"You can't buy love"

SAY PARISIENNES

But you can buy and be...

Irresistible

LIKE a Parisienne, you can set hearts on fire if you use the lure French women never neglect—an exciting, seductive perfume. Such is IRRESISTIBLE PERFUME. This mysteriously exotic fragrance stirs senses...thrills...awakens love. It makes you divinely exciting, glamorous, utterly irresistible.

Try all the Irresistible Beauty Aids...each has some special feature that gives you glorious new loveliness. Irresistible Lip Lure melts into your lips leaving no trace of paste or film...just soft, warm, ripe, red, indelible color that makes your lips beg for kisses. Four gorgeous shades to choose from. Irresistible Face Powder is so satin-fine and clinging that it absolutely hides small blemishes and gives you a skin that invites caresses.

Irresistible Beauty Aids are guaranteed to be of purest, finest quality...like $1 or $2 preparations. Be irresistible tonight...buy IRRESISTIBLE BEAUTY AIDS today...full size packages only 10¢ each at your 5 and 10¢ store.

Irresistible Beauty Aids
FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK
Isn’t it a Shame?
Graceful girl…lovely manners… but her teeth are dingy, her gums tender!

Don’t let “PINK TOOTH BRUSH” rob you of your charm

She’s as gracious as she is graceful. She is intelligent… friendly. It’s just too bad that the shadow of neglected teeth makes most people overlook her natural charm.

Yet sympathy is really misplaced. She ought to know better. The “pink” that appears on her tooth brush and dims the natural lustre of her teeth ought to warn her that brushing the teeth is not enough. Those tender gums say that gingivitis, Vincent’s disease, even pyorrhea, may be just around the corner.

IPANA is needed
Modern soft foods that give our gums no work or stimulation are often responsible for our gum troubles. But in spite of our daily menus—it is possible to have sparkling teeth and firm, healthy gums.

IPANA and massage is the way. Clean your teeth with IPANA twice a day. And after each brushing, massage a little extra IPANA into your gums with your fingertip or brush. The massage and the ziratol in IPANA help tone and fortify the gum walls. Start with IPANA today and keep “pink tooth brush” out of your life.

DON’T TAKE CHANCES!
A good tooth paste, like a good dentist, is never a luxury.

TUNE IN “TOWN HALL TONIGHT” AND HEAR THE IPANA TROUBADOURS WEDNESDAY EVES.
—WEA AND ASSOCIATED N. B. C. STATIONS

IPANA TOOTH PASTE

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
MYSTERY
ONE OF THE TOWER MAGAZINES
Catherine McNeils—Publisher

DURBIN LEE HORNER
Managing Editor
Hugh Ryan
Art Director
Mary Marshall
Director of Home Service

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NOVEMBER, 1934

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ADVERTISING OFFICES

ON SALE AT WOOLWORTH STORES AND NEWSSTANDS THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH
Betty's ready for 8 hours Beauty sleep...

What about her SKIN?

Let’s hope Betty removes daytime make-up Hollywood’s way— guards against unattractive Cosmetic Skin

BEAUTY sleep’s important— for you and for your skin, too. So don’t go to bed with daytime make-up clogging your pores— spoiling your beauty.

Many a girl who thinks she removes cosmetics thoroughly leaves bits of stale rouge and powder still in the pores. It is this choking of the pores that causes unattractive Cosmetic Skin.

Look closely in your mirror now. Do you see enlarged pores, tiny blemishes— blackheads, perhaps— warning signals of this modern complexion trouble? Then it’s time to start using gentle Lux Toilet Soap— Hollywood’s beauty care!

Cosmetics Harmless if removed this way

Lux Toilet Soap is made to remove cosmetics thoroughly. Its ACTIVE lather sinks deeply into the pores, swiftly carries away every vestige of dust, dirt, stale cosmetics.

Before you put on fresh make-up during the day— ALWAYS before you go to bed at night, use Lux Toilet Soap— the gentle care that for years has guarded Hollywood’s priceless complexions.

In this way you can protect your skin—keep it lovely!

Use Cosmetics? Yes, indeed! But I always use Lux Toilet Soap to guard against Cosmetic Skin

Claudette Colbert

STAR OF PARAMOUNT’S "CLEOPATRA"

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
I Go Sleuthing

A new kind of department for new writers. Do you know any true, unsolved, "unwritten mysteries"? This magazine will pay $100 apiece for the best solution submitted each month! Below is this month's prize winner! How about you? See page 86 for contest rules.

"GO SLEUTHING" WINNER FOR NOVEMBER

MARGARET ANDERSON
CHARLOTTE, N.C.

I LIKE excitement. Normally, when I find myself almost in the very center of some nerve-wracking situation, I am able to keep my wits momentarily and later I become intensely jittery until the shock passes. It's like finding yourself suddenly in a tight place while driving an automobile, keeping your head until the crisis is over, and then, after all danger is gone, succumbing to the tenseness of the experience.

That was what happened to me once when I was visiting a friend who was doing newspaper work in Chicago. As it turned out, I was perhaps the only one of the "principals" present who felt no official pressure at the time and consequently I noticed things that some of the others might possibly have overlooked.

I had been in school with my friend. After our graduation, we corresponded and one Spring she asked me to visit her. She was to begin her vacation on Tuesday, but I arrived on Sunday. Monday evening we went to dinner about six o'clock. We had just left the hotel and were standing on a corner waiting for a cruising taxi when suddenly, a terrific explosion blasted away the ordinary noises of traffic and city bustle. An earthquake couldn't have sounded worse.

For a moment, both of us stood stunned. I felt a tingle of excitement course down my back, but this was forgotten as my friend, yanking at my sleeve, started on the run for the scene which apparently was just around the block. We took a short cut through a slushy alley and came out to find a crowd already in front of a restaurant. The front was a shambles. Obviously, the place had been bombed.

One side of the restaurant was on the alley through which we had run and from windows set high in the wall on this side little wisps of smoke curled out through glass that had been shattered by the blast. Several policemen already were pushing a crowd back but my friend exhibited her press card and we edged inside the lines. An ambulance rolled up with screaming siren and then took away a man who had stumbled from the wreck-age. Several others stood about visibly excited. I guessed they had been diners and had escaped injury only because the dining room was set deep in the building whereas the explosion had occurred very nearly at the restaurant's front.

One bystander at the edge of the police lines stood just in back of us.

"About ruined the place didn't it?" he had commented.

My friend, seeking to get as much from the story as possible, began asking him questions. "Did you see it?" she wanted to know.

I turned about and saw the fellow, a wizened man, shake his head. "No. I run the cafe in the next block up there. Tough on this man. He just opened up."

"I saw it," said a man next to the one who had spoken. "What happened?" she wanted to know.

"I was standing over there," he said. "on the corner. I wasn't paying much attention but just before the explosion I saw a man about six feet tall hurry off in that direction." He pointed down the street. "Then, in about ten seconds, I suppose, the front end of the restaurant blew out."

"Did you see the man throw anything in the front of the place?"

He said he didn't. In fact, he said, he had paid little attention at the time.

I appraised the man in the street light and he seemed to be telling the truth. Then, I thought perhaps I could help in gathering a little color, so I turned to the man who had first spoken. (Please turn to page 67).
DUST
on the FLOOR

A famous true-life mystery drama—
complete on this page. The Episode
of the Wagging Tongues.

GOSSIP seldom accomplishes a useful purpose. Born largely of jealousy, it usually does more harm than good. But always there are exceptions. The gossip about the clothes Ethel Le Neve was wearing was one. Without it the perpetrator of one of England's most sensational crimes might have gone unpunished.

Ethel Le Neve was the petite and comely secretary of Dr. Alfred Crippen, a London physician, whose marriage to an American woman of means had long since grown cold. For appearance sake Crippen and his wife continued to share the same roof. But those acquaintances who knew of the ardent attention the physician paid his young secretary, often wondered how long it would be before the final break came between husband and wife.

They sensed it had arrived when the doctor announced that his wife had left England for a visit to California. Over tea cups they shook their heads knowingly and intimated that it was not for the climate alone that she had gone.

And then, several months later, Crippen announced that he had received word from the States of the sudden death of his wife. The statement was accepted on its face value, for, after all, there was no reason to doubt its authenticity.

But later, doubt commenced to make its presence felt, and tongues which had wagged only in private, did so openly. For Ethel Le Neve invariably accompanied by the doctor, was seen in public wearing clothes known to have been Mrs. Crippen's.

If Mrs. Crippen had gone to California, as her husband claimed she had, why had she not taken her clothes with her? And if she had not gone, what had happened to her? Had some grim fate befallen her? The gossips asked themselves these questions, asked them over and over again until at length Scotland Yard found itself interested in the answers.

To Detective Albert Young of the Criminal Investigation Division, went the task of piercing the veil of mystery. He called upon Dr. Crippen and bluntly asked for an explanation.

The physician welcomed him graciously. He was glad the detective had come, he said, for he, too, had heard the gossip which was going about, and found it particularly embarrassing. No, Mrs. Crippen had not gone to California. The story that she had, and that she had lived there, was one of his own concoctions, he frankly admitted. There had been a marital disagreement between his wife and himself, he told Young, and his wife had left him, leaving all her belongings behind. He had told the "California story," he explained, to suppress, if possible, the scandal he felt certain would result if the truth was known.

He spoke in a straight-forward, conscientious manner; but as Young came away instinct told him that there was more in back of the strange disappearance of Mrs. Crippen than had been admitted. The detective had a feeling that something sinister had happened to the woman and that her husband knew what it was and had had a hand in it.

If such was the case, then, he realized, the doctor's home would be the logical place to seek a clue. Accordingly, he had the physician trailed and when, a few nights later, word was flashed to him at the Yard that Dr. Crippen was spending the evening out, he hastened there and forced an entrance.

Methodically and painstakingly, he went through the dwelling, from attic to cellar. Nothing escaped his alert gaze, but nothing suspicious revealed itself until he was about to abandon the basement. Then it was that his eyes were attracted to a dust-like covering on the tile floor. Examining it more closely, he discovered that it was a thin layer of pulverized mortar, and that beneath it there were cracks in the floor. Instinct told him that the surface had recently been disturbed.

The grim significance of his discovery was not lost upon Young. Hurriedly he summoned two subordinates and with shovel and pick they commenced tearing up the flooring.

Several feet beneath the tiling they came upon the horribly mutilated body of a woman—the body of Mrs. Crippen. The mystery surrounding her disappearance had been solved.

But her husband had vanished. Nowhere in London was he to be found. And so, as is the custom in such cases, his description was broadcast throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles and upon the Continent. Also, for the first time in criminal history—the murder took place a score of years ago—the wireless carried it to ships at sea.

And from a vessel in mid-Atlantic, bound for Canada, came word that the fugitive doctor was aboard. Young, accompanied by other detectives from Scotland Yard, boarded a swifter liner and raced to Canada. They arrived ahead of Crippen and arrested him when he landed.

Because of gossip his "perfect crime" had turned out to be a very imperfect one indeed. And because of the self-same gossip he swung from the gallows.

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
A famous true-life mystery drama—complete on this page. The Episode of the Careful Detectives.

By a HAIR

On a foggy morning in October, 1939, United States Coast Guardsmen boarded the fishing smack Phoenix IV, which had been sighted drifting aimlessly with the tide off Point Higgins, Alaska, and found George Marshall, an aged fish buyer, lying dead in a pool of blood on deck. His skull was crushed in. "There was a bullet hole in his toe, and clutched in his clenched fist were several black hairs from the head of the murderer."

"He's holding on to them as though he did not want to part with them even in death," remarked the grizzled Coast Guard Captain.

All about the deck were evidences that the old man had not surrendered his life without a fierce struggle. It was in complete disorder. In the tiny cabin below were further evidences of the vain fight he had waged to protect his life. On the floor, open and empty, lay a small iron safe—proving that robbery was the motive for the murder. Nearby was a broken hack-saw blade.

It was a case for the Special Agents of the Division of Investigation of the United States Department of Justice to solve.

Embedded in the deck they found the bullet which had pierced the murdered man's toe. It was a thirty-eight. They also identified the broken hack-saw blade as one of a number which had been stolen, along with other accessories, from the Sunny Point Cannery some weeks before. And then, questioning settlers in the vicinity of Point Higgins, they learned that two men, Bert McDonald and Lloyd Close, had been seen fishing in the vicinity on the day of the murder.

They smiled grimly when they were informed that Close was suspected of being implicated in the Cannery robbery. And they had even more reason to smile when, checking his past, they discovered he had a criminal record.

Promptly they descended upon his boat, then moored at the City Float, at Ketchikan. He was not aboard, but his absence did not bode the Federal man-hunters. They ransacked every nook and corner of the vessel. They overlooked nothing, and when they were through they had a good portion of the Sunny Point Cannery loot and a wicked-looking thirty-eight caliber revolver to show for their efforts.

"We'll pack this get off to a ballistics man and see if he can make it talk," declared one of the Special Agents. "Seeing it's a thirty-eight, it may have quite a story to relate about the sudden demise of old Marshall."

And we'll find out what Close has to say about all this," the other rejoined.

Close was taken into custody. He admitted the Cannery robbery, admitted, too, that the thirty-eight caliber revolver was his, but he denied having murdered old man Marshall. The Government men listened to his story, and then had him lodged in jail to await the report of the ballistics expert.

"You noticed his hair, of course," one of the Agents asked his partner, as they left the jail.

"You bet I did. It's the same color as the hair clutched in old Marshall's hand—black."

The ballistics report came in in due time, and it revealed that Close's revolver had fired the bullet which pierced the old fish buyer's shoe. Another link in the chain of damaging evidence against the prisoner was accordingly forged.

Damaging evidence, but not complete enough for the Federal man, taught to get the sort of evidence that will stand up in court. There was one flaw in what, to the layman, might have appeared an open-and-shut case. When subjected to the ultra-violet ray—the black light, as the laboratory sleuths call it—Close's hair, although black, did not show up in the same manner as the hair which had been clutched in the hand of the murdered man.

So, while Close lodged in jail, the Special Agents sought the trail of Bert McDonald, the other man who had been seen fishing in the vicinity of Point Higgins on the fateful day that Marshall's life was snuffed out. The trail led from Alaska to Idaho, then back to Alaska, and finally to Portland, Oreg., where McDonald was arrested and confessed the crime. To guard against all possibility of the confession being retracted later on, the ultra-violet ray was again brought into use, and McDonald's hairs were found to tally perfectly with those Marshall had grasped in his death struggle.

McDonald had stolen Close's revolver, killed with it, and then replaced it. He believed he had committed a perfect crime. But he overlooked the hairs and the fact that science is one of the most valuable allies of the Federal man-hunters, and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary as a result.

An Alaskan fishing boat, similar to the Phoenix IV.

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
WITH A WALTZ IN YOUR HEART

Surrender to the happy seduction of Ernst Lubitsch’s most glorious picture holiday! When Maurice Chevalier with delicious gaiety flirts, sings, conquers Jeanette MacDonald, the rich and merry widow, it’s your big new screen thrill! Because Franz Lehár’s romance is the greatest operetta of our time M-G-M has spared no expense to make it memorably magnificent! With the stars and director of “The Love Parade”.

CHEVALIER
JEANETTE
MACDONALD

an ERNST LUBITSCH Production

THE Merry Widow

with
EDWARD EVERETT HORTON - UNA MERKEL
GEORGE BARBIER - MINNA GOMBELL

Screen Play by Ernest Vajda and Samson Raphaelson

A METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PICTURE
What Goes into the STUFFING?

Give your family a delicious new turkey stuffing of your own invention as a treat for Thanksgiving dinner.

Crackers, bread, noodles, tapioca, or other starchy food serve as the basis for your stuffing with other ingredients added to suit your own personal taste in texture and flavor.

PRAISE be to the cook who first invented stuffing to add to the enjoyment of eating the holiday bird. But don’t forget that you or any other home cook can turn your inventive genius to account by devising a special stuffing with a tempting quality all its own. To do this successfully you must realize that there are just four different kinds of stuffing, as follows: (1) Those in which bread crumbs are used as a basis with the addition of desired amount of liquid, fat and seasonings; (2) Those in which some other starchy food, such as cooked rice, cornmeal, noodles, are used in place of the bread crumbs; (3) Those in which some agreeably flavored delicacy such as chestnuts or oysters are used in combination with the bread or starch and; (4) fruit stuffings.

The most usual turkey stuffing belongs to the first class, and a good basic recipe calls for the following ingredients: 2 cups dry bread crumbs, ½ cup hot water, ¼ cup melted butter or other fat, with ½ teaspoon salt and other seasonings to suit the individual taste.

To make a richer dressing use less water and more melted butter or omit water entirely and use from ½ to ¾ cup melted butter. Finely chopped suet, bacon or salt pork may be used in place of the butter. Hot milk may be used instead of water and an egg may be added. Cracker crumbs may be substituted for the bread crumbs—¾ cup cracker crumbs taking the place of 1 cup dried bread crumbs. Some sort of onion flavoring is almost essential—minced raw onion, onion salt, onion juice or minced onion first sautéed in butter. A little garlic may be acceptable. Other agreeable seasonings are summer savory, sage and one or a combination of herbs known as poultry seasoning. Chopped nuts, celery, seedless raisins and chopped minced pepper may produce other appetizing variations.

Of the cereal stuffings, corn meal is the most usual or at least the most historic as it was used in New England in the Puritan days (Please turn to page 69)
A TALKATIVE MAN

A famous true-life mystery drama—complete on this page. The Episode of the Double Mistake.

A CONSTABLE patrolling his beat in Clapham Common, London, toward dawn of a New Year’s morning some years ago came upon the body of a man lying in a clump of bushes.

In the dim light the officer thought at first that here was a citizen who had celebrated the passing of the old year in too lusty a fashion and decided the bushes were as good a spot as any in which to “sleep it off.”

But the moment he flashed on his torch he realized he had been horribly mistaken. The man was dead, and murder was obvious, for a blood-stained silk handkerchief covered his crushed skull, and there were knife wounds in his chest.

A thumb-worn notebook in the slain man’s pocket identified him as John Meeks, a collector of Whitechapel, but aside from the handkerchief, which was of a cheap variety, such as could be purchased in scores of London stores, there appeared to be no clues to the murderer. That is, until Detective Alfred Ward of Scotland Yard appeared on the scene.

“We need to look for a left-handed man, a strong, left-handed man,” he announced after a careful inspection of the body. “He is the murderer.”

The Constable’s expression indicated that he was skeptical, but the expression vanished as Ward, pointing to the knife wounds, explained, “Their position is such that only a left-handed man could have possibly inflicted them. And they are deep, which shows he was a strong man.”

But to find the right left-handed man in a city the size of London appeared to be an even more difficult task than the finding of the proverbial needle in the haystack.

Ward, however, had tackled seemingly insurmountable tasks before, so he was not dismayed by the one which now confronted him.

First, he had the corpse propped up in the morgue and a photograph taken of the slain man. He needed the picture because Clapham Commons is a good distance from Whitechapel, and he realized that the odds were about even that Meeks and his murderer had taken a cab to get there.

Several days of visiting cab companies, talking with drivers, and showing them the photograph proved he was correct. A cabbie was found who recalled picking up Meeks and another man.

“He was a big fellow, sir, big and husky-looking,” the cabbie declared.

Ward smiled knowingly, and his smile broadened into a grin when the cabbie recalled the corner at which his fares had hailed him. But the identity of the strong man was still just as much a mystery as before.

In an effort to establish who he was, Ward took the blood-stained silk handkerchief and began the rounds of the laundries of Whitechapel with it. Again it was several days before he had the information he sought. It came from a Chinaman, who claimed the handkerchief resembled one which had once been left with him to be laundered by a man named August Stein.

The celestial was not positive it was Stein’s handkerchief, but Ward wasn’t overlooking any bets.

“He’s a little man, isn’t he?” the detective asked.

The Chinaman shook his head negatively. “No, he big man,” he said.

To the spot where the cabbie had picked up his two fares, a lonely corner deep in the heart of Whitechapel, the detective now hastened and there for a week he loitered, watching everyone who passed, studying them, seeking the murderer of John Meeks.

And finally he spotted a man who answered the description given by the cabbie and the Chinese laundryman. It was nearing midnight when Ward saw him slink slyly out of the shadows and enter an old, dilapidated house. Instead of accosting him immediately, as many a less clever detective would have done, Ward hung back in the shadows and waited for a light to flash on in the house. Then he moved silently forward and peered into the lighted window, for he wanted to be certain of one more thing before he took the man into custody. And when he saw him pick up a comb from the cheap dresser, he was certain of it. The man used his left hand.

But while he was a big man and left-handed and readily admitted his name was Stein, Ward realized full well that as yet there was no definite evidence with which the authorities could hope to convince a jury that he was the murderer of John Meeks.

So, in arresting him, Ward booked him as a suspicious character and deliberately ushered him to a cell without telling him the charge against him.

It was a truly clever move, and without it the previous brilliant work of Ward might have been for naught. But once the cell door clanged shut upon him, Stein supplied the missing link in the chain of evidence against him. His conscience proved too much for him, and, believing he had been charged with murder, he pleaded to be allowed to make a statement. The authorities were perfectly willing, of course, and in hysterical tones he babbled forth the account of how he had murdered Meeks in order to rob him of the few pounds he possessed.

His first mistake was in murdering; his second, one which many an adroit criminal has made, was in talking when he should have remained silent. And because he did not, he went to jail for the remainder of his days.

