked behind his head, as he gazed at the ceiling, he directed us to "Fire away!"

"Our interest in spiritualism," I explained, "is as a practical force. What are we going to be able to accomplish by it? Assuming that the evidence is conclusive, assuming that with more intensive and more intelligent research, we can establish a more certain method of communication, how will humanity profit, beyond a more firmly grounded conviction in a future existence?"

"That," replied Sir Arthur, "is a new thought. Just what do you mean by it?"

I then sketched for him some of the particular questions already outlined in this article.

Sir Arthur listened patiently and with manifest interest, which was emphasized in the enthusiasm with which he replied.

"THESE are searching questions," he said. "They cannot be answered authoritatively offhand. They need mature consideration and investigation. It must not be forgotten that this science is still in its infancy. We are distinctly not in a position to dogmatize. Moreover I must confess that this phase of the subject is new to me. It would certainly merit the fullest investigation. I do not believe that the spirits can give us any better advice about our personal affairs than any other well-meaning friend, except in certain rare instances, and I think the most pernicious evil we spiritualists must fight is the prevalent tendency to degrade it to the level of fortune-telling.

"Moreover, I am inclined to believe that what we call inspiration comes from within ourselves. What seems to well up in us is from the subconscious rather than from external spirit agencies. Yet every person who works creatively does reach the point where he must realize that the highest of our creations do *not* evolve from ourselves. There comes a day when a thought is projected like a bullet through our brain—that thought is from the Beyond. It has come from on high. Some spirit has given it to us.

"The general average, however, of conscious attempts to draw down such inspiration through spirit assistance is disappointing.

"Perhaps the subconscious mind in more elevated moments of inspiration does make contact with higher intelligence. We all know that there is an ebb and flow of inspiration. Occasionally, I am convinced we can bring down mighty thoughts from mighty thinkers—artists, painters, musicians and poets who have passed away. There is certainly that definite possibility, and unquestionably it fits in with the spiritual hypothesis.

"In general, however, I am convinced that it lies within ourselves to make of us what we would like to be. From within, and not from without, should come our best assistance.

"Obviously we are not now evolving Shakespeares or Shelleys through the vehicle of trance-mediumship.

"I am inclined to think, however, that there is the very definite possibility that we can improve character by communion with the dead. I am convinced that better sermons are received by trance speakers and a broader and more beautiful conception of religion than we could conceive without external aid. These thoughts of religion, inspired by the spirits, are undoubtedly better than those which come from the normal brain.

"I do not think, however, that under ordinary circumstances the creative artist, or indeed the normal man seeking to succeed in life, will get much assistance from the spirit realms.

"Take for example our own work: If we authors were compelled to get our material over a long-range telephone with a rather unintelligent operator at the other end, we might feel that the method was not the happiest one to employ. Indeed, I think it would be better not to lean on a crutch, but to find in ourselves all that we need to express."

"Yet," I asked Sir Arthur, "do you not believe there is a great reservoir of beautiful thoughts and beautiful music on the higher planes, which, if it could be tapped, would add immeasurably to the beauty of this world?"

"Yes," he replied emphatically.

"There is undoubtedly music, for example, in the spirit realms. It is most interesting to read in the collection of letters which I have received from people who have had spiritualistic experiences, of the wonderful music which they have heard while in trance. If it would be possible for these people to commit to lines and bars of music script, the celestial music that they hear, or the poems chanted by spirit metrists, or if they could paint the pictures of the glorious sights they see, the world would certainly be so much the better off. Perhaps we shall some day find combination of artist and medium, and when that day comes we may look for some results—although the telephone metaphor must always be kept in mind in such discussions.

"I REMEMBER very distinctly a letter from a shepherd in Scotland. He was eighty-two years old and spent all his days wandering across the dunes with his sheep. He was mediumistic and told me with what joy he sat alone in the silence of the dunes and listened entranced to the regular beat and cadence of the music of the spheres.

"In my medical experience I have frequently found that at the moment of death many patients spoke of hearing celestial music. Some mediums have told me of a most remarkable sight which they beheld on the spirit planes—falling fountains with seven jets of gauzy water. Each of the seven jets was tinted in one of the seven colors of the solar spectrum, and each, as it fell, sounded a separate tone of the seven notes of the musical scale."

I pointed out to Sir Arthur that certain advanced psychologists who had become deeply interested in psychic phenomena had advanced a theory in which color and tone were synthesized with character—that each person had his own individual spiritual color and natural spiritual tone; that these colors were reflected in the aura which, all mediums declare, surrounds each individual, and musically through the tone of the voice. These characteristics, according to the theorists, persist after death and may be identified.

"Have you ever heard of this?" I asked Sir Arthur.

"I am not an encyclopedia on the subject of spiritualism," he replied tartly; and then after a moment's reflection, "But after all that is a tremendous subject. I must confess that it is entirely new to me and would certainly merit a great deal of profound examination.

"I should be inclined to think there was some reasonable basis behind it. Indeed, we can readily realize from our own experience that the voice is often an indication of character. There are kind voices and there are cruel voices; and as character is modified by growth or retrogression, the voice, too, is altered. This is a subject which will repay deeper analysis."

AS Sir Arthur enunciated these principles and the others that followed, he discussed them plainly and simply, and with the most astonishing matter-of-factness. His advocacy of spiritualism is sheer, downright and absolute.

While he knows there are frauds, and is probably as well acquainted with the mechanics of fake mediumship as any conjurer, yet he offers the amazing testimony that his departed mother has stood before him in materialized form; that he has conversed face to face with the dead.

Against the intolerant attitude of the skeptics, he stands firm in his statements and challenges them to be disproved. It is easy to understand after conversing with him, realizing his sane earnestness and his intense conviction, why many conservative persons are disturbed about Doyle.

As he explained his conception of life after death, he developed the doctrine of two bodies, a physical body and an etheric body. Death from his viewpoint is not extinction but a *palingenesis*—a new birth into a higher life.

At the change called death, the spirit, clothed in its etheric body, leaves the physical body.

"Now, what happens to that spirit?" I asked Sir Arthur.

He replied, "It is received in the Beyond. Here, when the etheric body leaves the physical body is where the reward of a good life or the punishment of a bad one is adjusted. When the man who has been a decent chap and a loving, tender man; who has been kind, who has made many friends, dies, he is met by spirit friends. But the bad man's spirit has no friends to meet him. He feeds on solitude. He is sent into a sort of spirit coventry—the most terrible punishment conceivable."

"Is this judgment immediate?" I asked him.

"No," he replied. "When the etheric body comes out of the physical body, it rests for three days in a sleep, designed,

it would seem, to prevent the shock that comes from the grief of those who are left behind. At the end of this period the etheric body awakens and goes forth into a new world of indescribable glory. Messages from those who are beyond now do not adequately describe the glories of that world—those glories which everyone at some day or another will see for himself. Yet this first phase of Heaven is only a lead-up to more glorious spheres."

Describing some of his personal experiences, Sir Arthur continued:

"In my own household I receive many automatic writings through my own wife. They have reached such a pitch that a couple of nights ago my wife and I were sitting in our room, when my wife's writing suddenly began to assume the characteristics of my mother-in-law's handwriting. The message, too was about something of which only my mother-in-law had knowledge."

"How do people live in the Beyond?" I inquired.

"DO you remember," he replied, "when Christ spoke of 'My Father's house?' I have no doubt he saw that lovely landscape of the Beyond, those colonies of love.

"Husbands and wives unhappily married here below will not be tied to each other there. Each may seek out the circle wherein lies the greatest happiness, perhaps later to rejoin each other.

"This is only the first plane of Heaven. Persons fresh from the earth and with the ideals of the earth are not fit for direct ascent to the more dazzling realms of the upper Beyond and so they go through a figurative course of preparation."