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
HOME BUILDERS' 
Question Box

T. W. DAVIS, Architect

A helpful department for home owners and home builders conducted by Theodore Whitehead Davis, architect.

Q. We want to refinish our attic to make a playroom for the children. It extends over the entire house and has never been finished, as up to the present time it has been used for storage. Will you suggest the least expensive and best way to go about this?

A. Partition off the attic space where there is less than 4' 6" or 5' 0" headroom. Cover the walls and ceilings with wall board. If the attic has a rough floor only cover it with rosin paper and lay finished floor. Heat and light should be extended to this space, and additional windows may be an advantage.

Q. We have a small early English house which we built a few years ago. The downstairs walls are finished in rough plaster but as yet we have done nothing to the bedroom walls. We would like to use chintz design wall papers in these rooms but some of our friends tell us that wall paper of that type is out of place in an early English house. Is this so?

A. Wall paper was used in early English houses and would be suitable as a wall decoration. Besides the period designs of houses should not limit us to the materials used when these houses were first built. If so, we would have to leave out bathrooms, central heating, and many other conveniences. The use of these designs of precedent are of an inspirational character.

Q. How often should a house be painted and can you suggest some color combination that will not easily show the dirt and smoke?

A. It is generally believed that a house should be painted every three years purely to protect the woodwork. Buff and grays are often used subject to excessive dirt and smoke.

Q. Our cellar walls are whitewashed but it gets to look so dingy. Is it possible to use paint over the whitewash?

A. Whitewash on cellar walls is generally recommended. If the whitewash comes off readily it can be mixed with white cement, salt and glue to make a very permanent finish. If paint is desired the whitewash should be entirely removed before painting.

Q. The sash cords on the windows in our house are wearing out and need replacing. Would you advise using sash chains instead of the cords?

A. Sash chains would certainly solve the problem in your case. The disadvantage of using sash chains is the noise from them when being operated. A good grade of sash cord should last indefinitely so that in your case it may be the fault of the pulleys.

Q. When repapering does it make a room warmer to put up the new paper over the old?

A. The advantage as far as insulating value is concerned is very doubtful. I would advise removing the old paper in that it will mean a better job as far as appearances are concerned.

Q. As our kitchen has only two small windows it becomes extremely close and warm when the gas oven is being used. There is a chimney in the kitchen formerly used for a coal stove. Would it be possible to have some sort of device to carry off hot air from the gas stove through the chimney? I have seen "hoods" over stoves in hotel restaurants and wondered whether they are ever used in private houses.

A. Most gas stoves are equipped with an outlet from the oven that could be connected to the stove and chimney with a vent pipe. A hood over the stove is very practical if it has a vent pipe to carry the fumes of cooking outside. There are small exhaust fans made to be installed in walls and used in kitchens to remove all smells and heat from cooking.

Q. We have a large house and are planning to convert two rooms and bath into a small apartment which we will rent to friends. Is there any way to treat the walls and ceilings to prevent the sounds passing from the rest of the house into the apartment? We are going to redecorate the room but before doing it would like to make any other changes that are necessary.

A. Walls and floors can be made practically sound-proof in many ways during construction. When the sound deadening is applied afterward the problem is more difficult. There are large companies that specialize in filling walls with material that is either blown or poured into the walls through small openings to fill this need.

Q. We have started ivy growing on the side of our stucco garage, as the stucco looks so bare without it. I have been told that the ivy is likely to damage the stucco and would like your advice on the subject.

A. Ivy will not damage stucco by growing on the outside of it. Of course if the stucco develops cracks or has openings into which the ivy can grow it may harm the stucco but this condition should not exist. Properly applied masonry of any kind is not harmed by ivy.

Q. We are planning to build a small house in Dutch Colonial type of architecture. I am very anxious to have metal frame casement windows. Will you please tell me whether they would be appropriate for this type of house?

A. Our older examples of Dutch Colonial houses generally had double-hung wooden windows. But in those days they did not have metal casement windows as we have today. Inasmuch as we are looking for a style or an atmosphere for our designs today, we are not limited to the materials used in the older houses, so we may use metal casements with very good results if they are well proportioned.

The Home Builders' Question Box, a new department for readers of MYSTERY Magazine. Every home builder has a problem which a few words of advice will often solve. If you would like to ask any questions on home building problems, write to Tower House Editor, MYSTERY Magazine, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., and the answers to your questions will appear in a future issue of this magazine.
HIGH among the pine-clad mountains of the White River Indian Reservation, in Arizona, in the Summer of 1931, murder raised its ugly head to snuff out the life of a white girl, Henrietta Schmerler, who, armed with a Columbia University scholarship to engage in anthropological research, had journeyed west to study the tribal habits and customs of the once-fierce Apaches, who dwelt there.

Dressed in full Indian squaw's regalia, she left her cabin toward dusk one night to attend a tribal dance at Canyon Dey, seven miles away. Five days later her lifeless body was found half-concealed in the dry wash of a canyon, known as Muddy Draw. Her clothes had been all but torn from her frail body; her face and arms were grim evidences of the fact that she had been stoned, and in her neck was a jagged knife wound.

White authorities of the reservation shook their heads sadly as they gazed down at her still form. They believed her murder would remain forever unsolved, for they knew the Spartan-like will of the redskins well enough to know that they would be as silent about the crime as the pine-clad mountains among which it was committed.

And so it seemed until Special Agent J. A. Street of the Division of Investigation of the U. S. Department of Justice, was assigned to the case. Former trapper, cowboy, and western sheriff, he knew intimately the ways and customs of the stoical Indians. And more important still, he knew their superstitions.

He made a tireless search of the canyon where Miss Schmerler's body had been found, and there he discovered something which the others had overlooked—the murdered girl's fountain pen. It had been stepped on and crushed by a horse's hoof. To Street, it meant that the murderer had been on horseback.

It wasn't much to go on in a country where horseback is the chief means of transportation, but it was the only clue to the mystery.

So, for several weeks, Street rode the range, mingled with the Indians, listened much, and said little. And finally he learned that on the afternoon of the murder, Miss Schmerler had asked a certain Apache for a horse, so that she might attend the dance.

The Apache, Golney Seymour, had not been under suspicion before, and there was no evidence that he had complied with the white girl's request. But when Street checked up and learned that Seymour had but one horse and had ridden to the dance on it, he smiled grimly. He believed he had his man, but how to prove it was something else again.

Knowing well the reticent nature of the Apaches, he realized Seymour would admit nothing. He would adhere to the old Apache maxim of "Indian no talk, white man find out nothing."

And so he decided to play upon the superstitions of the suspect. It was his one chance of obtaining a confession.

He ordered Seymour to be brought in.

"Sit there," he told him, indicating a chair.

The Indian seated himself. His manner was defiant and confident. His eyes were expressionless. Street studied him. He did not speak for several moments. When he did it was in a slow, drawling southern accent.

"Seymour," he said, "you killed the white girl."

The Apache's expression did not change, as he replied, "I no kill her."

"I know you did. I have talked with her spirit."

Still the Indian did not flicker an eyelash. Street studied him again, then reached into his pocket and pulled forth a small bottle of colorless liquid. He sprinkled some of it on his own hands. It remained as colorless as water. Next he told the Apache to hold out his hands. Methodically, the Indian did so. His face was a mask. Street sprinkled a few drops of the colorless liquid on his bronzed skin, and then settled back in his seat.

"On the evening of the tribal dance," the Federal man continued in a husky monotone, "you came to the white girl's house on horseback and she asked you to lend her a horse to go to the dance."

"You replied that you had only one horse, but that she could ride with you. Then, a little after sundown, you went to her home again and she got on the horse in front of you."

Street paused a moment and surveyed the Indian. His expression was still a blank one.

"When you arrived in the little canyon you pulled her off the horse," the Federal agent went on. His voice was harsh now. His words had a snap to them. The southern drawl had vanished. "You assaulted her and then you killed her with a rock and a knife."

Seymour shifted uneasily. He knew the murder had been committed in a lonely spot, unseen by anyone. Yet here was a white man unfolding a faithful picture of the tragic events of the fateful night. He was, as he had said, commingling with the dead.

"I no—" the Apache commenced, but Street, rising to his feet, interrupted him.

"Look," the Federal man snapped, "the murdered girl's blood is on your hands."

Seymour looked down. His hands were covered with crimson smears. His eyes widened and his jaw dropped as though he were seeing a ghost. A few minutes later he had signed a cold, matter-of-fact confession.

Street had realized that, with one horse, the only way Seymour could have taken the white girl to the dance was by having her ride with him. It had enabled him to surmise what happened at the canyon.

But even then a confession, bringing with it life imprisonment for the murder, would not have been forthcoming had he not been familiar with Apache superstitions, and known, too, that their diet gives their skins an acid reaction, so that when colorless orecin, derived from lichens, comes in contact with them, it turns bloodlike.

Golney Seymour.
Six Reasons

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—I used to be an avid reader of mystery and detective stories, but they all became so similar that I stopped wasting the money on them. Then the other day when confronted with a wait of about an hour in a dental office, I decided to run out and buy a magazine. It was MYSTERY. Boy, oh, boy, the quality and quantity of stories for ten cents nearly made my eyes pop. It kept me interested for more than an hour you can bet.

But may I make a few suggestions:

1. Almost the sole interest in a detective story lies in the unraveling of the plot. Now if we already know who the culprit is at the beginning of the story, as in “Thirty Hours with a Corpse,” our interest lags immediately. Would enjoy more stories like “Four Men Loved a Woman”; “A Rare Room for Murder”; “The Man Who Hated Rats.” These have an interesting and new slant on clues.

2. How about a few “ghost” and “ridge” stories that really chill your blood and spell MYSTERY in capital letters. The type like Poe’s “Fall of the House of Usher.”

The “Strange Affair at the Middlebrooks” was terribly disappointing. There was nothing “strange” about it except how such a trite story found its way into your magazine.

3. “Off the Record,” and the racket exposé, “Don’t Let Them Rob You,” are intriguing because of their novelty, also the part in “Little Book of Strange Crimes” which tests one’s memory of past notorious events. The startling real-life mysteries are interesting but there are too many of them. Why not omit some of them and add another short story.

4. “I Go Sleuthing” is great! So are some letters in “The Line-Up.” Some of the others are either staff written or of the “your magazine is the most wonderful—now please send me the dollar” type. Would like to see more of the constructively critical type.

5. Why must stories like “The Two Who Smiled” be set in France and England with unpronounceable French names and phrases. There are thousands of interesting places in America we would like to see stories set in, such as: Grand Canyon; geyseras in National Park, etc.

6. Could we have a story every once in so often of the S. S. Van Dine type? The kind that is literary and makes you use your own head instead of the author’s for a change.

After all that I suppose you’ll wonder what isn’t wrong with the magazine, but I really do like it, and of course “what’s one man’s meat is another man’s poison.”

So yours for a continued top-notch MYSTERY magazine.

Carlos N. Eggelston

Now, Mr. Eggelston Said

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Hubert Footner’s new stories of Edda Manby are the best I’ve read in your magazine. They’re modern, very plausible, and have quick action. Keep them up! However, I’ve a criticism to make. In the August issue of MYSTERY, the photographs of Edda Manby pictures her as a beautiful blonde, which she is, according to Mr. Footner. In the September issue she is an altogether different person and has dark hair. Why not have the same models pose for the same characters every month. It would certainly make the stories more convincing.

This is the only flaw I’ve discovered in your otherwise perfect magazine. It’s the best I’ve ever read.

Dorothy Loewe

Safe and Sane and—Thrilling!

LINCOLN PARK, N. J.—How rapidly MYSTERY MAGAZINE has taken the lead in its field. I have occasion as an investigator to visit a great many homes during the course of a day. In at least two out of five homes I find a copy of MYSTERY MAGAZINE. Goodness knows how many of the other homes have them and I don’t see them. Being a constant reader of the magazine myself I asked several parties what they thought of the magazine. I have yet to hear anyone speak ill of it. From children who are just learning to read to grandma and grandpa the magazine is interesting.

I can pretty nearly guess a person’s character from the books and magazines they read and when I see a copy of MYSTERY MAGAZINE in a home I know they are people who enjoy the best things in life and know good reading when they see it.

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
As far as the children are concerned I know of several parents who won't allow their children to look at any other mystery or detective magazine but MYSTERY MAGAZINE itself.

Marjorie Donovan

Sporty Editors

TOPEKA, KANSAS.—Well, here I am doing the very thing that I had said I would never do, and that is, write a “fan letter.” It had always appeared sort of disgusting to me to see a fan letter that was simply “gushing with dripping honey and flowery praises” for some something or someone so and so, but since I have been reading your MYSTERY MAGAZINE I thought it quite appropriate to write to you and congratulate you on your wonderful magazine. I like it immensely and do enjoy reading its very entertaining stories and novels and your very helpful and most interesting articles concerning crime.

I also think you grand sports to publish the criticisms as well as the compliments in your “Line-Up.”

I would not change MYSTERY MAGAZINE one particle as it is a fully entertaining and enjoyable book, and costs just one thin dime!

I personally like my old friend Stuart Palmer and loved the “House of Sleep” for the novel and the “Riddle of the Forty Naughty Girls” for the story. All I can say now is to “keep up the good work.”

Cecilia Fritton

A Wise Storekeeper

JERSEY CITY, N. J.—I read your magazine for the first time, while living in Florida, and have been a constant reader since.

I wouldn't miss MYSTERY as long as it is possible for me to buy it. That ought to express my liking for your magazine. Perhaps I should have said, our liking, as my husband is as fond of MYSTERY as I am.

It was by accident that I first read your magazine. One rainy Sunday I was disappointed to find I had read all the detective magazines for that month, the storekeeper suggested MYSTERY since I hadn't read it. When I heard the price of it, I was a little discouraged about buying it, as I have purchased other ten cent magazines and I would never finish them. The storekeeper made me a promise that if I wasn’t back for the next issue he would refund my money. I can see now the storekeeper made a safe bet.

I'll try and tell you the names of the stories I liked best. “The Fatal Broadcast” was great. “Going to Saint Ives,” I lost a lot of sleep reading it. “The House of Sleep.” I’ll never tire of stories such as this. I thoroughly enjoy the true-life shorts. Please don't discontinue them. “I Go Sleuthing” is good and the “Line-Up” interesting.

I don't exactly care for stories that leave the readers in the dark such as “The Man in the Mirror.” I think that was the name of it. “Whirlpool” was interesting but I don't like continued stories.

My hubby lost a lot of sleep reading “The House of Sleep.” He couldn't stop reading until he finished it. I like your different articles on household hints and have profited by them.

Another thing the paper is easy on the hands. I can't stand to handle the rough paper some magazines use.

I can't find any fault with MYSTERY, only about continued stories and leaving the readers in the dark, but I don't expect you or ask.

(The Please turn to page 98)
GIFTS for Christmas

Here's a new assortment of useful and attractive accessories you can make to carry your message of holiday good cheer

No. 343—Make this engaging handbag for the girl who likes to go to parties.

No. 341—Your house-pride friend will be pleased with a linen and crochet table pad.

No. 340—Two wash cloths are used for a laundry bag for handkerchiefs and small lingerie.

No. 339—If she knits or crochets, she will be charmed with this new work bag.

No. 338—Any woman of any age would be sincerely grateful for this becoming hand-crocheted circular bed jacket.

No. 344—A crocheted powder puff case makes a most acceptable small gift.

If you would like to obtain patterns and directions for making these gifts, please turn to page 77.

By FRANCES COWLES
Not a Professional

A famous true-mystery drama—complete on this page. The Episode of the Dirty Felt Hat.

Three weeks went by and the police found themselves no nearer a solution of the crime than they had been when the two bodies were discovered. And then it was that Michael Fiaschetti, brilliant head of the Detective Bureau's Italian Squad, was assigned to the case.

As soon as he saw the dirty, shapeless felt hat it became of significant import to him. He drew upon his long experience with the underworld and reached the conclusion that he would not find his quarry along its devious byways.

"The man who dropped this hat is a novice at crime," he said. "He is not a professional—not an experienced gunman or robber."

"How can you tell?" his less-confident colleagues demanded.

Fiaschetti smiled.

"I know them," he replied. "The professionals! The underworld element! They are a fastidious lot. They like to sport silk shirts and flashy clothes and, being vain, they would never think of wearing a hat like this one, soiled and battered, as it is."

Fiaschetti's colleagues admitted that possibly there was something in what he said. Anyway, the angle was worth trying, for the underworld had been combed without results, and stool pigeons had been unable to throw any light whatever upon the gruesome crime.

Fiaschetti gave the hat a thorough examination. He looked beneath its sweatband, smoothed out its creases and studied them, and allowed his keen, dark eyes to wander slowly along its brim. There he found what he sought, smiled knowingly, and then demanded:

"Is there any construction work going on out near the roadhouse?"

He was informed there was—that a new development was being opened up.

"I think we are making headway," he said when he heard it.

He was not mistaken. It was rapid headway from then on and, within a month's time, he had traced an Italian named Mike Casalimo to a farm in northern New York State, arrested him for the murders, and obtained a confession implicating three other men, as well.

But first, Fiaschetti had spent some time in the Italian colony of Ozone Park, not far distant from the roadhouse of the murdered Holbacks and the new development. There he had learned in his quiet way that Casalimo had disappeared about the time the double slaying was committed. Alone it meant nothing, of course. The man had a perfect right to go and come as he pleased. But when the detective had learned that he had been employed as a plasterer on the new development, his sudden departure had loomed as decidedly suspicious.

For on the brim of the dirty, shapeless felt hat left at the murder scene, Fiaschetti's keen eyes had found splashes of plaster—enough to advise him of the legitimate occupation of the murderer he sought.

Casalimo and his three confederates died in the electric chair at Sing Sing for their heinous crime. Robbery had been their object when they forced their way into the roadhouse, but they had killed instead.
The **G**ibson **F**amily

**MARTY, AS CLUB MAID,** gives a good performance when she tells Jane to use Ivory Flakes for her stockings just as fine stores advise.

Good stores do tell you to use Ivory Flakes for your stockings. And here's why: The sheer silk of stockings is very sensitive. It needs a pure soap. Ivory Flakes are so pure that both the makers and sellers of fine stockings recommend them. These people know silk. They like the way Ivory Flakes are shaved up into tiny, curly wisps, too. Ivory Flakes won't flatten down on your stockings to cause soap spots and runs!

And here's a thought for you thrifty girls—Ivory Flakes cost less than other "silk stocking" soaps. There are lots more ounces in the box! Just hold on to that thought and the next time you're at your grocer's merely say, "A box of Ivory Flakes, please."

**IVORY FLAKES - 99.4% PURE**

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"**LADY, WHY YO' LEAVE** dis chile wif me?" gasps Sam. "Yo' train goin' soon."

"Where's the station drug store? Where's my head?" demands Nurse Tippit. "Why did I forget to pack Jerry's cake of Ivory?"

"Lots o' time," says Sam, turning smooth as a chocolate custard, now that he knows the reason. Then he chuckles to Jerry, "So she's goin' to keep yo' 99 44/100% pure."

"**PURE IVORY SOAP FOR BABIES** SAY DOCTORS"

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**REMEMBER THIS HAT, HENRY?**' asks Mrs. Gibson softly. "Sure!" says Mr. Gibson. "It chaperoned us on our honeymoon, Sara. And we knew we were made for each other because we'd both brought Ivory Soap!"

"It's still the finest complexion soap," declares Mrs. Gibson. "Absolutely!" agrees Mr. Gibson. "Your complexion is as clear and fine as the day I first kissed it, 17 years ago!"

**SENSITIVE SKINS ARE SAFE WITH IVORY SOAP**

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The **MYSTERY** Magazine, November, 1934
ON a bright-October morning just seven years ago, a lean and lanky youth set out from his native town of Baraboo, Wisconsin, with the avowed idea of hitch-hiking to New York City—on the strength of a single article about an Alaskan dancing girl sold to the Dance Magazine.

As his background, Stuart Palmer had a boyhood in the little town made colorful by the presence, in winter quarters, of America's two greatest circuses. After that there was training at the Art Institute in Chicago followed by two years at the University of Wisconsin, and a memorable season as supercargo for the Alaska Steamship Company sailing out of Seattle for Nome, Teller, and St. Michaels. Then came a Winter spent in writing publicity and public addresses for Mr. Samuel Insull of Chicago, and a Summer spent in a nine-foot boat on Lake Superior as an antidote to Mr. Insull.

And then Stuart Palmer set out for Manhattan. Unlike Dick Whittington in the fable, Palmer did not have even a pet cat as a mascot in trying his fortune in the big city, although a procession of gorgeous and blue-blooded felines has passed through the young author's life and through his stories since that time.

He immediately wrote and sold his first short story to Ghost Stories. For the next two years Palmer wrote persistently and voluminously for such varied publications as Ghost Stories, Gum-Mold, True Strange Stories—(many of these, he now admits, were more strange than true)—Smart Set, Dance, and College Humor. Soon he became associate editor of The Dance, and then editor of Ghost Stories, which promptly expired under him.

Then one day a publisher looking for new talent happened to suggest the New York Aquarium as a good setting for a crime book. As Palmer set about devising the plot, he hit upon the device of having an old maid school-teacher and her class of pupils rushing about among the fish tanks, as comedy relief. Strangely enough, as the story began (Please turn to page 68)
The RIDDLE of the

All around them loomed the vast, monstrous creatures which spoke of the odd genius of Dravid the sculptor.

In order to love her fellow man as she felt in duty bound to do, Miss Hildegarde Withers found it necessary to avoid humanity en masse whenever possible. Had her inclinations led her otherwise, she might possibly have stood shoulder to shoulder with a thousand or so fellow Manhattanites in solemn conclave one bright October afternoon. In that case, one chapter in the history of criminalology would have been considerably shorter.

As it happened, she spent most of the Saturday in her little West Side apartment with a stack of uncorrected examination papers beside her, reading. By the time she was dragged rudely back to the present century by the shrilling of her telephone, the fat was most completely in the fire.

"All Hades is broke loose in Central Park!" was the way Inspector Oscar Piper put it. "You see, they were unveiling a blasted statue or something . . ."

Properly speaking, the unveiling was completely in the firm white hands of Deirdre Bryan, daughter of the Commissioner of Parks. She had been given the name because of old Mike Bryan's desire thus to honor the grandest and most unhappy queen who ever graced ancient Gaeldom, but nobody ever called her anything but "Dee."

At a few minutes before two o'clock that afternoon Miss Dee Bryan, looking better than her best for the benefit of the crowd and the massed newreel cameras, was holding a rope. That rope, if properly and briskly tugged, would uncover from its
His Honor finds a public-spirited corpse; the school-ma'am detective finds a murderer; and Inspector Piper discovers what was wrong with the four Fates, the beautiful marble hussy and the nice young man with the beard

A Miss Hildegarde Withers Mystery

By STUART PALMER

drapes of flags and canvas the latest representation of the father of his country. Now the statue loomed shapeless and muffled against the sky, and thus it must remain until the last tune had been played and the last speech gasped.

The minutes dragged for Dee Bryan. His Honor the Mayor, looking even more like an angry sparrow than usual, was working himself up toward a climax. He had already disposed of politics, slum clearance, the widening of Broadway, and the five cent fare. Now he was in the middle of "the City Beautiful . . . ."

When he finished, if ever, Dee would go into action with the rope, while the band struck up "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and the mayor shook hands with Dravid, the sculptor.

And then the mighty marble Washington, which the city of New York had just purchased for five thousand dollars as part of its program of encouraging the fine arts, would stand forth in impasive magnificence above the as yet uncompleted hole which was to be George Washington Uptown Pool Number Two.

Dee sensed by the Mayor's delivery that he was nearing the wind-up. She tightened her grasp of the rope, and cast a glance at the two newsreel cameras which were perched upon a nearby sedan. The news director, a bored little fat man in a leather jacket, waved at her to look up at the statue.

Then there was a commotion behind her. The brisk young secretary from City Hall who was acting as master of ceremonies had caught her father by the arm and led him out of a cluster of aldermen.

"Commissioner!" his voice came clearly to the excited girl. "There's been an upset. Dravid hasn't shown up—so you've got to stand beside the Mayor and let him shake hands with you instead."

"Me?" The Commissioner of Parks looked unhappy. It was bad enough dressing up in cut-away and striped trousers. "But I had nothing to do with the statue," he protested. Then he pointed past his daughter. "That's Dravid's wife, the big handsome woman in white standing near the newsreel truck. Why not let His Honor shake hands with her?"

"There isn't time!" hissed the master of ceremonies. He leaned toward Dee. "Understand the change? When His Honor shakes hands with your dad, haul on the rope!"

Dee nodded. Her father shrugged his shoulders. "All right," he said. "But it's a shame that Dravid isn't here."

THE Mayor was coming at last to his finale. "To dedicate this statue of the father of his country in the spirit of reverence, and to honor a true genius which has grown and flowered in our own fair city, the great Manuel Dravid . . . ."

He half-turned, with his hand out—and caught the frantic signals of the secretary from City Hall. His Honor blinked, and managed a graceful about face. "Manuel Dravid, New York City's own, who is unfortunately unable to be with us today, but—but—"

The Mayor's hand went to his breast pocket, and brought forth a yellow bit of paper. —"but who has telegraphed to ask that his statue which is shortly to be displayed before you be accepted and understood as a true affirmation of his artistic faith! Ladies and gentlemen, in behalf of the people of the city of New York, I accept the Dravid Washington!"

He turned, as the band blared forth in Sousa's most stirring march, and grasped the outstretched hand of the Commissioner of Parks. There was an instant's delay, for the improvised twist in the end of the speech had caught Dee unprepared. She was staring for all her blue eyes were worth at a man who stood against the newsreel truck—a tall and bearded young man whose mouth was open.

He was gazing up at the veiled statue, with an expression of fascinated horror on his face. Then, as Dee was recalled to her duty by a hiss from the master of ceremonies, he seemed to melt into the crowd.

She gave a vigorous heave at the rope. Something stuck, and she tried again. Finally one of the aldermen gave a hand, and the rope loosened. . . .

There was a faint burst of applause from the crowd, which died away in a low moan of horror.

There stood the Dravid Washington, twice the size of life, dignified, handsome, and glistening with the white of eternal marble—the father of his country, one hand outstretched as if holding a torch.

But he was not alone. Caught in the crook of his great bended arm was the crumpled body of a man, a spare, roughly clad person whose face wore a look of blank surprise! His head, with its shock of white hair, was bent forward and from the back of his neck the life blood had gushed forth to stain the immaculate marble of the monument in a long brown cascade.

The first thought that Dee had was: "I
mustn't faint in front of the cameras—I really mustn't!"

The cameras were clicking still, with an expression of pure and unalloyed delight upon the faces of the newsmen. They'd come for another speech and a statue—and got this!

But there was more to come. The Mayor, speechless for the first time in his life, was pointing up at the body. He barked, cleared his throat, and finally managed—"But—

that's Dravid!"

And then, for a full minute, there was no sound but the widow's horrible hysterical laughter.

* * * * *

"So I thought you might possibly be interested," the Inspector finished.

"You mean you're stuck and you want me to lend you a hand?" Miss Withers told him over the telephone. "But it's a fine time to tell me about it—the body was discovered a little after two, you say. It's after five-thirty now."

"I know it," Piper admitted testily. "But there's no phone booths in the middle of Central Park. And you have no idea what it is to try to investigate a murder with His Honor the Mayor screaming for an arrest. I haven't had a second to slip away and call you until now. I'm on my way to have a look at Dravid's studio in the Village, and I thought you might like to go..."

"I'll be ready when you get here," she cut him off. True to her word, the angular schoolma'am was pacing restlessly up and down the sidewalk outside her flat when the Inspector, traveling incognito in a taxi, pulled up.

He started to give the man an address downtown, but Miss Withers vetoed the suggestion. "You can give me five minutes to look at the scene of the crime," she snapped. "You've had all afternoon. The taxi obediently headed up Central Park West and into the park.

There was still a good-sized crowd held back from the statue by a squadron of officers. George Washington had been covered with canvas again, but Piper lifted the drape to show her the tell-tale brown stain. The body, of course, had been taken away for an autopsy.

"He was killed with some sort of a stone hammer or arrow," Piper admitted. "Part of it stuck out of the back of his neck. Dead since sometime in the night, Doc Bloom said."

"Between twelve and one, I imagine," Miss Withers murmured.

"What? How did you know?"

"Because the park is quite crowded until twelve—and while I was waiting for you I called the weather bureau and found that there was bright moonlight last night—except for that one cloudy hour. The murderer would hardly risk working except in the dark."

"Oh, I see," Piper nodded. "Yeah, guess you're right."

"Elementary, my dear Watson," Miss Withers murmured softly. "By the way, Oscar, when was the statue set up here?"

"Yesterday—which was Friday," he told her. "Owen, Dravid's young assistant and a bunch of workmen got it in place; the newspapers took a few photos and then Dravid was handed his money from the city. Today's unveiling was just the usual official splurge."

"I didn't know," Miss Withers admitted. "I suppose the sculptor was in a last minute rush to finish the thing."

"Rush?" Piper laughed. "Why, the statue has been finished for weeks. It was chosen from a dozen others in a competition, you know."

"Hmm," observed Miss Withers, "I was just wondering why there are so many marble chips around the base, that's all. Unless the workmen had an accident setting it up..."

She had gathered up a hatful of odd-shaped fragments.

"For my rockery," she told the Inspector.

A stepladder leaning against a pile of scaffolding told how the body must have been lifted to its oddly macabre position in the crooked arm of the massive statue. "Cases like this usually are broken pretty easily," the Inspector was saying. "Contrary to usual ideas on the part of the public, the more unusual the crime and the weapon, the more easily it's solved. The whole situation here comes down to one point—the how of the crime. Why was Dravid killed with a piece of sharpened stone?"

"No doubt," agreed Miss Withers. She was thinking of something else, as usual. For most of her career as a sleuth she had been most successful when (Please turn to page 46)
OFF the RECORD

Second-hand Olives

I

T is against the law in the District of Columbia for bartenders to mix drinks in the sight of the customers. That is becoming tough on the latter, from the Senators down.

To comply with the law, all the bars have a telephone booth arrangement in which the bartender slips, there to do his mixing in the dark.

Now it comes to pass that numbers of these out-of-sight barkeeps are practicing economies which give the lawmakers the willies.

In mixing old-fashioned cocktails, for instance, they use the orange peels and cherries over and over again—and don’t even bother to wash the glasses between drinkers.

An olive for a Martini is said to last for days, or indefinitely, until some hungry drinker eats it. From the White House comes the word, nonetheless, that drinks oughtn’t to be mixed in public.

As soon as Congress comes back this Winter the problem doubtless will be taken up there.

The issue likely will result in a compromise, as most such things do in Washington. One solution, proposed by the Hotel and Restaurant Employees’ Alliance, would make it legal for bartenders to do their shaking in public—so long as the drinkers stay three feet away from the bar. A barbed-wire entanglement might serve to keep them at a proper distance, or maybe a white line on the floor.

It is a vexing problem.

Spelling in High Places

Somebody at the White House—we don’t know who—is a bum speller, thereby making life pretty miserable for Messrs. O’Brien and Stacy.

William J. O’Brien not long ago was selected by President Roosevelt as Collector of Customs at the Port of Buffalo.

The president nominated him, the Senate confirmed him, and the powers that be commissioned him as “O’Brien.”

That was okay with O’Brien, but it wasn’t with the Treasury Department, which discovered the error twenty-four hours before he was to be sworn in. The department refused to let the ceremony go on.

O’Brien had to get himself renominated, reconfirmed and recommissioned under his right name. That cost him about six week’s pay.

The other victim of the White House’s misspelling is Judge Walter P. Stacy, chairman of the new National Steel Relations Board.

The executive order by the President of the United States creating the board and naming the three members of the board, spelled the judge’s name “Stace.” It went through all the official channels, including the State Department, and has been printed officially in that form.

Judge Stacy also may have his check cashing troubles until he goes through the tedious routine of getting a dozen or so governmental records corrected.

SPECIAL!

Have you any questions, serious or otherwise, to ask about your government? John Alexander, MYSTERY MAGAZINE’S special correspondent in Washington, will answer the most interesting questions sent in by MYSTERY readers every month. If you want to know how your government works; if you wish information on any subject of national importance; or if you just want to gossip; address your queries to this expert on political happenings—John Alexander, Reporter of Capitol Comics, care of Tower Magazines, 35 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Questions and answers will be printed each month in this magazine.

By

JOHN ALEXANDER

Statues, Beware

The Congressional statuary situation has come to a sorry pass. If something isn’t done—pronto—the architects say the floor of the Capitol is going to cave in and bury the nation’s lawmakers in a pile of bricks and busted statues.

The crisis is cumulative, starting in the gay nineties, when Congress set aside one of its main rooms at Statuary Hall, for the safe-keeping of heroes in marble and bronze.

Each state was allowed two heroes in Statuary Hall. There being 48 states, that meant 96 full-size statues in a chamber none too big in the first place. At first it didn’t matter, because not all the states had statues to display. Now they have, and the floor is groaning.

The safety engineers claim there is no telling when the floor will collapse under the load. Maybe tonight, maybe next year, unless Congress acts in the meantime. The engineers have recommended that the statues be taken out of the room and distributed in the corridors throughout the Capitol, so that there won’t be a concentration of weight in any one spot.

Collectively, Congress thinks that is a good idea, but individually turns thumbs down, as a matter of pride. A hero from Idaho, it seems, is just as great a man as a hero from Alabama, and therefore his statue is entitled to just as prominent a position. The same obtains for all the other (Please turn to page 78)
Modern women and modern men, destructive phantoms and the vanished ruby made the 14th Century murder in the penthouse one of the most colorful and dramatic cases Jimmie Lavender had ever tackled. A masterpiece of mystery fiction by one of America's prominent authors—and one of your favorites.

"This is where the thing occurred," said Albert J. Penfield. He shrugged his narrow shoulders and added a single word: "Incredible!"

"Wanton destruction is always difficult to understand," admitted Jimmie Lavender, sententiously. "It traces usually to some curious brain quirk. But this is really too bad!"

We were bending over a magnificent mediaeval vase, which lay in a dozen or more fragments on a corner table.

"There were four of them," said Penfield. "There are the others!" He indicated three other splendid, mutilated vases, one on another table, two on a wide mantel that lay across the end of the room, above a fireplace. What their value might have been I had no idea; but it must have been considerable. I rather respected Penfield, however, for not mentioning it.

Lavender, a bit of a collector himself, was genuinely distressed.

"Tchck, tchck!" he deprecked, clucking his tongue like an old woman who had burned her biscuits. And again: "Tchck, tchck, tchck!"

"Infernal swine," muttered Penfield. "I'd like to have him by the throat for just five minutes."

Jimmie Lavender stopped his puttering with the ruined vases.

"I doubt that there are any fingerprints," he said.

"Even if there were, they would probably be valueless. But I fancy our vandal used a stick."

He straightened, and for some minutes turned his eyes upon the room in which we stood. His quick glance darted from one priceless artwork to another: from bronze to porcelain, and from porcelain to gold and silver. There were statuettes and images, and antique clocks, and little boxes wrought with exquisite artistry by hands long gone to dust. There were icons and there were ancient weapons, chased in silver and set with precious stones. The place was better than a museum.

Only the quartette of vases seemed to have been touched.

"What else?" asked Lavender, at length. "Was anything stolen?"

"That's all," said the collector, "except for the umbilical ruby."

"The umbilical ruby! Great Scott," cried Jimmie Lavender, "what's that?"

"It was stolen," said Albert J. Penfield bitterly, "God knows why! But it's missing from its setting."

He crossed the room and lifted a small bronze piece from the mantel. His pointing finger indicated a cavity that might have been mistaken for the exaggerated navel of the little Oriental god that squatted on the heavy base. A sort of twisted smile accompanied his gesture.

"That's where it used to be! But its value is trifling as compared with that of other things around the room."

"I see," said Jimmie Lavender; but I was confident he didn't see at all. He added: "Tell me about it all."

"Come into the garden," said Penfield shortly. "I talk better when I'm drinking."

So we returned to the amazing mediaeval garden, blooming twenty floors above the modern city of Chicago. We seated ourselves at an old-fashioned table, upon which a servant was already laying out a set of glasses, a decanter, and a siphon. Remotely, from the

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
Cartwright was jealous of Penfield, and had quarreled with Harriet about him.

By

VINCENT STARRETT

depths below, the city murmured. The sun shone warmly through the branches of stunted trees and garden growths. A breeze blew inland from the lake. It was an enchanting spot.

"It happened last night," began the collector abruptly. "My wife was alone, except for the servants, who—I understand—had gone to bed. But she was alone, in any case, for the servants live and sleep on the floor below. A telephone call came through, and my wife answered."

He sipped at his Scotch-and-soda.

"She heard a man's voice which she took to be mine. It was, in fact, intended to be mistaken for mine. And the voice asked her—speaking as if it were mine, you understand—to join me at the Blue Pavilion. She left the house within ten minutes, took a cab, and did join me at the Blue Pavilion within half an hour."

"You were really there?" asked Lavender, surprised.

"Yes. So it is obvious that whoever called knew I was there, and certainly acted on that knowledge."

Jimmie Lavender nodded. "That seems an allowable inference," he agreed. "Just what did the voice say?"

"It said, 'Hello Millie'? And then, 'Bert calling. I'm at the Blue Pavilion. I want you to join me right away.' Penfield spread his hands. "That was all! She said she would; the fellow said, 'All right,' and that was that. Naturally, I was surprised to see her. I said so, and she told me about the call. A little later we came home—to find the vases smashed to pieces and the ruby gone. Otherwise, things were pretty much as you saw them."

"Whom do you suspect?" asked Lavender, as soon as the collector had finished.

"Nobody!" Penfield suddenly laughed. "She suspected me of drinking, when I told her I hadn't made the call; but she changed her mind when she got home."

"I see," said Jimmie Lavender again. "What made
her think you had been drinking? The voice on the telephone?"

"Yes—it sounded like mine, she said, but with a little difference. The fellow lisped, it seems."

"Lispéd!"

"Yes. Not much, but enough for her to catch it."

"Do you know anybody who lisps?"

"Neither of us does."

"How many people might have known that you were at the Blue Pavilion, last night?"

"Dozens, I suppose. Hundreds, maybe, if you count those who may have seen me there and recognized me. When I left the Club, some hours before, I said I was going to the Pavilion; so there was also a clear record of my intentions."

It was Lavender's turn to shrug. "What time did it occur?"

"Mrs. Penfeld left the house a little before midnight; the call was about ten minutes earlier."

"There are the things here more valuable than your vases and the ruby. Why should only the vases have been broken, and only the ruby stolen?"

"Ask me something easy," said Penfeld. "I can't imagine—unless," he added, "the broken vases were just a blind to cover up the theft of the ruby."

Jimmie Lavender nodded. "It's conceivable," he admitted. "The vases were a set, I take it? Where did you get them?"

"They were given to me by a young woman I was once engaged to marry."

Lavender looked at the collector over the rim of his glass. "What happened?" he asked with interest.

"Between us?" Penfeld was surprised. "Nothing in particular. We just cooled off and decided to quit. Don't get any funny ideas about her. She's a fine girl. Harriet Proctor—you've probably heard of her."

"I've read about her," smiled Lavender. "Of the Proctors, I believe? She's going to be married, anyway, if I remember rightly. Wasn't it in the papers recently?"

"Yes—fellow named Cartwright," Penfeld shrugged. "Lives in this building, as a matter of fact. Downstairs. Maybe he did it, eh? What a story that would be!"

Jimmie Lavender laughed. "Good fiction, anyway," he said. "I'm bound to ask questions, you know.

"Sure, sure," agreed Albert J. Penfeld, without enthusiasm. "Go ahead and ask 'em." He rose suddenly to his feet, and we followed suit. Mrs. Penfeld was emptying the garden."

"Please sit down," she begged. "It's Mr. Lavender, isn't it? I'm glad you've come. No whisky, please, Bert! Too early in the morning."

She was enormously attractive. My pulses, as usual in such circumstances, beat more quickly. Whatever else Albert J. Penfeld might have lost, I reflected, he was still a lucky stiff.

We sat ourselves and listened to what the collector's wife could tell us. I think she rather bowed Lavender over, also.

"I am particularly interested in the voice on the telephone," he told her. "It's apparently our only clue. Mr. Penfeld tells me that the fellow lisped."

"Yes," said Millie Penfeld. "I certainly got that impression. I wondered if Mr. Penfeld had been drinking. And yet it was quite definitely his voice. She nodded vigorously, and I wondered if she still suspected Penfeld of untruth.

"Easy to imitate," Lavender observed. "Now that you think about it, it wasn't Mr. Penfeld, what do you think? Isn't there someone else who—?"

She shook her head. "I've been over all that until I'm frantic. And yet, it must have been somebody who knew us, don't you think?"

"It would seem so," Lavender agreed. "But it is to be remembered that this man, in all probability, does not lisp at all. I have no doubt that the impression you received was deliberately conveyed—to mask his actual speaking voice."

The idea, if I am right, would be to send us scurrying about in search of somebody who lisps."

"And who actually does not exist?" cried Mrs. Penfeld. "That's almost too clever."

"The whole affair would seem to have been cleverly managed. He knew your name was Millie, that your husband was known to you as Bert. That Mr. Penfeld was at the Blue Pavilion. And he didn't talk too much. Just a sentence or two, I understand."

"Hello, Millie! Bert calling. I'm at the Blue Pavilion. I want you to join me right away. Have I got it right?"

Mrs. Penfeld nodded. "It's exactly what Bert would have said," she insisted. "You didn't try to trace the call?"

Lavender looked at Penfeld. "Tardily. Not a chance!"

"What about your servants?"

"All downstairs, as I told you. Only three of them sleep here, as a matter of fact; two maids and Rackham—the fellow who served our drinks. There's a chauffeur, of course; but he sleeps over the garage, a block away. They're good servants; that's all I can say."

"They're splendid servants," corrected Mrs. Penfeld. "Jimmie Lavender slumped his liquor thoughtfully. "The self-operating elevator is a great boon to thieves," he commented. "There's a man at the door, of course?"

"Downstairs, yes; but he goes off at midnight. I suspect he ducks a few minutes earlier than that."

"He wasn't there when I went downstairs," added Mrs. Penfeld. "I hunted up a cab myself."

"Called away, himself, perhaps?" questioned Lavender, ruminatively. "So that somebody could slip past? H'm!" He was thoughtful again for some moments. "Well, well! Will you take me round the place, please?"