"What are the factors most deterrent to the universal acceptance of spiritual phenomena?" was the next question propounded.

On this Sir Arthur was definite. He referred to the hostile attitude of skeptics, the unscientific attitude of great scientists like Darwin and Huxley, the ridicule of press and public, and the perpetration of frauds by fake mediums. These latter he described as "human hyenas who live on the dead."

I have tried to let Conan Doyle disclose himself and his theories in this interview. I have tried to report faithfully the way he talks and his method of reasoning. By so talking and so reasoning he has attracted to himself from all classes of humanity both hope and hatred.

To me the importance of this man lies in his personality. Looking at him, one does not think of an erotic mystic, about whom spirits are hovering, pausing with fluttering wings. One does not look to him to open his mouth and utter incantations, or by a gesture evoke the shades of the departed. No! Here is a man outspoken, and with the common touch; a man of hard common sense with his feet planted firmly on the ground. There is no hint of the somber or the strange in him. Of him no one can say that he is a romantic dilettante, trifling with an interesting novelty; no dabbler in *diablerie:* but an earnest and serious-minded gentleman, seeking a full explanation of certain profound enigmas; and a gentleman exceptionally equipped for such a task.

With the man of honest doubt and open mind, Sir Arthur is patient. He is willing, and even eager, as disclosed in his lectures, to produce the evidence which has convinced him, and to reason out the subject to its logical conclusion.

Just before we departed, Sir Arthur managed to furnish us a genuine surprise. As we were shaking hands, I said:

"There is a medium I wanted to speak to you about, Sir Arthur. I have never seen her, but someone was telling me—"

"Is the name Thompson?" he suddenly interrupted.

"Yes!" I replied, startled. "How did you know?"

A look of bewilderment crossed his face.

"Dashed if I know," he confessed. "The name suddenly popped into my mind, and I spoke it aloud before I quite knew what it was all about!"

"Arthur! Arthur!" chided Lady Doyle, who was listening. "You are getting to be a medium yourself!"

"I have no mediumistic powers whatever," he protested. "Yet that certainly is curious. But what about this Thompson? Tell me about him."

"Her!" I corrected. The error showed that Sir Arthur did not know the medium in question—and thereby made the occurrence more unexplainable than before.

A few moments later, when we took our leave, we were still marveling at the little incident which had furnished a dramatic ending to an unusual interview with the great author and spiritualist.

Plagiarism

Stories have been submitted to this magazine which are copies of stories that have appeared in other magazines.

Anyone submitting a plagiarized story through the mail and receiving and accepting remuneration therefor, is guilty of a Federal offense in using the mails to defraud.

The publishers of GHOST STORIES are anxious—as are all reputable publishers—to stamp out this form of literary theft and piracy and are advising all magazines from which such stories have been copied of such plagiarism, and are offering to co-operate with the publishers thereof to punish the guilty persons.

Notice is hereby given to all who submit stories that the same must be the original work of the author.

The Château of Laughing Phantoms

(*Continued from page* 15)

blew it shut. Isn't that logical enough?

"Anyhow," he went on, "if somebody followed us down the passage and shut the door, we can easily fix things so he'll stay out where he is." He shut the door and dropped the ponderous oaken bar into place. "There! That door is solid oak and three inches thick, and nothing less than dynamite would make any impression on it. The other door is already barred and the window shutter is fastened. No danger of anybody getting in here now. We may have a headache in the morning for lack of fresh air, but certainly nothing else can happen to us."

He began to unpack the sterno outfit and the provisions. He measured coffee into a small pot, poured in some water from a canteen and placed the pot on the sterno stove. Then he cut thick slices of bread from a loaf and placed slices of sausage between them.

"Here," he said, holding one of the sandwiches out to me, "start the banquet. Nothing like a little food to cure the blue funk. And as a further cheer to your spirits, I have a bottle of wine here."

I UNSTRAPPED the cots and set them up, one on each side of the little sterno stove. I seated myself on one of the cots, my back to the door by which we had entered, and Paul took his place on the other, facing me. The candles, set on the floor in hardened pools of their own wax, threw a dim light about the room, wavering with every breath and making our shadows dance like gruesome specters on the gloomy hangings of the wall.

The room was soon filled with the pleasant aroma of boiling coffee. Paul lifted the pot from the stove, and was in the act of filling our cups when both candles flickered and went out, leaving the room in darkness save for the ghostly pool of blue light about the sterno stove. We sat for a moment in startled silence; then Paul said in a voice from which he tried in vain to keep a note of uneasiness: "It *is* a bit draughty in here, isn't it?"

I found my match box, struck a match and leaned over to light the candles. As I straightened up again, I saw Paul staring over my shoulder at something behind me, his face bloodless and his eyes glassy. I leaped to my feet and whirled to face the door.

It was standing wide open!

For what seemed an age we stood there staring—staring at that open, empty door.

At last Paul gave a weak chuckle, more like a gasp. "Oh," he said, "it gave me a little start at first—seeing that door standing open. I had forgotten that I opened it. You see—you see—I thought I had left the canteen of water down in the car, and I—I was going down to get it—and I opened the door—and then I saw the canteen and—and I guess I forgot to—to close the door."

I knew that he was lying—lying hopelessly and bravely to calm my fears, but in the extremity of my horror I was willing to accept any explanation—as a drowning man clutches at a straw. Without comment, I closed and barred the door and resumed my seat. We finished our meal in silence. Even the bottle of excellent champagne failed to revive our spirits.

After a little while, Paul said, "Well, I suppose it's time to go to bed."

I agreed, though I was fully determined that I should not sleep a wink that night.

"I'll tell you how we'll arrange this," Paul went on. "Just to make sure that nobody can operate those bars from the outside, you put your cot across that door over there, and I'll put mine across this one. If you feel anybody pushing the door open, call out. I'll do the same. We'll put out one of these candles. If we let both of them burn together, we'll be without light before morning."

I assented, and we both lay down at our appointed stations. I do not know how long I lay there, staring at the ceiling, listening tensely to the wind, which moaned about the deserted towers and empty turrets as though it were wailing the anguish of all those long-forgotten beings who had lived, suffered and died within these moldering walls. Paul's irregular breathing, and an occasional creak of the cot as he shifted his position, told me that he, too, was wide awake.

And then—the candle went out.

THERE was no preliminary flicker or wavering of the flame. The light was cut off as swiftly and completely as that of an electric bulb when the current is switched off. And at the same moment, out of the darkness, lean, powerful hands closed upon my throat.

I had no impression of a rush—of a body leaping upon me from some place of concealment. It was as though those hands had been there waiting—waiting. I tried to call out, but could make no sound. I tore at those relentless hands in an ecstasy of terror, but could not loosen them. At last, with the strength of despair, I struggled to a sitting posture, drew my pistol, pressed it against the body before me and pulled the trigger three times. The roar of the shots started a thousand reverberations which echoed hollowly through the room, and as they died away the grip upon my throat relaxed—the hands dropped. I waited for the thud of a falling body, but heard nothing.

"Paul!" I screamed. "Paul, where are you?"

There was no answer.

I found my match box, and with trembling fingers struck a light and ran toward Paul's cot. He was lying quietly—I thought at first that he had fallen asleep and had slept through my

struggle with the unknown Thing that had attacked me in the darkness. I glanced swiftly about the room—there was no sign of a body. Then I looked again at Paul. Blood was oozing from his temple. There were three bullet holes, all within a space an inch in diameter.

Was it Paul, then, who had attacked me? Impossible! The hands had closed upon my throat at the very instant that the light went out. And in any case, he could never have regained his cot, which was fully sixty feet distant from mine. He could not have walked a step after the first of those three bullets had struck.

As I stood there, too horrified to cry out—too horrified even to move—the match in my fingers burned out. And then, in the pitch darkness, at my very elbow, I heard a sardonic chuckle.