We recrossed the vaulted living-room and re-entered the ancient corridor. The door at the far end was a formidable-looking piece of furniture. It was fitted with the toughest of modern locks. On the outer surface of the lock, however, was a deep scratch where, presumably, a key had slipped. Lavender examined it without much interest.

"This is the only entrance?" he inquired.

"Except a staircase at the back, leading to the servants' quarters. This is really the roof, you see," explained Mrs. Penfeld. "Even the freight elevator and the fire escape end on the floor below."

Jimmie Lavender made a little gesture of disgust. "It looks impossible," he commented, "unless he..."
As the door opened, something began to slip in horrible and eerie fashion toward the opening.

flew in over the parapet. The scratch upon the locks means nothing."

"It is impossible," said Mrs. Penfield, with a glance at her husband; and suddenly I felt that I was right. She did suspect him—of something. Had Lavender noted it?

For some time we stood at the parapet and looked into the streets and lawns below. Even the treetops were far, far beneath us. Lavender's eyes, however, saw nothing of the scene; he was looking out across the lake, and thinking.

His examination of the servants' quarters, the freight elevator, and the fire escape was curiously perfunctory, I thought; but it is likely that nothing of importance escaped him. The whole establishment was beyond belief: the vaulted dining-room, with its arched doorways and richly colored frescoes; the extraordinary bedrooms, with their walls of red and blue and green and their great four-poster beds; the amazing bathrooms, with sunken pools and walls of green and gold; the art gallery, filled with priceless oils, its vaulted ceiling done in replica of Michelangelo's designs. It took the breath away. And one knew that Penfield was a wealthy man.

But at length we were back in the long corridor that led to the elevators and the world outside. We paused beside a door set in the corridor wall.

"What's this?" asked Lavender, his hand upon the knob. He tried the handle without invitation and discovered that the door was locked.

"A closet," answered Penfield. "A bit of a nuisance, as a matter of fact. It has a spring lock on it, and needs a key to open it. Fortunately, we don't use it often."

"May I look inside?" asked Lavender. "Quite silly, I suppose; but I've looked at everything else. I may as well be thorough."

Penfield was surprised. "Very well," he replied coldly. "There are only winter garments in it, though."

"I'll get a key," said Mrs. Penfield. "I have one on my ring."

"So have I," said Penfield. "But the fellow couldn't possibly have got inside."

He fumbled with the lock and ultimately drew the door ajar. Mrs. Penfield stepped forward and jerked it widely open.

Then she screamed and keeled over into my arms. It was my good fortune to be standing just behind her.

"Good God!" said Albert J. Penfield, in a feeble bleat. He leaned against the opposite wall and stared with eyes that fairly bulged with horror. "Good God!" he whispered.

Crushed back against a standing truck, on three sides of which hung garments redolent of camphor balls, was the body of a man. As the door flew open, it had begun to slip in horrible fashion toward the opening.

Quite suddenly, before anyone could stop it, the thing pitched forward at our feet.

A DEFERENTIAL China boy opened the door of the Cartwright apartment on the seventh floor, some minutes later.

"Mister Cartwright not in," he told us amiably, and slowly began to close the door.

"We know that," said Lavender, abruptly. He inserted a foot to block the door, then followed it over the threshold. "I'm a policeman—see? You'd better let me in."

It wasn't strictly true; but it sufficed. The China boy unwillingly gave ground.

"What you want?" he asked.

"When did Mr. Cartwright go away?" asked Lavender. "Where is he?"

The Chinese servant spread his hands. "Don't know," he answered. "Solly, don't know! Mister Cartwright not come home las' night."

Lavender nodded. He had a sneaking fondness for Orientals, and was inclined to treat them as pets. He reached out a hand and pinched the servant's elbow. "What's your name?" he asked.

"Joe."

"Mr. Cartwright is dead, Joe. Somebody killed him."

There was no change in the China boy's face. He simply stared. But his voice betrayed his shock.

"Dead?" The word was as lifeless as its import.

We pushed past him into the living-room, leaving him staring. In orderly haste we made the circuit of the dead man's rooms and found exactly nothing that seemed to have a bearing on the case. But there was really no longer any mystery about it, that I could see. I wondered what Lavender was looking for. The culprit, obviously, had trapped himself in Penfield's closet and had paid the penalty of his carelessness.

"Went up in the freight elevator, probably," I said. "The Penfield's servants had gone to bed; it was close to midnight. Took the servants' staircase to the penthouse—after making the call that sent Mrs. Penfield to the Blue Pavilion. It seems clear enough."

"Does it? What motive would you ascribe to Cartwright, if your explanation is correct?" asked Lavender, with interest.

"Jealousy of some kind," I answered promptly. "He was engaged to the girl who gave Penfield those damned vases. We don't know what Penfield's relations with the girl may actually have been. She may just have talked to him a lot about Penfield—until he was pretty sick of it. He wanted to hurt Penfield somehow, and he attacked him through his collection. He began with the vases, naturally; then he gouged out the ruby, and he'd have gone farther if he hadn't trapped himself."

"Very ingenious," acknowledged Jimmie Lavender.

"How do you suppose he trapped himself?"

"Thought he heard someone coming, I suppose—one of the servants, maybe—and stepped into the closet without realizing that he was locking himself in." Lavender smiled gently. "Nonsense, Gilly! He could have let himself out, any time he wanted to. The door opens from the inside, like any other door," I stared at him. "Then he wasn't locked in?"

"Apparently, but not (Please turn to page 54)"

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934.
At the End of the

PATROLMAN NATALE BONNO came up Esther Street into Chaumont Avenue at twenty past eleven of a mild, luscious night in early Fall. This is one of the high parts of the city. Bonno knew it was eleven-twenty by the illuminated face of the high clock atop the Medical Life Building, six blocks distant down Chaumont. He checked with his wrist watch, holding it up into the glare of the street light. Quiet, orderly neighborhood; old homes of weathered stone, most of them darkened at this hour, a few five- or six-storied apartment houses. He would walk eight blocks up Chaumont and ring in as usual from the box on the corner of Chaumont and Cull.

Natale Bonno strolled on, twirling his stick, taking a few deep draughts of the sweet night air. It was a new post for him. Nice. Quiet. Not like Domingo Road, where he’d pounded his heels for most of the Summer and smacked into race riots, crazy shootings.

He was a young man—twenty-six—and hard-boned, strapped with muscle; dark, dark-eyed and dark-browed, with a proper sense of importance, without which—say what you want to about it—a copper certainly is lost.

When the shot banged, wrenched the stillness apart, Bonno did not duck—he merely stopped, flat on his feet, his knees bent a trifle—though he knew it was near at hand, muffled by walls. Instantly there was a second shot, and mingled with the second shot the brittle snarling of shattered glass.

Bonno looked up at the facade in front of which he had stopped. An apartment house of six stories, with two heavy glass doors at the entryway. Parting the doors with a thrust of his shoulder, he barged into a small, deserted lobby containing a potted plant and a long, leather divan. At his left was a door with a ground-glass panel; the door was part-way open, revealing an elevator cage. Hanging from it was a sign:

Out of Order.

Feet came hurrying down the stairway. Bonno stepped over beside the potted plant, drew his gun. The bottom of the staircase was concealed to him by a jutting corner of the wall. The footfalls were hurrying, drawing nearer, and presently a girl ran into view.

“Hey, you!” Bonno snapped.

She stopped with a quick intake of a breath and an “Oh!” that was sucked in between parted teeth. She was young and slender, with a diminutive hat aslant a crop of thick, lustrous black hair. Her eyes, now, were round, almost popping. She raised a hand, knuckling her mouth crushing her parted lips against her sparkling, white teeth.

Peter,” begged the girl, “be good, Peter. Don’t get them angry. Please don’t.”

Bonno towered toward her, his thick bushy brows coming together threateningly. He ripped her large, patent leather handbag from her hand, popped it open, glanced inside, closed it and thrust it back into her hand.

“What’s the rush?” he muttered.

“Why—I was just.”

“You was just!” he snapped. He jerked his hard dark jaw. “Get back upstairs.”

She was breathless. A harried look came into her eyes and her face was dead white and this made her eyes seem darker. Her lips worked and she made a few idiotic gestures.

Bonno gave her a shove. “Up.”

She hastened up to the next landing, Bonno at her

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
Alley was a DOOR

FREDERICK NEBEL

popular author of best-selling novels and short stories, presents an ace-thriller of murder, young love and the sinister secret behind the side door. Another human drama in which Marcus Corcoran, the beloved district attorney, solves a crime and mends a heart at the same time

heels. As they were starting up the narrow staircase beyond, a man started down. At sight of them he stopped short, began to retreat. With his left arm Bonno thrust the girl to one side; his right held his gun leveled upward.

"Make up your mind, mister," he said.

The man above remained motionless.

"Oke," Bonno nodded, his eyes hard and dark and cagey. He rushed the girl up the staircase and, a few steps from the man, said, "Back up—and just for luck, put up your paws."

THE man was young, about as young as Bonno. He wore a light gray suit of herringbone material, with a flair to the lapels. His soft collar was white with blue horizontal stripes, and pinched tight by a collar pin. A gray felt was yanked over one eyebrow.

"You're in a hurry, too, I suppose," Bonno muttered, slapping the man beneath each arm, then his coat pockets then his hips—swiftly, certainly. "Well, say something."

The young man had a grayish, narrow face. "What should I say?" he asked, regarding Bonno steadily.

"Skip it. You can say things to the inspector. Where was that shooting?"

"I don't know."

Doors had begun to open in the corridors and now, heads began to pop out.

Bono raised his loud voice. "Where was that shooting?" he spun on the girl. "Maybe you know, lady?"

She looked at him as though his manner or his uniform held her transfixed. Color began seeping back into her cheeks in feverish, ragged splatches.

Bono grabbed her by the arm. "All right, lady. May-

be you know what room you came out of. Get a move on you. You heard me, didn't you? I said what room?"

She nodded stupidly. "Yes... yes."

"You get along, too," Bonno told the young man.

The girl led the way past gaping tenants to the last door on the right. Stopping, she turned and looked at Bonno. Her face was quiet now, set, and there was a film like wet silk on her eyes.

"This one?" Bonno asked.

"Yes," she said, sliding her eyes toward the door.

Somewhere distant a man's voice was calling, "Dermody! Say, Dermody!... Dermody!"

Bonno pounded on the door but no one came to open it. He rattled the knob. The door was locked.

"Dermody!..." the man's voice called again.

Bonno turned to the girl. "Is his name Dermody?"

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Her voice was hardly above a whisper. "Yes."
"What, what, what?" panted a small, fuzzy-haired man, running up with the folds of a bathrobe clutched tight at his waist.
"Who are you?" Bonno demanded.
"The—well, the building super. My name's Gregory."
"You got keys?"
The little man bobbed his head, hauled a bunch of keys from his pocket. His lower lip blubbered wetly:
"But whuh—what—"
"Never mind. Open the door before you need a repair job."
The little man opened the door and instantly there was a deep silence. The girl did not cry out, though her eyes widened with horror, her knockers ground against her lips. The tall man in the herringbone suit moistened his lips, looked sidewise at the girl.
"Get in," said Bonno, in a low, hoarse voice.
The woman entered as though she walked on stilts, stiff-legged. The man in the herringbone suit followed, his face a little grayer. Bonno, entering, took one look at the man on the floor, at the heavy revolver lying a few feet from his outstretched hand. Then he stepped over the inert figure and thrust his head out the open window beyond. Across the court, a man in pajamas was leaning out of a window.
"Were you doing the yelling?" Bonno demanded.
"I was calling Dermody."
"Why?"
The man looked upward, pointed. "A bullet shattered my window and woke me up. I saw Dermody's place lighted up and I called out to him."
"Who are you?"
"Sundstrand's my name. I'm an M. D."
"Oke. You better put your pants on and come over, doc, and take a look at this guy."

So the dead man's name was Dermody. Clinton Dermody. He was, up until the moment, the instant of his death, an author of some repute. A journalistic author. He'd written a number of actual biographies of notorious characters, still living. He had always written of the moment, never of the distant past.

Dermody was about fifty. With his great shock of yellow hair, he looked picturesque even in death. A large man with a large face and thick down on his hands, large, squarish fingernails. Jacobs, the coroner's man, had finished with the preliminary examination. He was a fattish small man with a hard-looking belly and uninspired eyes.
"It could easily be suicide," he said from beneath his fat nose, looking over his glasses. "I daresay it's suicide."

Inspector Tom Rockford, who had been hauled out of an important bridge game at headquarters, growled, "You're sure, huh?"
"No one can be sure, Tom," Jacobs said. "We know the gun is Dermody's. It's a thirty-two on a forty-five frame, with an extra long barrel. A target revolver. The cartridges are smokeless."

Rockford turned on a blunt heel to say across the room. "You hear that, Marcus?"

Marcus Corcoran, the district attorney, was standing in a corner smoking a cork-tipped cigarette and thumbing the pages of one of Dermody's latest books. He closed the book, laid it aside and came over to stand above the body, pinching his lower lip thoughtfully between thumb and forefinger. The district attorney had a taste in suits and linen. He was a slender, erect man, with a casualness of manner, with the unpretentious manner of a thoroughbred. He said amiably to Jacobs. "You've of course seen other cases of suicide by a firearm where there were no powder burns."
"Of course," the coroner's man nodded. "All suicides don't jam the gun against themselves."
Corcoran lifted his eyes. The girl was seated across the room, and beside her the thin young man in the herringbone suit. Doctor Sundstrand stood to one side, a gaunt man with a picturesque splash of gray at either temple, intelligent eyes, full, mobile lips. He was wrapped in a dark blue dressing gown. The fuzzy-haired little building superintendent stood near the door, beside two uniformed policemen.

Corcoran said, "Miss Powers . . ."
The girl started.
"Miss Powers, Inspector Rockford tells me you took a lot of dictation for Mr. Dermody."
She nodded. "Yes."
"How long were you here tonight?"
"Well, from eight until some time after eleven—ten or twenty minutes after eleven, I don't know exactly."
"What do you usually do, take the notes home and type them there?"
"Yes, I do."

Patrolman Natale Bonno said, "Nix. All she had when I snapped her was a pocketbook."
She colored a trifle, then nodded. "Of course. Mr. Dermody was dissatisfied with what we'd accomplished tonight and told me to tear the notes up," she pointed. "I think you'll find them in that waste basket. He—he didn't seem in a mood for working."
"What kind of mood was he in?" Corcoran asked.
She swallowed. "He seemed—depressed."
"Was he often depressed?"
"No. He was usually—I don't know how to express it—rather gay, even funny at times. As though acting a part."
"How long have you done this work for Mr. Dermody?"

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Corcoran said, "I thought you didn’t love your wife any more." "Who said so?" Powers shouted.

"A little over a year, I should say."
"When you heard those shots, why did you run? Patrolman Bonno said you were running."

Again she colored and seemed confused. "I really don’t know. Maybe it was instinct. They sounded close—certainly in the building. I think I felt that at any moment someone would burst out of a doorway with a gun and—I don’t know—I just ran. I guess I was just frightened."

"You’re sure you recognize the gun?"

"Positive. He bought it about two months ago and showed it to me then in its plush case."

Corcoran crossed the room to deposit his butt in an ashtray. He turned and looked at the thin, gray-faced youth in the herringbone suit. "Your name is—let me see—Browning?"

"Browning, yes."

Corcoran smiled drily. "Patrolman Bonno said you acted suspiciously when he accosted you on the stairs."

"It all depends on what you call acting suspiciously. I was starting down the stairs when I saw him and the girl coming up. He was a policeman with a gun in his hand. Naturally I stopped. Maybe I looked a little confused."

Bono mocked him: "It’s all what you consider acting a little confused."

Corcoran said, "Mr. Browning, do you live here?"

"No."

"Then what, the next thing to naturally ask is—what were you doing in the building?"

Browning’s face looked a shade grayer. He withdrew from his inside pocket a thick sheaf of pinkish slips and held it out. Corcoran crossed and took the sheaf. The sheaf must have contained a hundred-odd slips, each about four inches square and advertising certain bonded liquors.

Browning was saying, "I was on my way up to the top floor. Then I was going to start down, slipping a sheet under each door. Advertising. When I heard the shots—well, I gave up the idea and decided to leave."

"It’s a gag," growled Bonno. "The gent looked guilty as hell."

Corcoran said, "Thank you, Mr. Browning." He retained some of the slips, gave the rest back to Browning. Browning moistened his lips and let out a quiet, unobtrusive sigh.

And then Corcoran said amiably, casually to Dr. Sundstrand, "Mr. Dermody was of course dead when you examined him, doctor?"

"Quite," Sundstrand said, nodding grimly. "Quite dead."

"As a medical man, have you any theories? You knew Dermody pretty well, I gather."

"Yes, pretty well. We used to go on a lot of shindigs together. As to any theories, I don’t know. While you gentlemen have been talking, I’ve been trying to figure out why Clint Dermody should have committed suicide. It seemed quite unlike him. His health was good. I know that personally. He made (Please turn to page 79)
Her Husband's Friend

It was early on a hot morning in August that headquarters heard Dr. Wilhelm Mott had been murdered down in Pawhanssett. Dr. Mott, who was perhaps the most eminent physician in southern Staten Island, had been one of the guests at a party the night before at the Ring home—the name Ring is one of the most venerable of the district and the Ring house is a landmark—and it was in the summerhouse on the vast Ring lawn that he was found.

Now Pawhanssett, being what it is, is a matter of concern to the officialdom of New York. It is one of those queer, isolated spots within the shadow of the world's greatest metropolis—belonging, in fact, within the limits of that metropolis—that clings jealously to its individuality and scorn—when not legally compelled otherwise—any relations with the giant that is New York. A sizable portion of its population, having immense local pride, never have crossed the bay to Manhattan, not deeming such travel either necessary or beneficial.

Hence, its policemen, although technically under the supervision of Centre Street, are recruited locally and refer to themselves as the Pawhanssett Police Department—and so with its firemen and other officials who draw municipal pay.

Therefore, when the news of Dr. Mott's destruction came through, the matter was immediately laid before the Commissioner. The Commissioner, a weary man, looked over the report. He saw that one David Gray, a patrolman, had found Dr. Mott.

"Local man?" asked the Commissioner.

"Yes, sir," said the Inspector of the Homicide Squad.

"Oldest they got over there?"

"And these people—are they suspects?"

"Well, yes sir, in a way. There's Mrs. Ring—Unity's her first name—who gave the party and I suppose she's at least a material witness, if not a suspect. They say she and Dr. Mott were to be married. Her husband and Dr. Mott practiced together.

"What happened to the husband?"

"Blew his brains out after he'd lost everything in the market. Family fortune, it's said. He left his widow the house and a sizable lump of insurance, but that was all."

"Was Mott wealthy?"

"Fairly so."

"And these others?"

"Well, sir, now comes the queer part of it. It seems odd that Mrs. Ring should give the party at all because these three, the Proveens and Simon Lingle, the only other guests at the party, detested Mott."

"Why?"

"Well—they all grew up together, it seems—Mott had a heavy love affair with Prudence Proeven at one time, but he threw her over—there's a child somewhere according to local gossip—and it broke her heart. She's never married and they say she hates Mott now.

"Then, there's her brother, Caleb. He worships his sister—always has. They live together. And when Mott did her the nasty trick it was all Prudence could do to keep him from bumping off Mott then and there. She did, but there's always been the chance Caleb would do Mott in if he got half a chance.

"As for Lingle, he hates Mott like poison because when Mott threw over Prudence, he took up with Lingle's wife. Mott's been a local ladies' man all his life. Finally there was a divorce, but what adds to Lingle's hatred is that Mott, after the divorce, gave the wife the run-around and went chasing the Ring widow.

"So you can see that the party wasn't what you could call hilarious."

"Did Lingle and the Proveens know Mott was to be there?"

"Apparently not. They came early, and he came in later. He'd been at a hospital. The party broke up just a little after that, but Mrs. Ring apparently wasn't through with her little joke, if it was a joke. She asked Proeven, who had his car, to take Mott home. That sort of staggered them, I suppose, but Proeven said he would and Mott accepted. Lingle went along, too.

"Well, according to the story the three of them tell, they dropped him off at his house, but they had words. Both Lingle and Proeven warned him to keep out of their way in the future, but it seems he laughed at them."

"Did he go right into his house?"

"Yes, the housekeeper heard him come in, but nothing more. She says there's something supernatural about it."

The Commissioner looked annoyed.

"What do Lingle and Proeven do?" he asked.

"Lingle runs a hardware store and Proeven—" the Inspector laughed querulously—"is a Professor of Primitive Religions and the History of Witchcraft. He's a Doctor of Philosophy."

"It sounds," said the Commissioner, gapping, "quite mad. Any real clues?"

"None we can find out about."

"Well, find out!" snapped the Commissioner.

In the little village of Pawhanssett, where superstition and beautiful women were abundant, Ashel Mayhew, of Huntsdale, Mo., not only found that the world was against him, but that he had to solve murder by committing robbery. A town where anything was liable to happen—and did!

By HENRY LACOSSITT

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
Both Ashel and Graney caught their breaths sharply, for Unity Ring was beautiful.

The Inspector was embarrassed. "That's just it, sir. You see, Pawhanssett's such a queer place. They dislike interference, you know. I was wondering if it would be better to let them—"

"That's only encouraging them. We've had this situation before. Send a man with tact who knows his business. That's all!"