How I found my way out of that castle, I do not know. I can remember, as through a mist, dashing frenziedly through the endless, echoing corridors, falling down flights of stone steps, beating upon the bare stone walls with my naked fists when I could find no door, stumbling through the murk that seemed to close upon me like a foul ooze that clung, holding me back. And always, until at last I fell through the postern gate into the blessed moonlight, I heard that chuckle behind me, beside me, before me, growing ever louder and shriller, until it rang through those empty corridors like the wild laughter of demons.

I remember leaping into the car and driving, driving, driving. Across ditches and fields I drove until I came out on the high road—then on, on—with no thought but to leave that accursed castle farther and farther behind me.

The rest of the story everybody knows. When we failed to appear in the village the following morning, a group of the villagers, emboldened by the daylight, went to the castle and there found Paul's body lying on the cot. To all appearances, he had been shot in his sleep. The news, with a description of myself, was swiftly flashed all over France and I was arrested at the outskirts of Nantes—exhausted, bleeding and bruised from my contacts with the stone walls of the castle, but still running on—on. The car was found ten miles back along the road, where I had left it when the fuel gave out.

I pleaded not guilty to the charge of murdering Paul Granger, and employed the best legal talent that France could produce. But even from the first I knew that it was useless. For I could hear the voice of the old villager: *"They die! A curse follows those upon whom the shadow of the château falls by moonlight. All—all! They die!"*

I have spent the night in writing this record.

The candle which my pitying jailor allowed me as a last favor in life is flickering and about to die. And I, too! Already it grows light in the east. They are coming for me——

The Ghost of Doctor Harris

(*Continued from page* 46)

he had just been introduced than about the politics he had left behind him!

The apparition took no notice of me, nor behaved otherwise in any respect than on any previous day. Nobody but myself seemed to notice him; and yet the old gentlemen roundabout the fire, beside his chair, were his lifelong acquaintances, who were perhaps thinking of his death, and who in a day or two would deem it a proper courtesy to attend his funeral.

I HAVE forgotten how the ghost of Doctor Harris took its departure from the Athenæum on this occasion, or, in fact, whether the ghost or I went first. This equanimity, and almost indifference, on my part—the careless way in which I glanced at so singular a mystery and laid it aside—is what now surprises me as much as anything else in the affair.

From that time, for a long while thereafter—for weeks at least, and I know not but for months—I used to see the figure of Doctor Harris quite as frequently as before his death. It grew to be so common that at length I regarded the venerable defunct no more than any other of the old fogies who basked before the fire and dozed over the newspapers.

It was but a ghost—nothing but thin air—not tangible nor appreciable, nor demanding any attention from a man of flesh and blood! I cannot recollect any cold shuddering, any awe, any repugnance, any emotion whatever, such as would be suitable and decorous on beholding a visitant from the spiritual world. It is very strange, but such is the truth. It appears excessively odd to me now that I did not adopt such means as I readily might to ascertain whether the appearance had solid substance, or was merely gaseous and vapory. I might have brushed against him, have jostled his chair, or have trodden accidentally on his poor old toes. I might have snatched the *Boston Post*—unless that were an apparition, too—out of his shadowy hands. I might have tested him in a hundred ways; but I did nothing of the kind.

PERHAPS I was loath to destroy the illusion, and to rob myself of so good a ghost story, which might probably have been explained in some very commonplace way. Perhaps, after all, I had a secret dread of the old phenomenon, and therefore kept within my limits, with an instinctive caution which I mistook for indifference. Be this as it may, here is the fact. I saw the figure, day after day, for a considerable space of time, and took no pains to ascertain whether it was a ghost or no. I never, to my knowledge, saw him come into the reading room or depart from it. There sat Doctor Harris in his customary chair, and I can say little else about him.

After a certain period—I really know not how long—I began to notice, or to fancy, a peculiar regard in the old gentleman's aspect towards myself. I sometimes found him gazing at me, and, unless I deceived myself, there was a sort of expectancy in his face. His spectacles, I think, were shoved up, so that his bleared eyes might meet my own. Had he been a living man I should have flattered myself that Doctor Harris was, for some reason or other, interested in me and desirous of a personal acquaintance. Being a ghost, and amenable to ghostly laws, it was natural to conclude that he was waiting to be spoken to before delivering whatever message he wished to impart. But, if so, the ghost had shown the bad judgment common among the spiritual brotherhood, both as regarded the place of interview and the person whom he had selected as the recipient of his communication. In the reading room of the Athenæum conversation is strictly forbidden, and I could not have addressed the apparition without drawing the instant notice and indignant frowns of the slumbrous old gentlemen around me.

I MYSELF, too, at that time, was as shy as any ghost, and followed the ghosts' rule never to speak first. And what an absurd figure should I have made, solemnly and awfully addressing what must have appeared, in the eyes of all the rest of the company, an empty chair! Besides, I had never been introduced to Doctor Harris, dead or alive, and I am not aware that social regulations are to be abrogated by the accidental fact of one of the parties having crossed the imperceptible line which separates the other party from the spiritual world. If ghosts throw off all conventionalism among themselves, it does not therefore follow that it can be safely dispensed with by those who are still hampered with flesh and blood.

For such reasons as these—and reflecting, moreover, that the deceased Doctor might burden me with some disagreeable task, with which I had no business nor wish to be concerned—I stubbornly resolved to have nothing to say to him. To this determination I adhered; and not a syllable ever passed between the ghost of Doctor Harris and myself.

To the best of my recollection, I never observed the old gentleman either enter the reading room or depart from it, or move from his chair, or lay down the newspaper, or exchange a look with any person in the company, unless it were myself. He was not by any means invariably in his place. In the evening, for instance, though often at the reading room myself, I never saw him. It was at the brightest noontide that I used to behold him, sitting within the most comfortable focus of the glowing fire, as real and lifelike an object (except that he was so very old, and of an ashen complexion) as any other in the room.

After a long while of this strange intercourse, if such it can be called, I remember—once at least, and I know not but oftener—a sad, wistful, disappointed gaze, which the ghost fixed upon me from beneath his spectacles; a melancholy look of helplessness, which, if my heart had not been as hard as a paving-stone, I could hardly have withstood. But I did withstand it; and I think I saw him no more after this last appealing look, which still dwells in my memory as perfectly as while my own eyes were encountering the dim and bleared eyes of the ghost. And whenever I recall this strange passage of my life, I see the old, withered figure of Doctor Harris, sitting in his accustomed chair, the *Boston Post* in his hand, his spectacles shoved upwards—and gazing at me as I close the door of the reading room, with that wistful, appealing, hopeless, helpless look. It is too late now: his grave has been grass-grown this many and many a year; and I hope he has found rest in it without any aid from me.

I HAVE only to add that it was not until long after I had ceased to encounter the ghost that I became aware how very odd and strange the whole affair had been; and even now I am made sensible of its strangeness chiefly by the wonder and incredulity of those to whom I tell the story.

Spirit Tales

(*Continued from page* 82)

throat. Over and over we rolled upon the stones.

"My strength began to give way before the fury of my struggles. I saw that my antagonist felt it and smiled a ghastly smile of triumph. Presently, I saw him reach forth his hand and grasp a bright hatchet. Even in this extremity I noticed that the hatchet was new and apparently unused, with glittering head and white, polished handle.

"I made one more tremendous fight for life, and for a second I held my enemy powerless and saw with such a thrill of delight as I cannot forget, the horror-stricken faces of friends within a rod of us rushing to my rescue. As the foremost of them sprang upon the back of my antagonist, he wrenched his wrist away from me. I saw the hatchet flash above my head and felt instantly a dull blow on the forehead. I fell back on the ground, a numbness spread from my head over my body, a warm liquid flowed down upon my face and into my mouth, and I remember the taste was of blood, and my limbs were loosed.

"Then I thought I was suspended in the air a few feet above my body. I could see myself as if in a glass, lying on the back, the hatchet sticking in the head, and the ghastliness of death gradually spreading over the face. I noticed especially that the wound made by the hatchet was in the center of the forehead at right angle to, and divided equally by, the line of the hair. I heard the weeping of friends, at first loud, then

growing fainter, fading away into silence. A delightful sensation of sweet repose without a feeling of fatigue—precisely like that which I experienced years ago at Cape May when beginning to drown—crept over me. I heard exquisite music, the air was full of rare perfumes, I sat upon a bed of downy softness, when, with a start, I awoke.

"The fire still smoldered in the grate; my watch told me I had not been more than half an hour asleep!

"Early the next morning I joined an intimate friend with whom I spent much of my time, to accompany him, as was my daily custom, to the Law School. We talked for a moment of various topics, when suddenly he interrupted me with the remark that he had dreamed strangely of me the night before.

"'Tell me,' I said. 'What was it?'

"'I fell asleep about twelve,' he answered, 'and immediately dreamed that I was passing through a narrow street when I heard noises and cries of your murder. Hurrying in the direction of the noise, I saw you lying on your back, fighting a rough laboring man, who held you down. I rushed forward, but as I reached you he struck you on the head with a hatchet and killed you instantly. Many of our friends were there and we cried bitterly. In a moment I awoke, and so vivid had been my dream that my cheeks were wet with tears.'

"'What sort of a man was he?' I asked.

"'A thick-set man, in a flannel shirt and rough trousers; his hair was uncombed and his beard was grizzly and of a few days' growth.'

"Within a week I was in Burlington, New Jersey. I called at a friend's house.

"'My husband,' said his wife to me, 'had such a horrible dream about you the other night. He dreamed that a man killed you in a street fight. He ran to help you, but before he reached the spot, your enemy had killed you with a great club.'

"'Oh, no,' cried the husband across the room, 'he killed you with a hatchet.'

"These are the circumstances as I recall them. I remembered the remark of old Artaphernes that dreams are often the result of a train of thought started by conversation or reading or the incidents of the working time; but I could recall nothing, nor could either of my friends cite any circumstance that they had ever read, had ever heard by tale or history, in which they could trace the origin of this remarkable dream.

"I am, my dear sir, very truly yours,

"HENRY ARMITT BROWN.

"P. S. I may add that these friends of mine were personally unknown to each other. The first one in New York dreamed that he was the foremost who reached the scene, the other that he was one of the number who followed—both of which points coincided exactly with my own dream."

Two Faces

LATE one evening, rather more than fifty years ago, a small Southern town was filled from end to end with excitement. A queer light and curious, crackling sounds filled the air, and simultaneously all the inhabitants woke up to the fact that their court-house was on fire.

It was very badly on fire, too, and for the next two or three hours all hands were busy keeping the flames away from the surrounding houses.

Then the question arose: How did it happen? Soon this changed to: Who did it? One remembered this, another remembered that; and finally a posse of stern citizens set out on a man-hunt.

The quarry was a middle-aged negro who sometimes forgot that free speech was not for all, and who was known to hang around the court-house. Who or what warned him is not known; but he fled.

All through the night they beat the countryside—the hunters and the hunted; but by morning the chase was over. The troubles of the captured man were summarily ended, and the hunters went home weary with well-doing. Nevertheless—did none of them carry away the recollection of the haunted face of the fugitive peering through the underbrush, before the terror of death was upon him?

The burnt-down court-house became an accepted fact, and the ends of justice were served without it. The negro was forgotten, and the town and those in it flourished together.

Then came a question of rebuilding, and after a lapse of fifty years a new and beautiful court-house rose bit by bit from the ground. A bright and inspiring structure, fitly representing the new generation, windows gleaming in the sun.

But what was that? Was it a trick of light and shade, or was there really a negro inside, looking anxiously down the broad and prosperous street? People spoke to each other and wondered, and finally the court-house officials were called out to look.

The mystery was this: while from the outside there actually was a face to be seen—that of a middle-aged man to all appearances—inside there was nothing but a pane of glass. It was the same as all the other panes, had come from the same factory and had been handled in the same way.

LATER another furore of mob-violence swept the town. Another negro in trouble. A young one this time. An officer of justice had been shot, and this negro was suspected. A posse of men visited his home, and the sullen and resentful young man was dragged away and shot.

Perhaps the avenging shots had nothing to do with it; but *a window on the top floor of the court-house broke and fell in splinters.* Promptly, as was fitting, a new pane was installed.

And on it, from the inside looking out, was the face of the sullen and resentful young negro, side by side with that of the older man!

So there they are—those two negro faces, gazing steadily down the broad and busy street at something no one living sees, while all look up at them and wonder. And there are sane and unimaginative people in that town, too.

A Crystal Gazer's Crime

(*Continued from page 44*)

head. Shot herself. I was just coming into the library . . . saw her . . . her head after the shot. . . ."

I heard him faintly through a drumming of excitement in my ears. I had won! Success! I missed Bennet's words completely as he went stumbling on. My mind went ahead through the years, picturing myself at the side of the man I'd won—after he should forget his loss and turn to me. Then a louder word of Bennet's penetrated my abstration. It was—*Murderer.*

"You murderer!" he was crying at me. "*You* are the one that killed her! I'll tell all I know about this, so help me! I'll send you to the chair too, if there's any justice!"

THIS recalled me to the present effectively enough. The man must be silenced.

"If you say anything," I promised, "you'll pay for it with a lifetime behind the bars. You're as guilty as I am. More so! It was your phone message that killed her. If you ever breathe a word to anyone I'll tell about that phone call she made and the answer you gave!"

Through the receiver I could hear him catch his breath. Then he hung up without a word. A rabbit of a man! I knew the affair was safe with him. The sight of her shattered head, her powder-burned, white face, might haunt his sleep for the rest of his life, but he'd never dare to tell!

And now it was time to take my reward. My man! I'd done a lot for love of him. I'd killed for him, and what more can a woman do than that?

I knew that the news of his sweetheart's suicide would be phoned him immediately. I wanted to be there shortly after he had heard the shocking and inexplicable news. I wanted to be the first woman his eyes rested on. That first flashing impression at such a time would do more for me than a year of tender companionship. And I would grieve with him—wonder with him why she had done such an appalling thing.

Hurrying from the building, I called a taxi and gave the address of his office.

"And drive quickly, please," I directed the chauffeur.

I sank back in the seat, thinking what I should say to him, planning how best to impress my desirability on him, now that the other woman was gone. So much depended on the way I could turn these first moments to my own advantage. I must be very tactful and subtle.

The car went rapidly, according to my request; but my thought traveled even more quickly. He would be alone in his office. He would just have heard the news. I would tiptoe to his side. . . .

The taxi slowed suddenly, half a block from the office building; then it came to a full stop. All around us were excited people going in the direction we were headed. I tapped the glass window in front of me. It was imperative that I reach my man at once!

"Can't you get on?" I demanded. "I'm in a frightful hurry."

The chauffeur shrugged his shoulders.

"I can't move in this crowd, Miss. Something must have happened up ahead. But your address is only half a block or so up the street. If you're in a hurry, you'll save time by walking the rest of the way."

A look at the hopelessly jammed street convinced me that he was right. I paid him and started edging through the crowd toward the office building.

The mob grew denser as I neared the entrance, forcing me almost to a standstill. Fragments of talk came to my ears.

"Awful accident. . . . Don't see how he could have done it. . . . Right in front of the street-car. . . ."

Then a name, and I stopped—breathless at a similarity of sound. For an instant I had thought it sounded like the name of the man I was on my way to see! But that was impossible, of course.

The name was spoken again. And ". . . no chance for the motorman to put on the brakes. Terrible!"