The Commissioner was final. Sighing, the Inspector took his leave. He sat down miserably at his desk.

"Tact!" he snarled. But then his face lighted.

"Tact?"

He reached for the telephone.

In thirty minutes Ashel Mayhew, the sheriff-like gentleman from Missouri who was such a distinguished member of the Homicide Squad, was on his way with his son-in-law, Detective Sergeant Vincent Graney.

They went in a rather unusual fashion, for they traveled in a trim, twenty-four-foot speedboat, which went flying down the East River through the lazy summer day toward Staten Island.

The speedboat was Ashel's idea. They had bought it recently.

"Mistuh Graney," he had said at the time, "now that we're livin' over on the East River, we oughta get nautical. 'Side, we might need it to get some place in a jiffy sometime."

Neither reason had appealed to Graney, Irish and husky, red of hair, blue of eye, and thrifty, but there they were.

Ashel, tall, gaunt, gray eyes mild, long mustache drooping over his jaws, looked at Graney over his steel-rimmed spectacles as they sped along and said:

"What'd I tell you?"

He was, of course, referring to the justification of their purchase of the boat. Graney looked at him sourly.

"Ain't you never wrong?" he asked bitterly.

*The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934*
up at an old wooden pier that thrust
out into the water from a narrow
beach. The beach extended back
from the water to meet a sandy cliff
that rose for perhaps sixty feet. A
flight of wooden stairs ran up the
cliff.

Down the beach a quarter of
a mile a sprawl of little houses
nestled on a point. That, they knew,
was Pawhanssett.

They moored the boat to the pier
and crossed the beach to climb the
stairway. At the top they came
upon a wide, grassy lawn where
splendid old trees—maples, elms,
oaks—grew, and from the stairs,
windin in and out among the trees,
a flagged path, on either side of
which grew a privet hedge, ran to
the house. The house was frame,
New England Colonial, and on the
top of it was the famous platform
known as the "Widow's Walk," sig-
ificant of Pawhanssett's maritime
past.

**T**HEY started down the path, but
stopped abruptly at a turn. A
policeman stood there at a break in
the path. The break gave on a side
path that led to the octagonal sum-
erhouse. It was about ten feet off
the main path and painted white.
"How-de-de," said Ashel. "I reckon
you're Officer Gray."

"Guess I am," said the policeman.
A man in his fifties, he was tall and
thin, with sunken face and eyes.
"You found him?"
"Guess I did."
"How'd you happen to go in the
summerhouse, Officer Gray?"

Officer Gray's eyes were almost
black. They flashed.
"Guess we know our business
'round here," he said, "'thout any
'dvice fr'm Noo York. Guess we
don't ask it, neither."
"Guess no," said Ashel. He
smiled, a very friendly expression,
but Officer Gray remained sullen.
Ashel asked: "You s'pect anybody,
Officuh Gray?"

"Guess if I did, I'd say so,
wouldn't I?"

Behind Ashel, Graney growled like
a mastiff as Officer Gray turned on
his heel and walked down the path.
"I'll report—" began Graney, but
Ashel had gone into the summer-
house. Graney followed him and, as
Ashel had done, stopped at the door.

"Good God!" said Sergeant Graney.
Directly across from them, seated upright on
the wall seat that ran around the eight sides of the build-
ing, was the body of Dr. Mott. His hands were crossed
in his lap; his feet rested carelessly on the floor; his
head had fallen back in a horrible angle against the
only unopened window of the eight the place contained,
and his open, staring eyes looked at them with some-
thing more than horror.

In the throat was a gaping gash. It was the gash
that permitted the head to fall back against the
window.

For a moment they stood staring and then they were
startled when somewhere in the house a littleell chimed once. It was a ship's bell wired to the
chronometer that hung on the narrow wooden panel
next to the window where Dr. Mott sat. It was eight-


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LITTLE BOOK OF STRANGE CRIMES

Political Rivalry

ARISTEO BADILLO was a member of the Mexican House of Representatives. He served one term, the year 1935. Since the newspapers are silent on the subject, only the records of the Mexican legislative body can show whether he was competent or otherwise.

But competent or not he was a Mexican politician and Mexicans take their politics and politicians with an advanced degree of seriousness. Aristeo Badillo was taken seriously. He developed a number of deadly political enemies. But that was natural. Aristeo Badillo was playing the game of Mexican politics. It is an old game, played violently and perhaps Aristeo Badillo was a fatalist. Perhaps he expected that sooner or later he would be forced to trade bullets with his political enemies. There is certainly no doubt that he had ample precedent on which to base his expectations.

But Aristeo Badillo had no inkling of the terrible disaster that was in store for him.

He had beaten his enemies at the polls in Campeche, one of the states forming the Yucatan Peninsula. It infuriated them. And when he took passage on the SS Valley recently, they hatched a plot. They learned the destination of the steamer was the town of Frontera, on the coast of Tabasco. And when it docked they were ready.

They seized Aristeo Badillo, taking him forcibly from the steamer. They bound him, placed him in a small boat, spirited him away to a small island off the coast.

There was a straw hut there. Within its steaming walls they placed Aristeo Badillo, helpless in his bonds. And then, because Aristeo Badillo was their political enemy, because he had beaten them in elections and was inimical to their political interests, they sprinkled the hut with petroleum and set it afire.

And they stood nearby and watched and listened as the man, who had only followed principles in which they did not happen to believe and concur, died the most horrible of all deaths.

Truth is stranger than fiction! And this new diary of odd occurrences will acquaint you each month with the most peculiar events of the day! A monthly record of strange things that happen to strange people!

Serenade at the Tombs

THE prison in New York, known as the Tombs—because the original building resembled the famous sarcofagi of ancient Egypt—is famous throughout the world. Through its gloomy walls a parade of internationally notorious criminals has passed. Perhaps the ghosts of many of these criminals—from Mose, the Bowery Boy, to Gyp the Blood and Two-Gun Crowley—haunt those corridors and dungeons. At any rate it is not too pleasant a place. One may brood there, upon Hicks, the famous axe murderer of the last century, upon Monk Eastman, gangster peerless, upon Gallus Mag, the fearsome female slayer of old New York, and others, and one may shiver at his recollections. In fact, one does.

Therefore, one summer day, the prisoners, within the Tombs, looking through the bars at the drowsy sunshine, probably dreamed of green fields and rushing brooks and cool forests. Probably they yearned with a powerful nostalgia for the freedom of the open road. Their tempers, it may be imagined, were not in too placid a state.

Hence, when the strains of a certain song drifted on the warm summer air through the barred windows, they were at first incredulous, then infuriated. The stone walls rang with their fury. They stamped, shook the bars, growled ominously.

From the offices came the officials, apprehensive of break or riot. They endeavored to quiet their charges, but without success. So finally, in desperation, they rushed to the street.

There, they discovered an itinerant German band, familiar to the New York streets, puffing solemnly away in the monotones comunque of their style—playing the song that had so infuriated the incarcerated men.

"Oh, if I had the wings of an angel..."

The strains of the "Prisoner's Song," brazily rendered, echoed and reverberated in the street. The Tombs officials stopped the musicians, explaining that a riot was being brewed by their none too innoxious tune.

But, explained Fritz, Heinrich, August, Edward and Willie, they were under contract. A nice man, they said, had got off a bus and given them $1.50 spot cash to play the song beneath the windows at the Tombs.

The officials explained again, and patiently. They said it probably was a joke.

Whereupon Fritz, Heinrich, August, Edward and Willie nodded solemnly, took their instruments and went on their merry way.

Order was restored in the Tombs.

Lingo

THE confidence men have words for it. And words and words. In the bright lexicon of the swindler are to be found such as the following:

Pick-up—The act of getting acquainted with the prospective victim.

Steerer—The man who makes the pick-up and guides the victim into the web of the plot.

Feeder—The first gentleman actually to sound the victim. He is usually a bland,街区 person and impresses the victim with his importance in the world of affairs.

Squier—The gentleman who seals the scheme by smooth lan. (Please turn to page 85)
MR. EDWARD L. GREENE, OF THE NATIONAL

THE Terrible

The United States is infested with a multitude of crooks who, in the guise of honest business, prey upon the public and collect untold millions of dollars annually.

I believe the most practical way to combat these crooks is to expose them. For this reason I am glad to recommend these articles.

Edward L. Greene

In order to inform the American people of the vicious system of domestic racketeering that exists in this country, and of the illegitimate practices that flourish under the guise of honest business, this magazine presents the third of a series of cold-blooded fact articles, which the editors hope will aid in stamping out the insidious and malignant growth of "gyp" racketeers in the home

By

D. E. WHEELER

UP the path to the porch of the little suburban home of Mrs. Ewan Morse, outside of New York City, straggled a strange pair in the hot afternoon sunlight. The woman approaching was middle-aged, short and plump. Her clothes were poor and shapeless and she carried a large, bulky brown-paper bag. Alongside her ambled a gawky boy of sixteen, his trousers away above the tops of his shoes, and the sleeves of his jacket at least three inches too short.

"Look like immigrants," thought Mrs. Morse, who was busy typing a report of the local relief committee of which she was secretary. While so engaged, she had sighed over the cases of many well-to-do acquaintances reduced to accepting municipal help, and here, to complete her feeling of a world gone wrong, right before her eyes was the personification of poverty.

"Could I speak a moment to you, ma'am?" came the voice of the woman in accents that suggested an Irish origin, though she might have been Dutch or Swedish from her looks.

"Yes, certainly—what is it?" Mrs. Morse got up from the typewriter.

"O—o—h, see the beautiful little printin' press, Ma!" exclaimed the boy, pointing at the typewriter in naive delight.

"Hold yer tongue, Willie!" admonished the woman; then turning to Mrs. Morse she said apologetically: "He ain't used to the ways of this country yet, and he's never seen a typewriter before. God help him! Both of us is pretty green, you see, ma'am."

Immediately, Mrs. Morse grew more interested in the visitors, which was what they were after if their act was to get over. And if it hadn't been a typewriter, it would have been something else that would have exhibited Willie's touching simplicity. For

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
Williamsons

Willie, you must know, was a sort of "stooge" for his mother in the game they were working.

"Well—?" said Mrs. Morse.

"I'm sorry to take yer time, ma'am, but please look at this," replied the woman.

Out of her bulky paper bag she drew what looked like a large wad of lace. Motioning to Willie to take hold, they shook it between them and spread out a beautiful lace tablecloth made of small circles webbed together and containing a shamrock design.

"Goodness me!" breathed Mrs. Morse, involuntarily.

"'Twas made by me grandmother, ma'am," explained the shabby owner of it, "and she's over eighty and gone blind now. It took her the best part of a year to make this grand cloth. But I must sell it to get food for me children's mouths. Me husband hasn't been able to get anything to do since we came to this country, and we have nine young ones to clothe and feed—"

Hard times had made Mrs. Morse vow not to buy a thing that wasn't a necessity until the New Deal had established better days. But real hand-made Irish lace, and a great spread of it billowing before her! Her eyes sparkled as she gazed. Like every daughter of Eve, she loved genuine hand-made lace, always wanted to possess it, but her pieces of it had been few and small. On her husband's salary Mrs. Morse had never dreamed of possessing real lace in such quantity as this, any more than owning a necklace of genuine matched pearls.

"How was it made?" she inquired, examining one of the many encircled shamrocks.

"With bobbins, ma'am, on a pillar," said her visitor.

"Just consider the patience and eyesight it took to make all them circles exactly alike and put them together without a hair's difference!"

"Yes indeed," said Mrs. Morse, sympathetically; then a bit more sharply: "But this cloth looks new."

"It is that, as you might say," smiled the visitor, "for I never used it, faith! I had it put away till the time me children grew up and it wouldn't be destroyed, so."

Tempted as she was, Mrs. Morse knew that she could ill afford such a luxury, even if it was the chance of a lifetime.

"I'm sorry—" she began.

"You can have it for thirty dollars, ma'am", interrupted her visitor, "and it's a treasure that will outlast yer grandchildren's grandchildren!"

Mrs. Morse knew that a real hand-made Irish lace tablecloth of that size was worth five times that sum, at least. She had her vacation money tucked away, and might use half of it in the purchase. But she shook her head again.

"Why don't you try it on yer dinin'-room table, ma'am," urged the temptress in that wheeling voice.

Persuaded, Mrs. Morse tried it on her walnut table. It was perfect. She could fairly hear the delighted exclamations over it by Ewan, her husband, and her friends. Hesitating, coveting, she was lost when the forlorn creature who offered it for sale said:

"Sure, and it belongs right there, ma'am! Take it for twenty-five dollars—if I can afford to give it for that, and God knows I can't, then surely you can afford to take it, so!"

(Please turn to page 94)
The Well-Known

THE pineapple joust at Precinct 59 had lasted till well after four in the morning and Sergeants Druby and Howard were riding home in style. Captain Shoeman, thrilled at having won some three dollars, and generous to a fault with the taxpayers' gasoline, had ordered his chauffeur to drive them home in the station squad car. They were lolling against the rear cushions, making mental promises to mend their ways and get their rightful sleep when the chauffeur, Hagan, snapped them alert. He had hit the lever controlling the riot-gun box. The cover popped up, laying the deadly pump guns easy to hand and both policemen eased their pistol holsters and surveyed the scene. There was a visible commotion a block or so ahead. By this time, Hagan had gunned the powerful car into its stride and they arrived before the entrance of Casey Cohen's Four Hundred Club in time to witness the closing scene of a tableau.

One burly young man stood over another, all the evidence tending to prove that he had just knocked the other man down, for even now the fallen one arose. This resurrection was short, however, for his assailant treated him to a first person singular demonstration of that ancient trick of battle known as the "Dublin Flip." This antiquated form of assault was handed down from the old Irish mixed-ale fighters and consists of deftly kicking your adversary's feet from under him with a sort of rugby hook-kick and dealing him a lusty backhander at the same instant. The newly arisen one flopped back into the street sprawled out, arms and legs extended, starfish fashion. The aggressor then looked up, perceived the oncoming squad car and popped into the Four Hundred Club, and there found sanctuary, for the owner, Casey Cohen, was brother to the Democratic district leader and the police were forbidden to trespass on these hallowed premises for anything short of murder.

The group of late-to-beds who had been standing about admiring the technique of this thuggery now saw the policemen and their faces went suddenly blank as if wiped with a sobering sponge. They began an idle gaping into space, adopting that vacuous, deaf-dumb-and-blind look with which a policeman is normally greeted in certain neighborhoods. Not so the young lady who had been an interested spectator.

"Bill Fortune," she shrieked at the policemen. "It was Bill Fortune; he did it. I just got out of a cab and was going in the club as he was coming out. I just said hello to this guy and Bill puts the slug on him. He won't let me alone and you gotta do something about it. What the hell are

William Fortune could always unburden his troubles at Casey Cohen's bar to Casey Cohen himself.
coppers for if a guy can get away with that stuff? I want protection.

"Bee Morgan," said Sergeant Druby meanly. "So it's you. And you want protection? Well you can have it. I think we'll take you down and put you in the parade for Sunday morning when they show up all the dolls from the Saturday night raids. You'd feel right at home, wouldn't you, Bee? Little Bee Morgan, the sweetheart of Clark Street."

Sergeant Howard had picked up the prone gentleman, recognized him, and dropped him again as if fearful of soiling his hands.

"Eddie Latimer," said the Sergeant in disgust, as if there were sufficient explanation of this calloused action. He had recognized him as a young man who emulated the lily; beautifully was he attired, but he spun not. Gigolo is a mild—very mild—phrasing of his occupation.

"Listen, copper," continued the young lady, "you can't pull this kind of stuff on me. I know people that will take your buttons off if I say the word. You gotta make this Fortune let me alone. I don't want no part of him. I got a new sweet and I'm off William like that." Here she snapped her fingers. "I don't want no part of him. I'm levelling, I tell you. I'm working at the Elite. Ask anybody."

"The Elite!" barked Howard. "And she calls it levelling."

The fallen gentleman now arose for the second time and gazed about him with glazed dead-fish eyes. He saw the policeman.

"I didn't do nothing," whined Eddie Latimer. "I'm standing here doing nothing when this dolly here hops out of a cab. I give her hello and just then this guy Fortune comes out of the club and gives me the clouts. How about it, copper? What about putting the collar on him? That's assault and battery."

"Good," said Sergeant Howard and climbed back into the car. Druby stood for a moment on the running board and stared wistfully up at the Four Hundred Club. "I would like nothing better," quoted the Sergeant, "than to put Billy Fortune under glass. Maybe we ought to kick the joint and sleeve him.

"For what?" Sergeant Howard wanted to know. "For assault? Don't be dumb. His lawyer would spring him out of there in the morning and all we get is lost sleep. Come on, it's after four. Roll it, Hagan."

The object of this discussion, Mr. William Fortune, (none of whose respectable Czechoslovakian ancestors would have answered if addressed as Fortune) meditated as he climbed the flight of stairs and entered the gaudy Four Hundred Club. That's life for you. Always something. It seems like every time a guy starts to put the plug on someone, along comes John Law and butts in.

And you take dolls now. There's something no guy can figure. Imagine this Bee Morgan giving a rising young public enemy, a promising young labor racketeer like Billy Fortune, the air. Dolls just don't make sense, that's all. Didn't I always treat her right? Sure. And then she gives me the air. It ain't as if Bee were hard to get. Any small time checker, heist-guy or back porch climber on the West Side will tell you different. But they hadn't better—not where I can hear them. And then the mob will razz a guy that lets some doll throw him over. Especially after you invest a lot of dough in her like I did. Well, any guy that makes a play for her better watch his step that's all, and I mean watch his step.

Musing thus, young Mr. Fortune made his way through the club to the bar. Here he would find the owner, Mr. Casey Cohen, and unburden himself of his troubles. Mr. Cohen could be depended upon to help. Billy carry his cross, for Mr. Cohen was a saloon keeper and William was a wine buyer and times being what they are, wine buyers are few and far between. Also, Casey was a pal, not at all the type to quibble over a little perjury. Was William being prosecuted by the police in connection with certain acts of violence he was alleged to have committed then Casey came to bat. "Absolutely Mr. Prosecutor, William Fortune was in my place all night that night. I remember perfectly because it was the night of the Canzoneri-Ross fight and we made a little bet. I remember that Billy liked Canzoneri, but I said, watch Ross belt him over—all right, I won't go into that—but he was in the place all night."

Mr. Cohen had had many occasions to offer his services thus for William, in his capacity of Business Agent for the Leather Workers' Union and Mutual Protective Benefit, was constantly subject to police persecution. For William was a soldier in the gallant, and profitable, struggle of protecting labor from the deprivations of capital. Unfortunately the members of his union were continually running to the police with the claim that they needed protection from William far more than from the oppression (Please turn to page 59)
What Has Gone Before:
Warren Lorrimer Exonerated by Death-Bed Confession
Governor Extends Full Pardon to Millionaire Sportsman Who Served Seven Years for Crime of Which He Was Innocent

IT seemed to Warren Lorrimer that he had lived the last few years in a state of complete mental fog. First, his unexpected release from prison after serving seven years for a crime of which he was innocent; then his meeting on the train with Lyman Bracker which had resulted in his introduction to the strange man that constituted the Tribunal; and finally the death of Greyfield Platt. It had all happened with a kaleidoscopic rapidity that had left him quite dazed and with a devastating sense of unreality.

Added to this was his meeting with Monica Greffer, the daughter of the man whom he held responsible for his imprisonment. His mind dwelt for some time on Monica and he found himself strangely moved. He saw her quite clearly—tall, graceful, alluring and markedly aloof. Yet, despite her aloofness, she had shown a definite interest in him and had made a determined effort to keep him from joining the Tribunal. He was unable to fathom her reason for this. Did she want him to keep free of these ruthless men, who stopped at nothing, for his own sake, or was it because she was afraid for her father? Did she think that backed by the Tribunal, he, Lorrimer, was in a better position to wreak vengeance on Norman Greffer than he would be single-handed? Warren Lorrimer frowned. The more he thought of it, the more his mental confusion increased. Now go on with the story:

Warren Lorrimer leaned back in his chair and looked about. This penthouse, which he had rented furnished, at least was real. This sunshine-flooded room was real. He was no longer hemmed in by gloomy walls; his door was no longer a set of steel bars; and the man who stood deferentially back of his chair was not a keeper but his servant, ready to do his slightest bidding. His name was Jablowski, or something like that, and it was he, himself, who had suggested to Lorrimer that he adopt some other, simpler name. Lorrimer had agreed and after a moment’s thought had said: “I’ll call you Warden.” It was the first time in many years that he had smiled.

The man came forward. “More coffee, sir?”
“No, I’ve finished,” said Lorrimer. “You may clear away, Warden.”

The man bowed and began to remove the breakfast dishes. He was only half finished when the sound of a buzzer interrupted him and took him to the door.
“A Mr. Bracker wishes to see you,” he came back and reported a minute later.

Warren Lorrimer started. “Show him in,” he said.
Lyman Bracker entered briskly. Lorrimer made a mental note to ask him some time for the name of his tailor. Despite his short dumpy figure his clothes fitted him beautifully. No one who saw him would ever have suspected that he had once been in prison, or would imagine that this ordinary, though prosperous looking individual, belonged to an association whose members stood ready to avenge their wrong at any cost.

“Good morning,” said Lyman Bracker. “Sorry to disturb you so early in the day, but a matter of importance has come up that requires our immediate attention. Freda Hayward goes to trial the day after tomorrow.”

Warren Lorrimer stared at him blankly. “Freda Hayward! Did you say Freda Hayward?”

“Freda Hayward,” Bracker explained, “is what is commonly known as a gangster’s moll. She is a pretty thing and originally played around with Eddie Coakley. Coakley is a racketeer of outstanding reputation. Unfortunately, Freda made the acquaintance of one ‘Red’ MacCracken and transferred her affections to him. Even before this there had been considerable feeling between Coakley and MacCracken. They were leaders of rival gangs, and prior to repeal MacCracken had muscled in on Coakley’s territory. Afterward they both went into the slot machine racket. The two men got to hating each other more than ever. When Freda Hayward deserted Coakley and went over to MacCracken, it was the last straw, and ‘Red’ MacCracken came to a sudden end. He was found with half a dozen bullet holes in his stomach. Freda, apparently, was the last person who had seen MacCracken alive. The police pulled her in and questioned her. There was some circumstantial evidence against her. For instance, the gun which had killed MacCracken was found in her possession. She and ‘Red’ had been out together on the night he was shot. They had just come out of a restaurant. It was raining and ‘Red’ had gone on ahead to find a taxi. Then she had heard the shots and had run to him. Her claim that she had found the gun beside the body and had picked it up with an idea of tracing it to its owner, was ridiculed by the police. Still they wouldn’t have had much of a case against her if it hadn’t been for Eddie Coakley, who came forward and swore that he had seen her shoot MacCracken. It was easy after that to invent a motive... to say that ‘Red’ was interested in another girl and that Freda had killed him because of jealousy.

“How does that concern us—the Tribunal?” Warren Lorrimer broke in stiffly.

Do You Want Serials in Mystery?
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Here is the second installment of the newest serial by one of your favorite authors. If you like it, say so; if you don’t like it, say so. The editors wish to publish the kind of magazine you like to read, and by giving you this excellent four-part story on which to cast your vote, we feel confident that the results will be an accurate gauge of Mystery readers’ tastes. What is your choice?
For a moment Lyman Bracker’s round, bulbous eyes rested thoughtfully on the other.

"It is part of our creed to prevent innocent people from being convicted. I, for my part, consider that more vital than avenging ourselves on those who sent us to prison. This girl isn't important, perhaps, but the principle involved is. Your old friend, Norman Greffer, who got his start by convicting you, is getting a lot of publicity out of this. The papers reek with the fearless prowess of District Attorney Greffer who has sworn to put an end to racketeering. He is going to send this girl to the chair or at least to prison for life. She's innocent! Do you want to stand by and not lift a finger—?"

"No," said Lorrimer dully. "On the other hand, I don't wish..." he stopped and stared intently at Lyman Bracker. "Was Greyfield Platt murdered by the Tribunal?"

Lyman Bracker turned away. When a minute later he again faced Lorrimer, his eyes were more vacuous than ever.

"Platt was a traitor," he said evasively. "It has been reported that he died of heart failure. Whether or not he was murdered needn’t be the cause of any worry to you. You certainly had no hand in it."

"I know I didn't," said Warren Lorrimer. "Just the same," he added obstinately, "I'm not with you when..."
you try to bring about justice by committing other injustices. I won’t be a party to indiscriminate murders.”

LYMAN BRACKER’S brows came together. For the first time since he had known him, Lorrimer saw him lose his temper.

“When you joined us, what did you think we were going to do to right the wrongs which we’d suffered—write letters to the newspapers? We don’t commit indiscriminate murders. We punish and we punish justly, and we save others from being the victims of injustice!”

Lorrimer shook his head doggedly. “I’ll resign,” he said. “I won’t be a party to proceedings of that kind.”

Lyman Bracker looked at him not unkindly.

“I know you resign to do anything . . . don’t do anything rash, Lorrimer . . . I like you and in time you’ll see things differently.”

Warren Lorrimer sat down heavily. His emotions were inextricably mixed. He could see the others’ point of view, but just as the same, he had a feeling of anger that they dared to threaten him. He was conscious of sympathy for the girl to be tried shortly for her life and possibly convicted unjustly, just as he had been. Yet the thought of saving her at the expense of committing other crimes, no matter how necessary, repelled him.

Monica Greffer had been right when she had warned him against joining the Tribunal, but she had come too late, at a time when, overwhelmed by the injustice he had suffered, he was prepared to do anything. He looked thoughtfully at Lyman Bracker. The man’s warning was not to be taken lightly. They had meted out grim, swift justice in the case of Greynfield Platt. He was in a trap. There was no doubt about it. He had no choice for the moment except to accede to their wishes. Perhaps his decision was influenced a little by the thought of Norman Greffer. He had moments when nothing that they could ever do to Greffer would seem too brutal, too horrible. Lorrimer’s eyes grew slightly veiled.

“Why have you come to see me?” he said.

“For two reasons,” Bracker answered. “There will be a meeting of the Tribunal tomorrow night. I will call for you in my car. The other is to tell you some things you’ve done and still have to do.”

“Things I’ve done?”

Lyman Bracker nodded brightly.

“You do not know it,” he said, “but you’ve bought and own the Three-Way Club. It’s not much of a club. It’s a hang-out for prosperous gangsters and racketeers. But you needn’t own it for long. We’ll only require it for a short time. Eddie Coakley is one of its best patrons. He visits it nightly. You’ve also bought a little private house on Bank Street, a few blocks from the Three-Way Club. And you’re the owner of five taxicabs.”

“A night club, a house, and five taxicabs!” Warren Lorrimer was staring at Bracker in bewilderment. “What have I bought them for?” he demanded. “And who paid for them?”

“You’ve bought them,” said the other, “because the Tribunal needs them to straighten out this matter of Freda Hayward. As to who paid for them, that brings me to the other reason for my visit. Everything was paid out of the Tribunal’s treasury. We are provided with ample funds. Still the drain on us is constant and considerable. We expect you to make an initial contribution of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. But take your time about it. We appreciate that just having come back, your affairs may be in a somewhat tangled condition. If it is a drain on you—”

“It will be no drain on me,” said Warren Lorrimer slowly. “My affairs are in excellent shape. My attorney has looked after them during—my absence.”

“That’s fine,” Lyman Bracker remarked. “Paul says we are going to need a great deal of money—a great deal.”

Lorrimer said nothing to that. Instead he referred back to the matter that Lyman Bracker had first brought up.

“As regards Freda Hayward, I suppose there’s no alternative except to—eliminate Eddie Coakley?”

“I’m afraid not,” Bracker declared firmly. He picked up his hat. “I’ll see you tomorrow,” he announced.

Lorrimer, alone, took stock of his complex position. He had been too impetuous; he should have investigated before he joined the Tribunal. Lyman Bracker had made it plain enough that they would not allow him, at least at this time, to withdraw. Perhaps it was because they wanted his financial support. If that were all, he would gladly give it to them, but even then he would be, in a sense, compromised and partly responsible for their acts. A wild idea flashed into his mind. He would go away, go abroad and live in some other country. But that might be worse than staying. There was no telling what crime they might commit and fasten on him; something that might result in his being extradited and brought back. Then, too, in a way he sympathized with the motives that actuated these men. They were human and altruistic. Their idea of saving this girl, Freda Hayward, who could mean nothing to them. . . . A night club! A house! And five taxicabs!

“Sit up, Eddie,” said the girl. “Sit up
His years of incarceration had, to an extent, dulled Warren Lorrimer's spirit but not his keen mind. He had a very clear notion why these had been bought in his name. He now appeared on the records as the owner and so he was definitely involved in whatever steps they took to do away with Eddie Coakley. Damn them! He'd shake himself free somehow.

He got up and went for his hat. There were some matters he wanted to discuss with his attorney, Ronald Graham.

RONALD GRAHAM was a short man of slight build with grayish, kindly eyes. His expression was constantly harried; there were so many people dependent on him, so many people who came to him to get them out of their difficulties.

He was delighted to see Warren Lorrimer. His eyes lit up as he clapped him on the back.

"You old buzzard," he said, "why didn't you let me come up and call for you when you were released?" Then his face clouded. "I've saved many a guilty man from going to prison and to think that I couldn't save you who were really innocent." He shook his head sadly.

Warren Lorrimer gripped his hand.

"You did the best you could," he said, "I never blamed you and I want to thank you for looking after my affairs while... I was away. Nobody could have done a better job. I appear to be richer by a million or so."

"Just luck," said Ronald Graham carelessly. "Anything special on your mind?"

"Nothing of importance," he said. "I want you to look up some people for me. Try and find out who they are. There's a man named Lyon Bracker—"

"I've heard of him," said Mr. Graham. "He's pretty well fixed and is a director of a dozen important corporations. He was once—" Then Ronald Graham stopped abruptly.

"He was once in prison, like myself," Lorrimer finished for him.

"You knew that, did you?"

Warren Lorrimer nodded. "Put these down," he said, "and have someone in your office look them up. He gave me the names of Lyon Bracker, Dr. Togler, Joe Anaropolus, Dennis O'Mara, and Morris Grender, which besides himself and Paul constituted the Tribunal. There was no use in giving him Paul's name. "I'll have them looked up," said Mr. Graham. "I can't do it myself. I've got a case coming up the day after tomorrow, a girl accused of murder. Perhaps you've read about it. Her name is Freda Hayward. There's been a lot of publicity. The man she's accused of murdering—'Red' MacCracken—was one of the most notorious racketeers in the country. There isn't a doubt in my mind but that she's innocent."

"Has she a chance?" Warren Lorrimer interrupted. Ronald Graham shook his head despondently.

"I'm afraid not. It's a shame. She's a nice little thing. Honest in her way, despite her unfortunate background. If it weren't for a rat by the name of Eddie Coakley, I could get her off easily enough, but he's prepared to swear that he saw her shoot MacCracken. I'm positive that he and his gang did the job themselves, and this is his way of getting even with the girl. She used to play around with him."

"I know," said Warren Lorrimer.

Mr. Graham looked up in surprise.

"You know?"

"I must be going," said Lorrimer hastily.

He had a curious sense of depression, a feeling of responsibility toward this girl whom he had never seen. The Tribunal—if Bracker had spoken the truth—had it in its power to save her. But at what price? Was it to be another cold-blooded murder? For how many details, he wondered, had they been responsible before he had become one of them?

Out in the street Warren Lorrimer stood for a minute irresolute. It was as though he were in the middle of a stream helplessly being carried along by a swift current. Things were happening that he couldn't understand. The situation was growing steadily more involved, his thoughts were muddled and he felt he must get them cleared up. Possibly the information he had asked Graham to get might help. He formed a swift resolution. Monica Greer—a she knew things. She had been prepared to give him information on the night (Please turn to page 87)
WHAT NEXT in

By PAMELA PINKERTON

Short hair prevails. Carefully dressed up and off the face it follows the graceful lines of the modern airplane and automobile, giving the effect of smartness, simplicity and intelligence.

HAIR styles follow the crowd. They've gone streamline, just like everything else, and are as much a reflection of present day conditions as the latest style in automobile or airplane.

Which means that they are strikingly modern, smart, significant. The new coiffure is designed for hard wear. But it has a look of tremendous freshness, lightness, airiness. It is simple to the point of plainness, but it is daintier than any complicated arrangement of curls ever devised.

Dumas, hairdresser, at the Savoy Plaza in New York, explained this new streamline tendency. The hair is short. It is up and off the face. It is up and off the neck. The hair line shows across the nape of the neck. The bun is gone. The outline of the head is followed. The whole movement is extreme—it is modern, it is intelligent.

But what must the poor girl do who likes a bit of length to her hair, we asked Dumas.

Ah, she must try to look in the mode. She must on no account wear a bun. She must have her hair arranged in a sort of chignon, flat from nape of neck to crown, so that the outline of the head is preserved. The line must be up, up—and off the face. Up and off. Smart, simple, intelligent.

So there you are. That's the news about hair. And from what we have seen of the new coiffures, it's good news. Good looking, at any rate. And becoming.

For there is no one, cut-and-dried style for everybody in this new coiffure. It is adapted to suit the face, the head. Wide, soft waves soften the severe outline. If the shape of the forehead demands it, a thin, slightly waved bang, still following closely the shape of the head, is arranged to make the coiffure more becoming but not a bit less smart.

The streamline mode of hair dressing demands immaculately kept hair. All modes of hair dressing do, for that matter. But there is so little artificiality about this one—the quality and condition of the hair have so much to do with its smartness. So it is regular trips to the hairdresser for the girl who wants to look her best, and the most careful attention to everything that keeps the hair soft and shining and lovely.

To have heavy hair is of no special advantage. Of course, your hair must not look skimp. But all the hairdressers stress the fact that it must be thinned out with regularity and with unsparing scissors if it is to take and keep the new lines satisfactorily. And that's another job that the hairdresser must do for you.

With the aid of all the lovely hair cosmetics—lotions and pomades, curlers and wavers and shampoo of one sort and another—a girl can do a pretty good job of keeping her hair neat. But she can't thin it out and she can't trim it, and she needs a professional wave now and again to train it in the way it should go.

Hair brushing has gone a bit out of vogue, perhaps. That is to say, women don't spend the hours and hours.
HAIR STYLES.

And here’s the streamline coiffure adapted to the face that looks best with more and softer waves and with a shadowing bang over the brow.

Paris, this season, sponsored a number of 1938 fashions, and with them came a modified 1890 method of doing the hair. There are little hats, tilting forward, that leave room for a soft mass of curls rather high at the back. These curls are not kinky, fuzzy curls. They are soft, somewhat flat, clinging closely to the outline of the head. They are entirely bewitching on certain girls, they and the demure little hats that go with them.

Something besides appearance is a great advantage in a coiffure. And that is the substantial quality that keeps it looking well.

That’s a point in favor of the new, simple arrangements. They wear well. The modern girl is busy, whether she works for a living or leads a life of so-called leisure. She hasn’t time to repair to her mirror every hour and “do” her hair over. She likes to hurry it into shape in the morning, confident that it will stay there all day—while she plays tennis or golf, takes dictation, goes to a committee meeting or a business conference, a bridge, or an after-office party. She can usually find time for a few corrective moments to devote to her appearance before the evening’s diversions set in. But not too many, even then. So the hair arrangement that depends for its effectiveness on good grooming and a sturdy line are all in favor, so far as she is concerned.

This good grooming matter applies in all matters of beauty, of course. And the well-groomed head is an incentive to keep the whole beauty ensemble in its most attractive state. The basis of modern make-up works down to a matter of good grooming, if you analyze it carefully. Rouge and lipstick and all the other cosmetics are used to make the face look as nearly in perfect condition as possible. They make a woman look attractive, alive, healthy. They make her a part of the smart world around her.

Clothes that are well pressed, immaculately clean, in smart style—well-groomed clothes that make frequent visits to cleaner and tailor and home dressing board—are part of the well-groomed picture. The new coiffure doesn’t look well unless clothes and features are all smartly well groomed.

Of course, in hair, shampooing is of first importance. For hair that is not fresh never lends itself well to any mode of hair dressing. And untidiness of hair is more apparent in this new mode than in others more ornate. There’s nothing to hide untidiness or lack of fastidiousness in the new streamline coiffure.
The Riddle of the Marble Blade

There were mingled smells of clay, rock dust, cooking and decay, at which Miss Withers wrinkled her nose. Piper closed the door behind them and cast his flash around the rudely furnished hall.

There was a stairway at the left: and a locked door directly ahead of them. "Let's see what's in here," Piper suggested. He tried another key, and then led the way down a long passage. The place still looked much like a house than anything else, in spite of the overalls and other rough clothing which hung here and there. And the young man made an abrupt turn to the right, and opened through a doorway into what at first seemed to be a starless and windowless outbuilding. From somewhere came a cool draft.

Piper cast his flash ahead, and Miss Withers scowled. It shone full in the face of a black and evil giant who was crouched as if ready to spring down upon them. A second glance told him that the muscle-bound giant was not of the giant was cut out of black stone, and eternally unable to move.

All around them loomed the vast, monotonous creatures which spoke of the old genius of Dravid, the sculptor. Some of them, like the black giant, were cut out of stone. Others, most of them in ghostly white marble, were finished and ready for exhibition. Farther on were smaller projects, some of them barely begun—models in clay and the like.

Walking softly, almost unwilling to speak loud, and looking with a fanatical interest and brooding figures, Miss Withers and the Inspector pushed farther and farther into the vast underground region.

Once Miss Withers paused to admire a fanciful interpretation marked with a brass placard—"The Fates," which consisted of four crouching female figures, composed in marble and draped in white drapery. A moment later the Inspector, stepping back suddenly from an uncanny likeness of Isadora Duncan, writhing beneath a thorn tree, lost his balance on a pile of rock chips and staggered into the outstretched arms of a vast and naked lady who leered back at him.

"Oh!" he gasped. Then, to Miss Withers, "I know, I almost said 'perfidious me'!

He raised his flash, and they both stared at the voluptuous, Junoesque figure—truly a caricature of desirable womanhood. Her robe had just slipped to her feet and her face wore an expression of inviolation, of evil knowledge—all in all, here was sculpture with all the clear cold hardness of marble, a woman perfect in her fleshliness.

"Isn't she something?" Piper remarked gloatingly. But Miss Withers was frowning.

"I'm Hussy!" she accused the marble figure. Then—"He must have known some woman—much too well," she analogized.

But they were not to spend the evening in admiration of the murdered sculptor's genius. From somewhere in the upper regions of the place sounded the shrill ringing of a telephone.

"Say—I'd like to answer that," Piper told her. "Maybe if we hurry . . . ."

The ram-buck past the Fates, past the Jesters at the black clock-case giant, and came into the little hall once more.

Here both stopped short, and Miss Withers, who was normally a person of calm and restrained temperament, gave her second squeal of the night.

"Coming toward us was the white marble woman which they had just left in the studio!"

She seemed smaller, and she was wearing a white negligee which heavily concealed her large, and Junoesque figure—but it was the same woman. Even now she had red lips, and walked smoothly.

She was not surprised to see them. "I am not directed by Dravid," she said. "If you're the detective, you're wanted on the phone!"

Piper gurgled a bit. "But—but my man said you hadn't come home!"

She pointed past them. "Perhaps your spies don't know of the studio entrance. It opens on another street," she explained. "I heard you come in the front door, and I'm sure I don't mind your knowing about. But I wish you'd have your telephone calls somewhere else. I've stood all I can today!"

Without a word, the Inspector followed her back down the hall, through the front entryway, and up the stairs. Miss Withers turned and took over her shoulder at the looming black giant, threw her dignity to the winds and scammed after them.

The telephone in here," said Gretchen Dravid, leading the way to a chaste and modernistic bedroom. She sprawled out on the bed, where she had been content to comfort herself with smelling salts, a gay-looking novel, and a bottle of wine.

He's the type of woman who never sits down," Miss Withers told herself. Piper was looking forlornly at the telephone.

"Lucky I left word where I was going," he remarked, "for this must be the last call of the night."

Gretchen had pointed out to him where the location of the phone, which was reached by lifting the silken skirts of the dress. She was French, and the Inspector looked somewhat abashed, but he finally got the instrument in his grip.

She spoke in French for a long while, after which he said "Yes" five times and "My God!" twice. Then he put down the phone and stared at Miss Withers with bewildered eyes.

"They've found the murderer?" Miss Withers prompted.

He shook his head. "It's Dee Bryan, the girl who unveiled the statue," he told her. "She's been kidnapped!"

At which, for no particular reason, Mrs. Dravid was hysterical again.

It was not until five that afternoon that Park Commissioner Bryan was able to leave the grounds of Central Park. Miss Deirdre Bryan had waited, in spite of his efforts to make her leave earlier.

"It's a terrible thing for a girl your age," old Mike had told her.

"It's the most thrilling thing that ever happened to me," Dee replied, grinning.

"And if you make me go home I'll disown you. Dee had stayed, all through the fruitless questioning of the crowd, the preliminary examination by Dr. Bloom, and the removal of the body.

And not until then, she drove her father along the boulevard in a smart new Packard roadster. They came out of Fifth Avenue, and headed downtown.

"I've got to phone my office," Bryan told her. "Pull up here a moment, and have a cigarette."

Dee was surprised at this, which was a breach of discipline. "Your driving shows that you need a sedative," her father told her. He gave her a cigarette, and then headed down 50th Street to where a Childs' galleon was moored.

Bryan was barely in the phone booth when Dee caught a glimpse of the young woman. She was wearing a white negligee, and Dee Bryan had no thoughts for such minor matters.

The young man who was hurrying away into the twilight was either a clairvoyant—or a murderer! And Dee Bryan was going to find out which.

Tense as a steel spring, eager as a cat at a mouse-hole, Dee trailed her.

(To turn page 49)
The symptoms of appendicitis vary. Almost always, continued pain and tenderness in the abdomen are the first indications of an acutely inflamed appendix. Of course, not all intestinal aches are caused by appendicitis, but anyone who has continued, unrelieved abdominal pain, especially if it is accompanied by nausea or vomiting, needs competent medical attention at the earliest possible moment and not self-medication.

If it is appendicitis the use of a laxative is dangerous. It stimulates violent intestinal action and may spread the inflammation, cause the appendix to rupture, or induce peritonitis. Moreover, the sufferer should not be given food, drugs or medicine of any kind unless prescribed by the attending physician.