My heart raced, and then seemed to stop beating. My purse slipped unheeded to the sidewalk and was scuffled under the equally heedless feet of the throng. Then I commenced to tear a passage for myself among the spectators until I came to the scene of the accident. . . .

In what awful fashion had my prophecy come true! What irony had turned my lie on my own head!

A street-car instead of a truck; three o'clock instead of one-thirty—only in these details did the fate of the man differ from the lie with which I'd sent the girl to her death!

I won't forget that picture till I die—and I hope my death won't be too long in coming.

A SCARED crowd of workmen. A long street-car jacked up to permit the removal of a mangled thing from under the front wheels. The almost unrecognizable features of the man I'd thought to win. . . .

The frightened motorman was babbling to whoever might pause to listen.

"It wasn't my fault. I swear it wasn't. He saw me coming—looked right at me. I thought he was going to get out of the way. He had time to. Then he stopped dead-still, like he'd been shot. Seemed like he was listening to something. Right in front of me—dead-still—no chance to stop——"

I would have given anything for the power to raise my hands to my ears and cut off his words. But I was as unable to move as the mangled thing under the car wheels.

On and on he babbled. "Exactly

three o'clock." As though the time meant anything! "Just three o'clock. I'd looked at my watch a second or two before. . . ."

Three o'clock! The man's hysterical words were an echo of another message I had received. Something else had happened just at three o'clock! I tried not to think any further on that line, but my mind refused to be commanded and raced ahead to dwell on the coincidence of time.

At three o'clock this man's sweetheart had shot herself. And exactly at three——

". . . stopped dead still in front of me—stopped like he'd been hit on the head, and looked around like a blind man," the motorman repeated brokenly. "Seemed to be listening to something I don't know what——"

His words trailed off into silence as someone led him away.

And me—I fought my way blindly back through the crowd. I had to get away from the awful, accusing stares that seemed to come to me from the eyes of everyone on that crowded street. I must get away by myself to realize to the full just what had happened—though nothing but bitterness could come from such realization.

But now, as I dragged myself back toward my lonely studio, my head was jerked up as though tilted by an unseen hand. As if a revengeful finger directed my gaze, I found myself staring at an incredible thing!

Two persons, a man and a girl, were walking slowly toward me. The man's head was bent as though he were listening, afraid he would miss some slight note of the voice he loved. And the girl was looking up at him with the light in her eyes that is only lit once in a woman's existence and by only one man.

They laughed soundlessly and drew nearer to where, paralyzed with fright, I stood directly in front of them.

I screamed at them, shrieked at the top of my voice. They paid no attention—seemed not to hear. Closer they came. I turned to run away from them but I couldn't move an inch.

Nearer they walked, never looking at me, acting as though I didn't exist. Again I screamed at them.

They paid no heed, these two who walked so close together. I tried once more to call to them, to deny the crime I'd committed against them. But still they would not hear.

Arm in arm, absorbed in each other as only reunited lovers can be, they drifted toward me.

Just as I fell fainting to the pavement they walked past me—and on to whatever place is reserved for those whose hearts have been made one beyond even the power of death to separate.

Were You Born in June?

(*Continued from page* 80)

the restlessness and nervousness of this type.

Geminians rarely fight just for the sake of fighting. It is said that they allow themselves to be pushed into the background but this is not so, except when they are indifferent. When sufficiently interested, they will return again and again to the fight and one writer has compared them to the mosquito!

Among famous Geminians of the past the poet Dante, the musician humann, the philosopher and scientist con. Nero also was a Geminian.

Those born under the twin sign have been passing through a difficult time. They have been handicapped and exasperated by delays of all kinds, by an accumulation of work which it seemed impossible to get done because other duties intervened, and in some cases by ill-health. In other words, they have been under discipline by Saturn, and, for Gemini, discipline is hard to bear because the temperament is nervous, restless and not adapted to steady, continuous effort. Primitive Geminians are sometimes wayward and fickle, intent upon seeking joy and pleasure and losing their chance of happiness through indecision and love of change. The developed Geminians are charming, intellectual people, always ready to bask in the sunshine in life and to stimulate and refresh more melancholy types by their cheeriness.

Up to the end of November, those born between the 15th and 22nd of June must continue their period of probation and are likely to meet with hindrances and obstacles in one form or another. Through such difficulties their character is being strengthened and they are being made to realize the virtue of patience.

On June 12th Jupiter enters the sign of Gemini and those born between May 22nd and June 6th may look forward to a successful and profitable period. They passed their Saturn test some months ago and during the next six months will meet with opportunities for advancement. July should be a very good month for these people because both Venus and Jupiter will be sending them vibrations which should increase their prosperity, improve their health and add to their general happiness and good fortune.

Those born at the end of May or during the first few days of June are in the good graces of Uranus just now. They may make favorable changes, undertake new work, or interest themselves in study or invention. They will meet with unexpected and helpful turns of fortune; friends and acquaintances will place opportunities their way; and they may find themselves in strange, romantic situations out of which good will come. They should prepare themselves to take advantage of whatever transpires.

The fortune of the Sagittarians is closely associated with that of the Geminians because the same rays affect both. Saturn is preparing to leave Sagittarius, and the sons and daughters of this sign may look forward to better times. Those born about December 20th are not yet out of the wood. They must take care of their health, avoid taking cold and guard against accidents. It is better not to take any risks while under an adverse ray but to be patient and wait until the times are more opportune for change and new undertakings. This is the time to finish what has already been commenced; to clean the slate before beginning new work.

Affinity also exists beween the Piscarians and Virginians, who share in the general fortunes of Sagittarius and Gemini. Those born about the 20th of March or September will be able to extend their interests when Saturn leaves Sagittarium, the sign in which he has been since the end of 1926.

Since the commencement of the present year, Jupiter has been sending favorable rays to the Earth people—the Virginians, Taureans and Capricornians. He is now specially interested in helping those born about the middle of May, September or January. At the same time, Mars is giving them energy and initiative and the present should be a happy and prosperous time for them. In the case of the January-born the martial ray may be rather too powerful and they should avoid dangerous and risky situations.

The Leos born about the beginning of August and the Sagittarians born during the first week in December are receiving rays of both mental and physical energy and should make this a time of advancement and enterprise. Those who are about forty-two years of age are likely to make some complete change which will be beneficial. Arians born at the end of March or first of April are receiving similar rays but should be careful to avoid risk of accident. As they are under a powerful ray from Uranus, which governs the nervous system, some of them may suffer from neuralgia or kindred ailments unless they avoid excessive fatigue and excitement.

Other birthdays which may feel the adverse influence of these rays are July 2nd, October 4th and January 1st. Those born on or about these dates should spend their leisure hours as quietly as possible, should practise relaxing the body and should avoid unnecessary nerve strain. The more self-controlled they are and the quieter they keep their nerves, the less they will feel these vibrations.

The beryl is the Geminian talisman. It is practically the same thing as the aquamarine, which is also known as "precious beryl." Both have a chemical relationship with the emerald, but not with the Oriental emerald which is much rarer and is really a green sapphire. The beryl does not possess the vivid green of the emerald; it is more of a greenish yellow, blue or yellowy brown color. The clear yellow beryl is sometimes called aquamarine chrysolite.

THE beryl was greatly prized by the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans and by artists of the Renaissance. It is mentioned as the tenth stone in the breastplate of the High Priest of the Jews and as one of the foundations of the Heavenly City. "Precious beryl"—or aquamarine—is referred to by Rosetti in "Rose Mary" as the magic crystal in which the future becomes visible.