Send for your doctor immediately if there is any suspicion of appendicitis. In making his diagnosis he may find it necessary to make one or more blood cell counts or to observe your temperature for a few hours, keeping you quietly in bed under close observation.

Your doctor may decide that the attack does not clearly denote appendicitis and can be relieved without an operation. But if it is a clear case of acute appendicitis, he will probably recommend an operation within the shortest possible time.

Performed by an expert surgeon, early in the attack, before the appendix has burst or peritonitis has begun, an operation for acute appendicitis should cause little concern.
The Riddle of the Marble Blade

quarry. He stopped and looked cautiously around, but he descended the stairs to the BMT subway station at the corner of the park, but Dee was actress enough to feign black legs and black shoes. There was not a thought in her head except a desire for tea at Rumpelmersh. Suddenly she went out of sight, she doubled back and slipped down the farther stair. A southbound train swung past and stopped noisily. She saw a man walking, then slipped into the middle door, and she managed to slip to the end door of the same car.

He leaned against a pillar, though there were many seats. Dee cowered between a fat woman and a couple of stenographers and picked up a discarded extra which shrieked of "The Statue Murder." Casualy she turned to the sports page, now and then peering over at the top as she was reading. He was not over thirty, she decided, in rumpled clothing of excellent cut, he looked lost, appealing, and exceedingly soft. She stared out of the window, liking the reckless ugliness of the subway cavern which flashed past. At 42nd Street he suddenly left the car, and she almost had to tread on his heels to get out before the door closed. But he did not look back.

"I wonder if I have the nerve to ask him?" Dee breathed. But he was already hurrying up the stairs. At the head of the stairs was the Mint turnstiles. Luckily she got another nickel, and got through in time to see him go down the downtown stair of the other subway.

Here the platform was crowded with homeward bound office workers. Dee saw the bearded young man buy a tabloid and stuff it into his pocket. Then he moved along.

Dee, standing at the express side of the platform, but as a local train pulled in he turned suddenly and slipped through a closing door. For a moment the man cast a triumphant backward glance at her, and then she realized that if her suspicions were right she was following him again, from not her, but from everybody.

She managed to get her arm in the door of the last car, and the automatic release flung it open long enough for her to crowd inside. The man with the beard was two cars ahead, and there was too much of a crowd for her to force her way forward even if she had dared to risk being recognized. But she thought of another idea. There was room on the rear platform, and she paid no attention to the signs forbidding passengers waiting there. Shoving the door open, she took her stand at the gate, where she could see the open one if the bored guard got out on the platform.

Penn Station... 28th Street... 23rd... 18th... 14th... slowly the train grew full. But the guard did not open it, and still no sign of the man with the beard. Sheridan Square came next, the corner of the Village. And this was another blank. The train started forward with a jerk, and then she saw him!

The young man with the beard and the hunted eyes had concealed himself behind a pillar on the platform. Now he was hurrying toward the stairs which led down. He knew, then! Yet he was not looking toward Dee. "It must be the police he fears," she told herself. "Where is it now?" she asked herself. Yet Dee's Irish was up. She had followed him this far, and she was going to trace him today. She was in the middle door, and she managed to slip to the end door of the same car.

Climbing up on the gate, she balanced herself a moment and then swung herself forward from the rapidly accelerating train. She landed sprawling, overturned a tin container full of old newspapers, and then rose direct to her feet. The train roared into the tunnel. "Me and Tarzan!" said Dee Bryan proudly. And then, as the straggling crowd stared open-mouthed, she ran briskly past them and up the stairs. That quarrelly was in sight, walking down the west section of the North River, "Now to see where you live," Dee remarked, without triumph, "and see some woman call to daddy and the cops..."

He went on, with Dee keeping as close behind as she dared—one block, two, three... and yet another. They were coming into an odorous and unsavory region, the borderland of the Hudson waterfront. On the other side Dee's hair roared deeply.

The man with the beard hurried past a building where Dee caught a glimpse of a man with a brand new Dravid. There was a lounger across the street, but Dee did not realize the significance of his hump-toddled shoes. To her all the policemen were bright cheerful brass buttons and carried nightsticks.

Around the corner and along a side street went the bearded man—and then suddenly he disappeared into thin air.

Dee stopped, stared all around and up into the sky, but there was no sign of him.

She went ahead softly, and then she saw the door was almost large enough to permit the passage of a truck, and it was open. Everything would have been different if the door was closed. But it was open, suggesting untold possibilities.

Dee bolstered up her courage and walked briskly past the door. Nothing happened. Yet the man she had pursued must have gone through that door! If she could only be sure!... It seemed so easy to her—just a peek at the door. After all, this was not New York City, was it? She turned and rang for a taxi at the corner, and some children were nosily playing cards on a nearby step. At an open door didn't look like a closed one. It's so easy just to take a step inside, and as long as the door is open, a person can turn around and come right through. Dee took a deep breath, and peeked in at the door. In the murky twilight she caught a glimpse of looming marble—nothing out of the ordinary, but Dee recognized it as the studio.

"Drawn in unsophisticated wonder by the mystery of the mighty stone images, she took a step inside... and then another."

She knew that it was madness as soon as she heard the soft closing of the great door behind her. She turned, and her red mouth opened in a silent scream as the darkness engulfed her, rising like water over her head. . . .

"W hat are you going to do?" demanded Miss Withers.

"Blanked if I know," admitted the Inspector. "But I've got to drop this murder case and do what I can on the other. Can you think how long it'll be before we find her? I suppose the Federal detectives will be hornying in any minute.

"Fiddlesticks," Miss Withers came back. "Can't you see? The kidnapping of that girl is part of your murder case. You can't do anything until you find something or see something..."

"What?" demanded Piper, not with any reason. Miss Withers admitted that she didn't know. "But while Miss Dee Bryan was holding that rope at the waterfront, she must have involved herself somehow...

"But what could she see that a thousand others didn't see?"

Miss Withers shrugged. "If I'd been there, I could tell you, no doubt. Saving that, I'll have a talk with an eye-witness. Can you suggest anybody?"

"The Mayor—but he's hard to reach. His father—but the Commissioner is so upset at losing his daughter he can't think straight. Says he left her in her roadster and came back five minutes later to find her wiped off the face of the earth.

Miss Withers shook her head. "No, I don't want to talk to any of the official personages involved. You don't happen to know any newspapermen who were there? They usually see what's to be seen. . . ."

She was suddenly cut short by a bellow from the Inspector, who turned and burst back into Gretchen Dravid's bedroom. "Reddy, you and the telephone from beneath the skirts of the French doll, and barked a number. In a moment he was back, jubilant. "It's all fixed," he said. "You've got you an eye-witness that is an eye-witness. Just wait!"

As Gretchen Dravid, widow of the sculptor, watched with wide and slightly bleary eyes, the two oddly matched sleuths went scurrying out of the studio and into the street, where a taxicab was noisily summoned. Fifteen minutes later Miss Withers was hustled into the Times Square offices of the Paradox News Service. She was whisked to an upper floor, elbowed into a pitch-dark room which seemed to be well provided with leather chairs, and after a brief delay the Inspector joined her.

"Just out of the drying racks," said a voice somewhere above and behind them. "No cutting done yet, but here goes. . . ."

The green and white square appeared before them, and a moment later the projection machine cast upon the screen a flickering picture of a public traffic signal. With a start Miss Withers recognized the Mayor, who was beginning his speech—and beyond him, a dark-haired girl nearby who clutched the release cord. Everywhere else (Please turn to page 50)
Seven Years Apart—
Yet Both have Skin equally Young

Beautiful Vanderbilts examined
by Dermatologist for Skin Age
... both get 20-Year-Old Rating

Miss Reginald Vanderbilt
famed for her brunette beauty. Her skin was rated by the dermatologist as being practically the same as it was eight years ago. Mrs. Vanderbilt says: "The thorough cleansing Pond's Cold Cream gives keeps my skin clear—fine-pored—seems to wipe away tired lines."

Miss Frederick Vanderbilt McKittrick
is an enchanting young blonde with a skin expeditiously fair. The dermatologist declares it to be "a perfect skin of twenty." She says: "I've never had a coarse pore, blackhead, or blemish. I'm sure this is due to Pond's Cold Cream."

YOUNG skin is firm and fine of texture—its color clear—glowing—radiant.
OLD skin is loose, lined, crêpy—its texture is thick and coarse—its color dull—sallow—dark.

These conditions, dermatologists report, are due to loss of tone—impaired vasomotor circulation—failure of glands to produce youth-sustaining oils.

When the two charming Vanderbilts, pictured above, were examined by a dermatologist, their rating was the same. In actual age, they are seven years apart.

Both of these two noted society beauties are faithful users of Pond's Cold Cream. Could there be more convincing proof that this cream actually keeps the skin young—the young skin at the height of its loveliness?

Cleanse your skin with Pond's Cold Cream every night. Pat it in briskly. It will sink into the pores—float away impurities that linger there. And every morning freshen your skin with this fragrant luxurious cream.

Then your skin will look alluringly young—clear—silken. Powder and make-up will smooth on evenly and lastingly.

NEW quick-melting cream
Pond's now makes a liquefying cream. It melts instantly on the skin. It contains the same specially processed oils for which Pond's Cold Cream is famous.

Send coupon for a 3-days' supply of Pond's Cold Cream, 3 other Pond's effective beauty aids and powder.

Pond's Extract Company, Dept. 1, 48 Hudson Street, New York City. . . . I enclose $0.50 to cover postage and packing for a 3 days' supply of Pond's Cold Cream with samples of 3 other Pond's beauty aids. I prefer three different Light shades of powder. I prefer three different Dark shades.

CORRECTS SKIN FAULTS USUAL in the 20's

- Roughness
- Blackheads and large pores
- Dryness
- Sensitive skin
- Little defects

FIGHTS OFF AGE SIGNS USUAL after 30

- Crepe skin
- Worry lines
- Sallowness
- Sagging tissues
- Discolorations

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
The Riddle of the Marble Blade

(Continued from page 48)

there were people crowding up against the statue, one a line of heads before and below the camera . . . in the background were the trees of Central Park and, to one side, the spires of Manhattan.

Miss Withers and the Inspector listened to the Mayor's speech; they noted the last minute bustling of the master of ceremonies and saw, but could not hear, his hurried change of tone, the late Commissioner and to his daughter.

They watched, spell-bound, while Dee Bryant nodded to show that she understood them. Then his glance right at the camera and then up at the muffled statue.

THEY heard the Mayor make his clever recovery of the climax of his speech, and heard him read again the telegram "from Manuel Dravid . . . expressing his regrets at not being able to attend the unveiling.

"That was a thorough lie of His Honor," said Piper. "You got to hand it to him." Miss Withers did not answer. She was looking at the blue eyes at the white, glaring screen. If there was a detail she missed, it must have been invisible.

Directly before the camera, and somewhat out of focus, she could see the back of Gretchen Dravid's head. That head and the fall of neck and shoulders, were unforgetable . . . The Mayor was winding up his speech now. But Dravid still was calmly staring straight ahead.

At that moment Miss Withers realized that the woman could not, by any possible chance, have had the slightest premonition of what hidden thing lay beneath the covered statue.

Yet Dee Bryant, the lovely black-haired coleen who held the rope, was staring in the direction of the Dravid woman with an expression of incredible joy on her face. She began to tug at the rope . . .

"Stop it!" shouted Miss Withers. As she spoke, the glowing figures on the screen were frozen into immobility.

"She isn't looking at Mrs. Dravid!" Miss Withers told the Inspector excitedly. "She was staring at the man beside the Dravid woman—the hatless young man with the rumpled coat!"

Only the back of his head and his ears could be seen, and those none too clearly because the camera had been focussed some distance farther off. But even now, it was clear enough that he was staring up at the statue as if he hoped the thing to rise over and crush him beneath its weight—cringing away a little—

"And that, declared Miss Withers, as the screen became alive again, "is what Miss Bryant happened to see."

She watched the end of the film—saw the canvas fall from the statue, and disclose the fearful crumpled burden which grotesquely was held in the arms of Washington Square.

"You're wrong, Oscar," said Miss Withers softly. "The answer to this puzzle is Where? Where!"

"You mean the setting for the murder? But maybe Dravid was killed somewhere else, and brought to the statue, did you not. But why, unless—because the blood was on the marble."

Bodies don't bleed after death, so Dravid was killed while climbing on his own statue. But I don't see . . ."

"You will," Miss Withers told him. "The film did show that before they both saw the young man who had stood beside Gretchen Dravid as he turned round his own statue—"and not before they both saw that he wore a soft brown beard!"

They came out of the projection room, and spoke to the man official who had arranged for the preview.

"I hope that we'll get permission to release the film tomorrow," the man said; "we've got the biggest scoop since we caught the death plunge of those men from the Mecon. . . ."

The Inspector said that he had to call his office. Miss Withers suggested another telephone call that he might make.

"But that was only a graceful way out for the Mayor," said Piper. began. "He didn't really have any telegram from Dravid."

"Ask him, anyway," Miss Withers insisted. He hurried away to the telephone, and for the first time that day the schoolmaster threw away his opportunity to study the marble fragments which she had lurged around with so much difficulty. They were like working a jigsaw puzzle, one of her minor vices, and by the time the Inspector returned she was surveying her results with considerable triumph.

THERE was a little table in the waiting room of the railroad official's house. Upon this table Miss Hildegarde Withers had spread out her bits of rock. The Inspector stared at them. "Well—whatever have you got there?"

"The weapon," she told him. "Weapon! But I just talked to Doc Bloom. Dravid was killed by being stabbed with a marble blade, which Bloom just took out of his neck. A nasty weapon, too."

"Exactly," Miss Withers nodded in agreement. "And that blade fitted right on the end of this!" She pointed to her hand with a few gaps representing a stone hammer and a stone sickle with the end of the blade missing.

"What is this druidic ritual?" asked the Inspector, "the burst of glass, the lights of Times Square. Miss Withers told him, with a voice which sounded weary. "In that case, we can forget the boxes," said Piper reasonably. There was a police signal box on the corner, and he unlocked it and spoke into the mouthpiece. "Emergency, and I mean emergency," he said.

THEN they climbed into a taxi, but before it had gone two blocks, there was a shout of excitement from the direction of Greenwich Village, the wall of squad car sirens sounding behind them, and the Inspector raced through town like Admiral Byrd returning from the Antarctic, only much faster. There was no deluge of ticker tape and serenades and yelling squalls of rain made up for that. The sirens were still as they raced down the avenue and came to a stop outside the door of the Mayor's mansion. Miss Withers made for the door.

When the Inspector caught her arm, and pointed out a light in an upper window. It was the widow's bedroom.

"I know," Miss Withers came back. (Please turn to page 52)
Tintex

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Men's Shirts - Blouses - Children's Clothes
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The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
"She doesn't matter, though. I suppose she was really the cause of the whole thing. But women like her make their own hell on earth, given time enough. You'll never get anything on her. But come on—unlock the door or break it in. I want to see the fourteen Bryan girl—or what's left of her!"

They raced down the long hallway, and came at last into the high-vaulted studio with its gray loom and figures. Even a hard-boiled copper might well wince as his flashligh struck the grimacing face of the black, crouching giant, or the tortured figure of Judas in the thorn tree. But it was before the statue group labelled "The Fates" that Miss Withers paused.

"I'll be something!" gasped Piper.

"There were only three figures, after all."

"There are only three," Miss Withers corrected. "Which means that we are too late!"

Then he felt a draft across her ankles—just as she had done on their other visit to this world of the stone figures, they were on the faint sound of a closing door.

"Quick!" she gasped. "There's another way out of here—find the door!"

The police and firemen were making a terrific screech of brakes, and Miss Withers shut her eyes.

But she opened them again—for the fugitive firemen were skidding awkwardly halfway through the railing, with its front wheels spinning in thin air.

The beastly young driver stood up suddenly, his face a mask of defiance and desperation. Then he turned and dived over the side of the car—down, down, down.

"Best thing he could have done," the Inspector was saying, as his men worked the car away and hauled back from its perilous position. "With two murders on his conscience. . . ."

Deft hands were unwrapping the cleverly draped sheets which had given the soft young form of Deirdre Bryan the semblance of a draped marble statue. Then someone yelled, a shrill exclamation of amazement and glory.

"She's breathing!"

And so she was. "You can't kill the Irish with one whack on the back of the head," Piper told Miss Withers reprovingly. "Your big fellow has borne Dee Bryan away. "She's been knocked cold for two hours or more, but the doctor says she'll be right as rain in a couple of days."

"It'll teach her not to follow murderers home," Miss Withers agreed. "Well, Oscar, it wasn't as bad a tangle as I feared."

"Bad enough so I'm still entangled," he returned. "I catch on that Owens killed his own boy, but why?"

Miss Withers didn't try to tell him until they were in a nearby Coffee Pot. Then she showed him the rock samples on the counter. "You didn't study these sufficiently. Oscar."

"Study them? Just broken pieces of some statue?"

Miss Withers rearranged the roughly assembled fragments, so that the head of the hammer was inside the curve of the sickle. "Does this mean anything more to you?"

"Huh? No—why, yeah! That's the symbol or whatever you call it of the Young Communist party. Only the other day there was newsreel footage because one of the CWA mural artists tried to slip it into the design of a wall painting I was doing for the new building on Ellis Island!"

Miss Withers nodded, in triumph. "Right! Well, Dravid was trying to perform the same sort of practical joke on the city—by slipping a marble sickle and hammer into the hand of his own statue of George Washington! It would be great publicity, too, on account of the newsreels and the Mayor's speech. But he couldn't risk being there, so he sent a wire begging off, and then sneaked up to the park last night with his assistant to help him. It was no easy job to get those extra pieces of carved marble into the outstretched hand of the statue. . . ."

"And Owen, being patriotic and all that, hit him in the neck with the sickle? And then just walked off and left the body there under the canvas? Piper looked dubious.

You told me that this part of the case was the location of the murderer, and not the weapon. Why was Dravid stabbed while mounted on his own statue? And why was making a last minute change?"

Miss Withers took a large bite of ham and egg. "But I wonder about the motive, Oscar. Perhaps young Owen thought he was being a patriot when he seized the opportunity and killed Dravid. A little overemphasis on the patriotism, perhaps. But my own idea is that his motive was that big white woman who was married to Dravid. Remember the statue that her husband made of her? It was a terrible revelation of her true nature and I'm very much afraid that, whether Owen admitted it to himself or not, that woman was really the reason why it happened that a great surge of hatred swept over him when he was alone with Dravid at the statue last night."

JEALOUSLY causing a rush of righteousness to the head, eh? When it was really only a rather silly practical joke that Dravid has made on the city."

The Inspector finished his coffee, reached for a toothpick, and then tossed it away under Miss Withers' disapproving stare. "Seems a lot of shooting over small potatoes, to me."

The school-teacher agreed. "The only lucky one is Miss Dee Bryan," she pointed out. "When that inquisitive and charming Miss gets out of the hospital shell I've heard the story of having been fourth among the Three Fates!"

"She won't remember much, she was out cold all the time. Doesn't Piper. Miss Withers' blue eyes twinkled. "I have an idea that, being Irish, Dee Bryan will have a grand housing story to tell all the relatives—one that will get better as she grows older."

And again Miss Withers was right.

In next month's MYSTERY

"THE RIDDLE OF THE THREE OWLS"

By Katherine Wolfe

Another new, thrilling, complete novel

52

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
Loveliness is no longer Expensive!

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Purity and quality... these are the two essentials in beauty aids. Your skin loveliness depends on them. That is why you should use nothing but the very finest. And now... science has produced in Faoen Beauty Aids superlative purity and quality... at a fraction of the price women used to pay for de luxe beauty aids. Read the report of a famous research laboratory:

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10¢ each at F. W. Woolworth Co. Stores

The Mystery Magazine, November, 1934
The Lisping Man

(Continued from page 27)

actually. All he had to do was turn the door knob and step out.”

“Good Lord!” I said. “Then why didn’t he do it? Do you mean—he didn’t know he was alive?”

The detective shrugged. “He could easily have ascertained.” He drummed his fingers on the chairback. “At any rate, he died a very ugly death, it would appear. Suffocation isn’t pleasant, I imagine. We must be certain, however, that he really suffocated.”

There was a soft step behind us; then Joe, the China boy, was standing at our side.

“Sorry,” he said apologetically. “Who killed?”

JIMMIE LAVENDER clamped his hand on the shoulder. “We don’t know yet, Joe,” he answered. “Mr. Gilruth— he pointed at me—thinks he killed himself.”

The Chinese shook his head. “Darn him!” he said, with complete courtesy. “You find out what he killed himself with?” answered Lavender.

“Yep, I’m going to find out.” He caught the servant by an arm as he walked away. “Look here, Joe, who was with Mr. Cartwright, last night, before he went away?”

“A lady,” answered Joe, with steady eyes. “Miss Cartwright going to mangle her.”

“Ah!” said Jimmie Lavender. “Miss Proctor?”

“Miss Proctor,” said the China boy. “What time was that?”

“Ten o’clock, you go away.”

“Tell me Mr. Cartwright with her?”

“Only downstairs. When he come back, he tell me, ‘That is all!’ I go to mangle his head.”

“The deuce you did! A little late for the pictures, wasn’t it? Well, have it your way! You sleep here on the premises? I mean, in this house?”

“In back.”