Chunder Bose, the Hindo scientist, has demonstrated the fact that gems may be alive, asleep or even dead so that they can no longer be considered only as inanimate objects of beauty. It is doubtful if they were first worn for purposes of decoration. Rather would it seem that they were chosen for their virtue in keeping away evil spirits or healing certain forms of disease. The emerald, for instance, was prized as a preventive against epilepsy—and a cure for dysentery. It assisted women in child-birth, drove away evil spirits, preserved the chastity of the wearer and conferred the gift of memory. Such beliefs are found among a" primitive peoples and some day we may discover that they have some foundation in fact.

The planetary indications for Jun re given below. Let them e your guide.

LUMINOUS PAINT

Make Your Watches, Clocks, Etc., Visible by Night The very latest discovery in the scientific world. Hitherto, practically unobtainable except at an exorbitant price, we have at last succeeded in producing this remarkable LUMINOUS PAINT, which, applied to the surface of any article, **emits rays of white light, rendering it perfectly visible** in the dark. **THE DARKER THE NIGHT, THE MORE BRILLIANT IT SHINES.** Quite simple to use. Anyone—you can do it. A little applied to the dial of your watch or clock will enable you to tell the time by night. You can coat the push buttons or switch plates of your electric lights, match boxes, and innumerable other articles; make your own Luminous Crucifixes, Luminous Rosaries, etc. Small bottle, **price 25c.** Larger sizes, **50c** and **$1** postpaid. **JOHNSON SMITH & CO. Dept. 879 RACINE, WIS.**

CIGARETTE MAKER

Roll your own and save money. Better and quicker; saves more than half. Use your favorite brand of tobacco. Neat, useful, handy. Pocket size, weighs ½ oz. Made entirely of metal, nickel plated. **25c, 3 for 65c postpaid anywhere.**

GOOD LUCK RING

Very striking, quaint and uncommon. Silver finish; skull and crossbones design, two brilliant, flashing gems sparkle out of the eyes. Said to bring good luck. **Only 25c ppd.**

Exploding Cigarettes

JUST LIKE ORDINARY CIGARETTES. BUT SUCH REAL STARTLERS! The box contains ten genuine cigarettes of excellent quality. They appear so real, but when each cigarette is about one-third smoked, the victim gets a very great surprise as it goes off with a loud BANG! A great mirth provoker yet entirely harmless. **Price 25c box.**

NOVELTY BADGES

Kissing Permit 10c *Garter Inspector 10c*

Two very novel metal badges, nickel plated, that you can wear, giving you fun out of all proportion to their trifling cost. **10c, each badge, 3 for 25c, or 75c per doz. postpaid anywhere.**

MIDGET BIBLE

GREAT CURIOSITY Smallest Bible in the World. Size of a postage stamp. **200 Pages.** Said to bring good luck to the owner. A genuine work of art. Must be seen to be appreciated. Make good money selling them to friends, church acquaintances, etc. PRICE **15c** each. **3** for **40c**, **12** for **$1.35**, **100** for **$7.50.** Also obtainable in Leather Binding, with gold edges. **Price 50c each, 3 for $1.25, $4.50 per doz. Magnifying Glass** for use with Midget Bible, **15c.**

STAGE MONEY

With a bunch of these bills, it is easy for each person of limited means to appear prosperous by flashing a roll of these bills at the proper time and peeling off a genuine bill or two from the outside of the roll, the effect created will be found to be all that can be desired. **Prices, postpaid: 40 Bills 20c, 120 for 50c, or $3.50 thousand postpaid.**

MAGIC NOSE FLUTE

Post Paid **10c**

The Magic Nose Flute, or Humanatone, is a unique and novel musical instrument that is played with nose and mouth combined. There is just a little knack in playing it which, when once acquired after a little practice, will enable you to produce very sweet music that somewhat resembles a flute. There is no fingering, and once you have mastered it you can play all kinds of music with facility and ease. When played as an accompaniment to a piano or any other musical instrument, the effect is as charming as it is surprising.

SURPRISE MATCHES

More fun than fighting with your wife. Look just like ordinary matches. Put up in boxes just like regular Safety Matches. As the victim tries to light one he gets quite a surprise. **Price 10c per box, 3 boxes for 25c, 12 for 75 cents.**

INVISIBLE INK

The most confidential messages can be written with this ink, for the writing **makes no mark.** Cannot be seen unless you know the secret. Invaluable for many reasons. Keep your postals and other private memorandums away from prying eyes. Great fun for playing practical jokes.

Only 15c a Bottle; 3 for 40c.

JOHNSON SMITH & CO.
Dept. 879 RACINE, WIS.

Wonderful X-Ray Tube

10¢

A wonderful little instrument producing optical illusions both surprising and startling. With it **you can see what is apparently the bones of your fingers, the lead in a lead pencil, the interior opening in a pipe stem, and many other similar illusions.** A mystery that no one has been able to satisfactorily explain. **Price 10c, 3 for 25c, 1 dozen 75c. Johnson Smith & Co.**

Every Boy His Own Toy Maker

A great book for boys. It gives plain, practical instructions for making all manner of toys, machines and other articles, amusing and useful. Tells how to make a Steam Engine, a Photographic Camera, a Windmill, Microscope, Electrical Machine, Galvanic Battery, Electric Telegraph, Electrotyping Apparatus, Telephone, Kaleidoscope, Magic Lantern, Aeolian Harp; how to make Boats of all kinds, Kites, Balloons, Paper Toys, Masks, Card Racks, Wagons, Carts, Arrows, Bows and Arrows, Pop Guns, Slings, Fishing Tackle, Rabbit and Bird Traps, etc. 200 illustrations. **PRICE 25c Postpaid. Postage Stamps accepted.**

Serpent's Eggs

Box contains 12 **eggs.** When lit with a match, each one gradually hatches itself into a snake several feet long, which curls and twists about in a most life-like manner. **Price per box, 10c postpaid, 3 for 25c.**

The "Little Giant" Typewriter

A First Class Writing Machine For $1.50

A perfect little typewriter for $1.50. There are thousands of persons who would like to use a typewriter, but whose needs and business do not warrant the expense attached to the purchase and use of a fifty or seventy-five dollar machine. To such persons we confidently recommend our Little Giant. It is strongly made, but simple in construction, so that anyone can quickly learn to operate it, and write as rapidly as they would with pen and ink. The letters of the alphabet most frequently used are so grouped as to enable one to write rapidly, the numerals 1 to 10, and the punctuation marks being together. With this machine you can send your best girl typewritten love letters, address envelopes, make out bills, and almost any kind of work not requiring a large, expensive machine. With each typewriter we send a tube of ink and full printed instructions for using the machine. **Price complete $1.50 by mail postpaid to any address in the world.**

15c POSTPAID Card Sailer Pistol

It shoots small squares of cardboard, sending them spinning and sailing through the air to great distances. Length 8¾ inches. Wood barrel, metal handle, heavy rubber band. Plenty of ammunition and extra rubber with each gun in neat box. More ammunition can be made as desired. Can use without the ammunition as a fly killer. **PRICE ONLY 15c each, 3 for 40c, or $1.35 per doz. postpaid.** *Stamps accepted.*

JOHNSON SMITH & CO., Dept. 879, RACINE, WIS.

A De Luxe Edition of our new 1929 CATALOG mailed on receipt of 25c. Handsome binding. Bigger and better than ever. Only book of its kind in existence. Nearly 600 pages of all the latest tricks in magic, the newest novelties, puzzles, games, sporting goods, rubber stamps, unusual and interesting books, curiosities in seeds and plants, etc., unprocurable elsewhere. Remit by Stamps, Coin, Money Order, Check, etc. Unused U. S., Canadian and Foreign Stamps also accepted.

BLANK CARTRIDGE PISTOL

Protection against Burglars, Tramps, & Dogs

Well made and effective, modelled on latest type of Revolver; appearance alone is enough to scare a burglar. When loaded it may be as effective as a real revolver without danger to life. It takes standard .22 Cal. Blank Cartridge—obtainable everywhere. **Special cash with order offer:** 1 Superior quality Blank Cartridge Pistol, **100** Blank Cartridges, and our new **550** page De Luxe Catalog of latest novelties; all for **ONLY $1.50.** Shipped by Express only. Cannot go by parcel post. Extra Blank Cartridges **50c** per **100.** Special Holster (Cowboy Type) for pistol **50c.** No C.O.D. shipments.

Special Offer
1 Blank Cartridge Pistol
100 Blank Cartridges
1 550-page Novelty Catalog
ONLY $1.50
The Lot
Shipped by Express Only
Cash With Order Only

JOHNSON SMITH & COMPANY, Dept. 879 RACINE, WIS.

Throw Your Voice

Into a trunk, under the bed or anywhere. Lots of fun fooling the teacher, policeman or friends.

The VENTRILO

a little instrument, fits in the mouth out of sight, used with above for Bird Calls, etc. Anyone can use it. *Never fails.* A 16-Page Course on Ventriloquism and the Ventrilo..... **ALL FOR 10 Cents**

PISTOL, OPERA AND FIELD GLASS — 9 In One

It is made in the shape of and looks like a regular Automatic Pistol. No one is likely to stop and ask you whether it is real or not. Thus it is likely to prove itself very handy in an emergency. On pressing the trigger it opens up, as shown in the illustration at the right, revealing nine most useful articles—Opera and Field Glass, Telescope, Mirror, Magnifying Glass and Burning Lens, Reading Glass, Sun Dial, Sun Compass, etc. In the handle of the revolver there in a place for various pocket necessaries, such as First Aid Articles, Buttons, Pins, etc. The Pistol is of sheet metal, blued finish, that can be carried comfortably in pocket. **PRICE $1.00 postpaid.**

Watch Charm Pistol — $1.75

Exact reproduction of a real pistol; actually fires REAL BLANK CARTRIDGES of miniature size. Illustration 1 a actual size. 1¼ inches long, with ring at end for attaching to watch chain. Loads like a regular pistol. Pull the trigger and it goes off with a loud bang. Pistol is break open type; illustration shows position for loading. Made entirely of high grade steel, nickel plated, octagon barrel, handsomely engraved handles, complete in box with cleaning rod. **PRICE $1.75.** Also furnished with **pearl handles, $2.50. BLANK CARTRIDGES, 50c** per box of **25.** **JOHNSON SMITH & CO., Dept. 879, RACINE, WIS.**

MICROPHONE TRANSMITTER BUTTON

$1.00 Postpaid

You can easily make a highly sensitive detectophone by using this Transmitter Button to collect the sound waves. You can build your own outfit without buying expensive equipment. It is simple and inexpensive. You can install an outfit in your home and hear conversations being held all over the house. You can connect up different rooms of a hotel. This outfit was used by secret service operatives during the war. It is being used on the stage. It is ultra-sensitive and is the greatest invention in micro-phones. You can mount the button almost anywhere—card board boxes, stove pipes, stiff calendars, on the wall behind a picture frame, etc. Button is so light and small it cannot be detected. Persons can be overheard without suspecting it. You can listen in on conversations in another room. A deaf person in the audience can hear the speaker. Connected to phonograph, piano or other musical instrument, music can be heard hundreds of feet away. Button may be used to renew telephone transmitters; often makes an old line "talk up" when nothing else will. The ideal microphone for radio use; carries heavy current and is extremely sensitive. Amplifies radio signals. Countless other similar uses will suggest themselves. Experimenters find the button useful for hundreds of experiments along the lines of telephones, amplifiers, loud speakers, etc. Many fascinating stunts may be devised, such as holding the button against the throat or chest to reproduce speech without sound waves. **PRICE $1.00.**

JOHNSON SMITH & CO., DEPT. 879, RACINE, WIS.

MAGICIAN'S BOX OF TRICKS

Apparatus and Directions for a Number of Mysterious Tricks, Enough for an Entire Evening's Entertainment... $1.00

Anyone Can Do Them

It is great fun mystifying your friends. Get this Conjurer's Cabinet, and you will be the cleverest fellow in your district. It contains the apparatus for ten first-class tricks, including The MAGIC BALL AND VASE TRICK (a wooden ball is placed inside, and upon replacing the lid has disappeared and is found in someone else's pocket); The HINDOO TRICK CARDS (can be made to change completely no less than five times); DISAPPEARING COIN BOX (a coin, placed in the wooden box, vanishes entirely or changes into a coin of another denomination); The GLASS GOBLET TRICK (a coin is dropped into a glass of water and when the water is poured out the coin has vanished and is found somewhere else); the RIBBON FACTORY FROM THE MOUTH TRICK (a seemingly endless supply of colored paper ribbons comes out of your mouth); the DISAPPEARING HANDKERCHIEF (a handkerchief held in the hand mysteriously vanishes); the WIZARD'S RING COIN TRICK; the ENCHANTED BOTTLE (no one but yourself is able to make it lay down); the GREAT HAT AND DICE TRICK (a large dice is placed on top of a hat, disappears, and is found underneath yet no one has touched the hat), and last, but not least, the GREAT PHANTOM CARD TRICK, or two from five leaves nothing. Full instructions are sent for performing each trick. In addition to the above, a number of other feats and illusions are fully explained for which you can easily make or procure the necessary apparatus. **Price complete $1.00 postpaid.**

DISSOLVING VIEWS

50c

You may have a lot of fun with this little peep-show. A regular startler. Made entirely of metal, having a microscopic lens fitted into one end. While the victim is absorbed in admiration of the pretty picture and turns the button in the confident expectation of seeing something interesting, a spring syringe is brought into action, and the observer experiences a very great surprise. **50 cents each postpaid. JOHNSON SMITH & CO.**

Lover's Knot or Friendship Ring

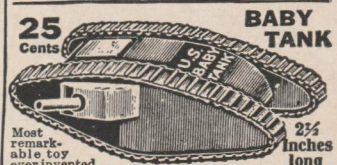
Made of 4 strands of genuine 14K gold filled wire, woven into the True Lover's Knot, symbolic of love or friendship. Very pretty, yet not showy. Each ring is made by hand by gold wire expert. It looks good and it *is* good.

Price 50c Postpaid
Johnson Smith & Co.

Female SEX Indicator 25c Male

Hold the **MAGIC INDICATOR** over a man's hand, instantly it moves in a straight line, backward and forward. Hold it over a woman's hand and it describes a complete and continuous circle. The same action can be obtained over a letter written by a man or woman, etc. It is fascinating; baffling. We have never been able to figure out how it's done, but we have never seen it fail. Many novel and entertaining feats may be performed with the Sex Indicator. For example, similar results can be obtained with animals, cats, dogs, rabbits, over birds, chickens, canaries, etc. Also used to predetermine the sex of chickens and birds, etc. In fact it is sold as a patented egg tester in Europe. **Price 25c, or 2 for 65c, postage prepaid. JOHNSON SMITH & CO.**

25 Cents BABY TANK



2½ Inches long

Most remarkable toy ever invented. By drawing the Tank backward, either with the hand or over the floor or table and then placing it down it will crawl along, overcoming all obstacles, in the same life-like manner as the larger Tank that proved so deadly in the great war. What makes it go is somewhat of a mystery, for there is no mechanism to wind up as is usually understood with mechanical toys, yet this tank will keep plodding along ten times longer than the ordinary run of toys. It will perform dozens of the most wonderful stunts. **25c prepaid.**

ITCHING Powder

This is another good practical joke; the intense discomfiture of your victims to everyone but themselves is thoroughly enjoyable. All that is necessary to start the ball rolling is to deposit a little of the powder on a person's hand and the powder can be relied upon to do the rest. The result is a vigorous scratch, then some more scratch, and still some more. **10c** box, **3** boxes for **25c** or **75c** per dozen. Shipped by Express. **Johnson Smith & Co., Dept. 879, Racine, Wis.**

ANARCHIST BOMBS

One of these glass vials dropped in a room full of people will cause more consternation than limburger cheese. The smell only lasts a few minutes, but appears in a short time. **10c a Box, 3 Boxes for 25c or 75c per dozen.** Shipped by Express. **JOHNSON SMITH & COMPANY**

SNEEZING POWDER

Place a very small amount of this powder on the back of your hand and blow it into the air, and everyone in the room or car will begin to sneeze without knowing the reason why. It is most amazing to hear their remarks, as they never suspect the real source, but think they have caught it one from another. Between the laughing and sneezing you yourself will be having the time of your life. For *parties, political meetings, car rides,* or any place at all where there is a gathering of people, it is the *greatest joke out.* **Price 10c, 3 for 25c, 75c per dozen.** Shipped by Express.

Johnson Smith & Co., Dept. 879, Racine, Wis.

COMICAL MOTTO RINGS

Lots of harmless fun and amusement wearing these rings. Made in gilt finish (to resemble platinum), with wording on enameloid, as illustrated. **Price 25c ea. Postpaid**

Johnson Smith & Co., Dept. 879, Racine, Wis.

Rubber Chewing Gum

It is just like a regular package of chewing gum and looks so real that it fools everybody. And no one of course suspects it is not genuine until they start to chew it. There's a world of fun in this rubber chewing gum. 6 sticks to the package. **Price 10c Package; 3 for 25c; 12 for 75c, Postpaid.** Stamps taken.

10c a Pkge, 3 for 25c Postpaid

ADDRESS ORDERS FOR ALL GOODS ON THIS PAGE TO

JOHNSON SMITH & CO. DEPT. 879 Racine, Wis.

Unusual Offering
Smart, Modern Jewelry
Saving Prices ~ Guaranteed Quality

Latest Styles from Paris —
Direct Diamond Importations from Antwerp—

Standard watches from the world's best makers, and saving prices which are beyond comparison! Manufacturing on a large scale and volume buying for both our national mail order business and our chain store system enable us to offer these extraordinary values. All of this with no extra charge for the convenience of liberal dignified credit, that is—the policy of "Royal"

Just Say: "Charge It"—12 Months to Pay

If you have dealt with us before, just make your selection—send $1.00 with your order and say: "charge it"—that's all—and your choice will come to you immediately, postage prepaid, no C.O.D. to pay on arrival.

New buyers send $1.00 with order and a few lines, telling us a little about yourself, for example: [A]—How long at present address. [B]—Age. [C]—Married or Single. [D]—Name of employer. [E]—What you work at. [F]—How long at that work. This information will be held strictly confidential—we make no direct inquiries of anyone—not even from your employer.

10 Days Free Trial — Satisfaction Guaranteed

You have the full privilege of 10 days' free trial—if not entirely satisfied return shipment at our expense and the entire deposit will be refunded. Written guarantee bond with every purchase.

All Dealings Strictly Confidential

A full year to pay! No extra charge—no red tape. You take no risk—satisfaction absolutely guaranteed or money back.

Gift Cases Free. Every article comes to you in a beautiful and appropriate presentation case.

Your Choice SENT FOR $1.00

12 MONTHS TO PAY on Everything

$50.00

DB1-Butterfly design 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD engagement ring. Finest quality, genuine blue-white diamond. $1 with order, $4.08 a month.

$57.50

DB2-"DEAUVILLE" 18K Solid Wnite Gold, grade "AA 1" flashing genuine blue-white diamond; 4 navette shaped sapphires on sides. $1 down, $4.71 a month.

It's a BULOVA

$25

DB4 Hand engraved and pierced 18K Solid White Gold lady's ring. AA1 genuine blue-white diamond, $1 with order, $2 a month.

$37.50

DB3-The "CAMELIA" handsomely engraved new oval design lady's BULOVA wristwatch. Guaranteed 15 jewel movement; pierced flexible bracelet. Patented "dust-tite" protector. Warranted accurate $1 with order, $3.04 a mo.

$24.50

DB9-"PRINCESS PAT"; Style and dependability. 14K Solid White Gold engraved case, guaranteed 15 Jewel movement. Engraved genuine "Wristacrat" flexible bracelet. $1 now, $1.96 a mo.

DB10 **$42.50**

Gorgeous new style lady's dinner ring; 3 perfectly matched, "AA1" genuine blue-white diamonds, 2 French blue sapphires; 18K Solid White Gold mounting. $1 with order, $3.46 a month.

It's a BULOVA

$29.75

DB5-Nationally advertised 15 jewel BULOVA gentleman's watch. White gold filled case; "dust-tite" protector keeps out dust and dirt; radium dial and hands; furnished with latest style woven mesh wristband to match. $1 with order, $2.39 a month.

DB6 **$25.00**

Gentleman's initial or emblem ring. 14K SOLID WHITE GOLD, set with genuine black onyx and flashing blue-white diamond. Any initial or emblem in raised white gold. $1 with order, $2 a month.

$50.00

DB7-A massive, 14K Solid Green Gold gentleman's ring; 18K Solid White Gold top; genuine blue-white diamond. $1 with order, $4.08 a mo.

DB16-The "MODERNIST", richly hand engraved, fashionable step mounting, 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD square prong effect. Brilliant, superior quality, genuine blue-white diamond. $1 with order. $3.66 a month **$45.00**

$37.50

DB11-ELGIN "MOLYNEUX" Modernistic design created in Paris. Triangular dial; guaranteed dependable ELGIN movement, case furnished in black or jade green enamel, newest style silk cord wrist band. $1 with order, $3.04 a month.

$48.50

DB12 - Dazzling cluster of 7 perfectly matched genuine blue-white diamonds, 18K Solid White Gold mounting. Looks like a $750 solitaire. $1 with order. $3.96 a month.

$75.00

DB17- Hand pierced modern baguette effect 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD engagement ring. Large dazzling grade "AA1" genuine blue-white diamond. $1 down, $6.16 a month

DB18 **$28.75**

Compare this astonishing value! 7 perfectly matched genuine blue-white diamonds, hand engraved 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD wedding ring. $1 with order, $2.31 a month.

DB14 **$19.75**

Lady's birthstone ring of 14K Solid White Gold, border of seed pearls; furnished with topaz, amethyst, emerald, ruby or sapphire. $1 with order, $1.56 a month.

$37.50

DB8-Fashionable new design in a lady's wrist watch. 14K SOLID WHITE GOLD hand engraved case, set with 2 diamonds and 8 emeralds or sapphires. Guaranteed 15 jewel movement. Handsome pierced flexible bracelet set with sapphires or emeralds. $1 with order, $3.04 a mo.

Credit at Cash Prices

Enjoy prosperity.
Order now.
Wear while paying.

DB19
WALTHAM Decagon thin model, 12 size engraved White Gold Filled case, guaranteed 20 years, timed and tested 15 jewel WALTHAM movement. Superior grade gold filled pocket knife and fine quality "Waldemar" chain. All complete in handsome presentation case. $2.21 a month. **$27.50**

$29.50

DB15-The "SPORT KING". Handsomely engraved new sport model. White or green gold filled case, warranted 20 years; fitted with a guaranteed, accurate, timed and tested ELGIN or WALTHAM movement. Gold filled "Wristacrat" flat wrist band. $1 with order, $2.37 a month.

Send for Latest
CATALOG FREE
To Adults

FREE—Completely illustrated catalogue of genuine diamonds; Bulova, Elgin, Waltham, Hamilton, Howard, Illinois watches; fine jewelry and silverware at special prices. Write now to get your FREE copy.

Established 1895

ROYAL DIAMOND & WATCH Co.

ADDRESS DEPT. 12-T 170 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y.