“The back room, you mean? Was Mr. Cartwright here when you went home?”

“Mr. Cartwright gone away.”

“Me, too. Thank you very much! That’s all!”

The servant vanished from the room, and the detective turned to me.

“Very clear now, isn’t it, Gilly,” he chided me. “You think so.”

“If Cartwright had a quarrel with Miss Proctor about Penfield,” I began, “our case—”

“It’s strengthened,” finished Lavender. “Well, Gilly, I think there was a quarrel.”

“Well, then Joe can tell us all about it,” I protested. “Let’s call him back and ask him.”

Joe shrugged and shook his head. “Joe away—may not be telling us the truth. He may or may not have heard them quarreling. I prefer to ask Miss Harriet Proctor herself.”

As we talked, I had a momentary glimpse of Joe, the China boy, furtively listening in another room, almost pretending to be doing something else.

Lavender also saw him. “Hey, Joe!” he cried. “You still want to help us. The police are coming soon. They want you to identify the body.”

“All right,” said Joe, and went to get his clothes.

“You won’t need that,” said Lavender. “We’re only going up to Mr. Penfield’s penthouse.”

If he expected an explanation of surprise, he was disappointed. Joe laid his hat upon a table, without emotion, and indicated that he was ready to accompany us.

In the Penfield living-room, the collector was talking with a young physician. The doctor, too, had vanished. Mrs. Penfield, the doctor told us, had had a serious shock and was not to be disturbed.

“You’ll catch the devil from the coroner and the police for removing Cartwright’s body,” Lavender observed. “You should have left it where it was.”

The young physician flushed. “I hope not,” he replied. Mr. Penfield thought there was a possibility that life remained. It was impossible to try the restoration exercises in the corridor. I’ve sent for the pulmotor squad, although I’m certain it’s quite hopeless.”

“I’m afraid so,” agreed Lavender. “However, I’m glad you’ve notified the police. It was imperative, and I was going to suggest it. How long would you say the fellow was in that closet, Doctor?”

“I can only venture an opinion. Suffocation to some extent depends on the strength of the heart; and naturally, in a case like this, on the depth of the closet. I’m afraid his oxygen was practically gone in a short time.”

“Six hours, perhaps?”

“I should be inclined to think so. Certainly he would have been dead in twelve.”

“But you can give a certificate,” Doctor, clapped Penfield. “It was accidental, was it not? Whatever you may have been up to, I knew the man! In the circumstances, I am willing to forget the,—the—vandalism.”

The physician shook his head. “I’m afraid an inquest must be held,” he replied, with a certain asperity; and Lavender heartily agreed.

“To what do you attribute Cartwright’s vandalism?” asked the detective, observing Miss Proctor. “He’s a bit of a fiend!”

“God knows!” the collector was somewhat distracted. “Perhaps jealousy—perhaps the man may have heard her talk so much about me—and the collection—and the vases,—oh, damn it, I don’t know! Motives are always so dreadfully obscure!”

“At any rate, I’ll see Miss Proctor,” said Lavender. “Her opinion of the motivation may be interesting.”

“I won’t permit it,” snapped the collector. “It’s absurd! There’s no need to drag her into this.”

“Shocked Cartwright last night, before this happened,” said Jimmie Lavender. “I think they quarreled.”

“What if she was? What if they did?” Penfield’s eyes fell for the first time, consciously, on the China boy. “What’s this boy doing here?” he asked.

“It occurred to me that the police would want to question him,” said Lavender. “He’s Cartwright’s valet.”

“Knows better Penfield vell well,” contributed the China boy, as if he were acknowledging an introduction.

“It’s ridiculous,” said Penfield irritably. “Better a hundred and any will continued with greater courtesy. ‘The truth is, of course, Mr. Lavender, I’ve dragged you into this without quite realizing where it was going to lead. Naturally, I didn’t dream that Cartwright was the man who smashed my vases. In a way, he’s somewhat of a friend of mine, not by entanglement, at any rate. The fact is, I’m willing to let the whole thing drop.”

“Too late for that, I’m afraid,” said Jimmie Lavender. “You may drop me, of course, at your convenience; but there is a small family of your cronies, and the police are now entering the case.” An authoritative knock sounded on the door panel at the far end of the room. Jimmie Penfield jumped. “They are, in fact, outside the door,” concluded the detective, gently.

CLENDENNING CARTWRIGHT was, of course, quite dead. The efforts of the police pulmotor squad had been useless. Lavender had had no doubt from the beginning—nor, probably, had the young physician—watching his victim’s hideous, lifeless, and horrible thing that had been Cartwright, until the terrible task was over. The vaulted living-room, where still lay the shattered fragments of the mediaeval vases, a bulky police officer, with Jimmie Lavender, and asked a question:

“What the hell do you make of it, Jimmie?”

“I’m very puzzling,” admitted Lavender, not quite truthfully.

Lieutenant Andrew Clyde was awed by the surroundings. “It’s perfectly crazy,” he exploded, with a gesture that embraced the whole fantastic menage. The splendor of the place annoyed him. He resented it, without knowing precisely why.

“Well,” said Lavender, “whatever may be back of it, Lieutenant, there’s little doubt that the ‘guilty’ man—if there was any guilty man—was Cartwright, and that he is now dead. Do you agree?”

“I’m not so sure,” growled Clyde. “Suppose this Penfield’s whole story is true. I mean with you and his wife, protecting him by sticking to it. There’s one thing you can’t get by—the fellow wasn’t locked in! You pointed that out yourself. But he didn’t come out? I’ll tell you why! Because he was already dead when Penfeld stuck him in there!”

But he looked at Lavender as if he didn’t really believe it.

“Well,” he snapped, “how about it?”

Lavender laughed. “This is your case, Lieutenant,” he protested. “I understand your point of view. There’s been too be an autopoly. Why not wait until it’s over? If you find poison in Cartwright, or any other indication of murder, I’ll cheerfully accept the blame. But where’s the ruby?”

“But where’s the ruby?” continued the lieutenant. “It isn’t on the body. Has Penfeld had a chance to go through this Cartwright’s pockets?”

“Oh, yes! Plenty!”

“Then he’s got it?”

“Why should we have. I honestly don’t think so.”

Clyde snorted and puffed to his feet. “If it shows a shot from Shotty, Jimmie, I’d think you were double-crossing me,” he said, and stamped out of the room. Joe, the China boy, following de——

(See page 56.)
Have you tried this New Powder?
that makes skin so Clear, Transparent!

Send for your 3 shades—
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Here’s a new face powder that contains the actual tints in beautiful skin!

Have you ever noticed how some powders will make your skin look dull, gray? Or dark? Or sallow?

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The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
The Lisping Man

The door closed softly behind the Chinese servant; and again I looked at Lavender. But somehow I did not have to ask the doctor who interrupted. He came in hurriedly from the garden and dropped into a chair.

"They're gone, he said.

"Yes, the police are gone," said Lavender. "But they'll probably be on the alert and a lot of trouble. It's quite a nasty mess. I know the truth about it, Mr. Penfield. Let's get it straight. After all, it was between us, before Lieutenant Clyde arrested you on a charge of murder.

It was a harrowing session for Penfield.

"I have been employed by you to solve this mystery," said Jimmie Lavender. "And I am ready to submit my report."

He lighted a cigarette and leaned back in his chair. In a back room, beyond the garden, a dead man lay silent upon a fourteen-century bed, not far from where a woman tossed and mumbled.

There was an intolerable pause.

"To begin with, Mrs. Penfield lied," said Jimmie Lavender.

"I knew that Cartwright had pre-meditated murder, and I knew why. His instinct told him there was likely to be trouble. He knew that Cartwright and his Miss Proctor were after the Buddha's belly. So when I came back, from whatever picture it was he didn't go to, and found his master missing, he was worried. I think he liked Miss Proctor, and was afraid that she had followed Cartwright up here after she was supposed to have gone somewhere else. He had to use the fire escape, of course. He wouldn't come the front way, and the front elevator would have been too noisy. He says there was no one else; but in point of fact Cartwright was here—only poor Joe didn't know it!"

"You mean—?"

"Yes, Cartwright was in the closet, suffocating. It's horrible to think of it, with help so close at hand. But it's the only solution that will fit the curious situation."

"What is the truth?" I asked, and looked him in the eye.

He put up his hand to stop me.

"Easy, Jimmie," he said to the lieutenant, who was coming back. The doctor, too. I'll be glad to see the last of both of them.

The police officer approached, snarling conversation."

"I'm off, Jimmie," he snapped. "Mrs. Penfield is still muttering, and they're going to get a nurse. God knows when we can get a word with her. We've got Penfield's story, anyway—whatever it is! The coroner will be here shortly. I'm glad you're on the job. If anything develops, let me know."

He tramped out of the place, followed by his men, and shortly afterward the doctor also went away. Penfield was with his life.

"I go away now," said Joe, the Chinese boy, with sudden alacrity. He ambled into the room and stood beside us, looking at Lavender inquiringly.

"All right," said Lavender. "Go on.""

"Solly," said the Chinese boy. There was something else upon his mind, it seemed. It came out. "Much thanks!" he finished.

"Don't mention it," said Lavender. And he added significantly: "To anybody!"

(Continued from page 54)
LAST CALL!

LAST CHANCE!

for reader-letters telling us of your most enjoyable shopping experiences in

DEPARTMENT STORES

To Win Your Share of

$1000 IN CASH

HERE’S WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT

If you really want to help friendly helpful selling, you can do your favorite department store salesperson a good turn in the next two weeks by sending his or her name to Tower Magazines on the official ballot at the right. Receipt in our office of five ballots entitles the salesperson to membership in the 1934 Retail Sales Honor Roll. The ten best letters received here from members of the Retail Honor Roll will be rewarded with a trip to New York.

HERE’S WHAT YOU DO

Write us a letter at the same time telling of some helpful selling service this favorite clerk has given you. It may have been help in the selection of towels...a rug... a refrigerator. Fill out the ballot at the right... include the letter. Send it on. You may win one of the 82 cash prizes listed. (Entries may be used by the publisher in any manner desired and will not be returned. Duplicate awards in case of tie. Decision of judges final. Tower employees and families excluded. One statement per person.) Write it today. Send to Shopping Editor, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City, N.Y.

OCTOBER 15TH IS THE LAST DATE • DON’T FORGET!

TOWER
MAGAZINES, INC.

HOME • MYSTERY • SERENADE
TOWER RADIO • NEW MOVIE

MAIL THIS OFFICIAL BALLOT TO
SHOPPING EDITOR, TOWER MAGAZINES,
55 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

Write, clearly, in this space, name of your most helpful Retail Store Salesman or Saleswoman, together with name of store in which he or she is employed. Mail this official ballot (or facsimile) completely filled, to Shopping Editor, TOWER MAGAZINES, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

(Store Salesperson’s Name) (Man?) (Woman?) WHICH

(Name of Store in which employed) (Department of Store)

(Address of Store)

(Check which Contest) (Grocery Store?) (Dept. Store?)

(Your Name) (Married?) (Single?) WHICH

(Your Address—Street, City, State)

(No. of children in your family) (Occupation of head of family)

Do you OWN?...or RENT?... (apartment?)... (house?)... CHECK WHICH

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
Here are a few DON'TS about laxatives!

Don't take a laxative that is too strong—that shocks the system—that weakens you!

Don't take a laxative that is offered as a cure-all—a treatment for a thousand ills.

Don't take a laxative where you have to keep on increasing the dose to get results!

Take EX-LAX—the laxative that does not form a habit

You take Ex-Lax just when you need a laxative—it won't form a habit. You don't have to keep on increasing the dose to get results. Ex-Lax is effective—but it is mild. Ex-Lax doesn't force—it acts gently yet thoroughly. It works over-night without over-action.

Children like to take Ex-Lax because they love its delicious chocolate taste. Grown-ups, too, prefer to take Ex-Lax because they have found it to be thoroughly effective—without the disagreeable after-effects of harsh, nasty-tasting laxatives.

For 28 years, Ex-Lax has had the confidence of doctors, nurses, druggists and the general public alike, because it is everything a laxative should be.

At any drug store—10c and 25c.

WATCH OUT FOR IMITATIONS!

Ex-Lax has stood the test of time. It has been America's favorite laxative for 28 years. Insist on genuine Ex-Lax—spelled E-X-L-A-X—to make sure of getting Ex-Lax results.

The Laping Man (Continued from page 36)

ant who had heard the quarrel and the smashing. She had no wish to be caught with Cartwright at his house alone; nor he with her. This is the only explanation of Cartwright's curious action in slipping into the closet and remaining there, when at any time he might have opened the door and come out. She pointed out the closet, in which Cartwright had pointed him into. She told him to keep quiet until the servant had gone away, then to come out and have the doses that had been left in the kitchen. She probably told him that she was getting out immediately. Then she grabbed her hat and fled.

Jimmie Lavender panted. "Now bear in mind," he continued, after a moment, "that she had no reason to suppose that Cartwright would not escape in a little while. The servant would not investigate the closet, since it required a key, unless he heard a noise inside. All Cartwright had to do was to keep quiet and wait for sounds to cease outside—at least until he felt sure the servant had gone away. That was the situation. But it was not one of your servants, after all. The intruder, we have discovered, was poor Joe. He was a boy, looking for his master. He had anticipated trouble, it appears, and was worried."

LAVENDER frowned. "Joe, I am sorry to say, did not go away at once. Your music fascinated him. He hung about for some time, when he failed to find Cartwright; and all that time, he lay off from air and possibly slightly stupefied by whatever liquor he had drunk—either here or in his own apartment—was rapidly falling asleep in the closet. It is the only conceivable explanation, and I am convinced it is the true one."

Penfield's face was white. "If we had investigated—" he began.

"Yes, if you had looked into the closet when you returned last night, there might possibly have been a chance to save him; I don't know. But, of course, it would be quite the last thing Mrs. Penfield would suggest to you. And, in fairness, it must be admitted that she thought he had escaped last night. Her horror and surprise, this morning, when the body was discovered, were too genuine to be acting. Her mistake, from one point of view, was in hurrying off to you with that cock-and-bull story about a telephone call and a man who looked. But she was in a panic, and there were the broken vases to be explained. She should have come back in twenty minutes and released Cartwright."

Lavender shrugged. "But, after all," he added, "I can't expect you to be sorry for Cartwright!"

"I am," said Penfield miserably. "I'm sorry for both of them."

"Good man," said Lavender. "There is no reason, though, why all this hideous background should be dragged out at the inquest. The rubies were not stolen. It's in the fireplace there, where I discovered it a little while ago. And the vases were broken by Mr. Cartwright in a foolish escape, in which he unfortunately lost his life!"

The collector's eyes brightened momentarily. "Pentangle! "I don't want to upset you; but—" and Harriet Proctor too. "You'll help me?"

"Of course," said Jimmie Lavender. "I should be honored to do that, but—" and pentangle! "Good God!" he cried. "What's that?"

An eerie, horrible laugh had floated to us through the air, that broke the sunlit garden. And then the high-pitched patter of a woman's voice at the peak of some hideous delirium.

"I murdered him," the screaming voice repeated. "I was 1—1—who killed him!"

Lavender dashed across the living-room and out into the garden like a man possessed. I was hard on his heels and the collector was pattering behind me. We ran like madmen—and we were all too late.

She was clinging to the parapet, and her agility was catlike and bewildering. She was rising at full height against the foreground of blue sky and floating clouds, and the sunbeams struck through her flimsy garments and revealed the outlines of her splendid body.

Below, the city murmured and the treetops swayed.

Our footsteps seemed to sink into the grass.

A futile cry of warning broke from Lavender's lips; he hoped to make them hear. Then his last leap brought him to the parapet and his hand clutched wildly into space.

The parapet was no longer habitable. Lavender looked downward, then swiftly drew in his head, a hand across his eyes. A long scream rose upward from the pit; but whether it was the last cry of Millie Penfield or the sudden terror of a spectator, we never knew.

There was a dreadful silence seemed to fall upon the world, and I looked into the sun and found no explanation of the human tragedy.

"JIMMIE," I said, when once again the world seemed to have put the shocking scene behind us, "there's still one thing I do not understand."

"Only one, Gilly?" questioned Jimmie Lavender.

"How did you know that Mrs. Penfield was lying? You said you knew it from the beginning; and that it was your only clue, at first. But how could you be certain?"

He laughed. "The laping man was obviously an invention. Surely you remember what he said? 'Hello, Millie! Lovely evening! I'm at the Blue Pavilion. I want you to join me right away!' But in her eagerness to describe a man who did not exist, Mrs. Penfield overplayed her hand. She was too clever—or not clever enough. She should have said a man who was seen. Just try to lie that line, Gilly! There's not a sibilant in it. Go on—just try it on your lisper!"
The Well-Known Works

(Continued from page 39)

of any group of employers. Immediately after one of these claims, Mr. Cohen would be called on to help his friend. The complainant would go to the hospital with a fractured skull or be found dead in a roadside ditch and the police would again be persecuting William. Oh, life is full of troubles. Listen, Casey.

SOME eighteen hours later Mr. Fortune again gazed on Mr. Latimer, though Eddie did not see his late assailant. William was skulking in a darkened hallway directly across the street from the gay-lit entrance of the Elite Dancing Parlor (100 Lady Hostesses).

Eddie strolled gayly up and down, belazing the citizenry with his pristine splendor. From his hideout, William bent a stern gaze upon him. The Elite, in keeping with the city's midnight closing ordinance was discharging its crowd of slick-haired youths, itinerant working men, and a sprinkling of uniformed sailors. A lull, and the hostesses came down the stairs, most of them stepping into cars for a round of partying or a busman's holiday of pleasure dancing.

Then William snapped alert, for Bee Morgan came down the stairs on ludicrous four-inch, spike heels. She stopped at the curb, applying lip-stick to lips already over arched, and looking cautiously up-street and down. Then she crossed, toward William, but farther up the street, out of his line of vision. He turtled his neck out. There was Eddie Latimer, obviously not interested. That gentleman was, for a change, innocent. A cavalier, indistinct in the gloom, stepped out and took Bee's arm. They turned, coming toward William's hiding place.

"I'll have a look at the monkey," opined the lurking one and popped from his hideout to confront them.

Bee Morgan's cavalier was a dapper coffee-colored Filipino! That staunch Caucasian, Mr. Fortune, was stricken motionless with amazement, just the split instant necessary for the tan gentleman to wheel like a polo pony and make tracks, his highly polished shoes flickering. Bee goggled, her spit-curls standing straight out from surprise, and then she decided that certain urgent matters called her elsewhere. She craved naught but distance between herself and her violent ex-lover when he was aroused. William made after the Filipino.

But, the hare was fleet; the hound had indulged in too many beers and it looked as if the race would be to the swift. Bee's Filipino had the early foot, as the racing people phrase it, and William was badly off pace and not racing to form. Perceiving this his rage flamed the more. He had only intended drawing the burnt-sienna gentleman a severe kicking, but now he pulled up, and reaching under his arm, unlimbered a piece of ordinance that should have been mounted on artillery wheels. He pointed this after the flying one and squibbed off half a dozen shots. No man can outrun a .38 Police Positive.

The Filipino faltered in mid-stride, threw up his arms like a man going off a spring board, and silhuetted to a falling stop in the gutter, his light topcoat gleaming, woolly and bright, under (Please turn to page 60)

A NEW LEASE ON LIFE
FOR
LEFT-OVERS

LEFT-OVER ROAST PORK WITH SPAGHETTI
Cook 1 medium onion and 1/2 cup celery, both finely chopped, in 4 tablespoons butter till tender. Add 2 cups diced cooked pork, sprinkle with flour, and brown. Stir 1/2 cup milk gradually, then add 1 large can Heinz Cooked Spaghetti in Tomato Sauce. Cook till spaghetti is heated. Serve hot, sprinkled with browned, buttered bread crumbs.

ONE OF THE
57

YOUR left-over meats take on fresh appetite-appeal quickly and easily if you combine them with Heinz Cooked Spaghetti. For each tin of it has palate-pleasing flavor—and that's what left-overs need.

We make Heinz Spaghetti from fine wholesome Durum wheat. We cook it—just so—delicately limber. Then we add a succulent, keen sauce concocted of luscious Heinz tomatoes, sweet milk, meat stock and rare spices brought by Heinz from the Orient.

So here is new life to add to left-over meats. Get a tin of Heinz ready-to-eat Spaghetti from your grocer. Try this left-over recipe. Then invent other left-over recipes with spaghetti—all of them quick, easy, thrifty, and delicious.

H. J. HEINZ COMPANY
PITTSBURGH, U. S. A.
TORONTO, CAN. • LONDON, ENG.

HEINZ Cooked SPAGHETTI

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934

59
"It Started a New Craze... When the Neighbors Saw My 15¢ Clopay Window Shades"

I THINK YOU ARE FOOLING—ONLY 15¢ FOR SUCH LOVELY SHADES!

IF YOU'RE NOT JOKING—I'M GOING TO HAVE NEW SHADES TOO!

HONESTLY—THAT'S EVERY CENT I PAID—IT'S REALLY A MIRACLE!

* ONLY CLOPAYS GIVE YOU THESE PATENTED EXCLUSIVE FEATURES

* Exclusive Creped Construction

It is the patented CREPED texture of Clopays that make them roll easily, hang smoothly, resist wear.

* Patented Gummed Strip

Makes attaching to rollers a matter of seconds; makes tacks, tools unnecessary. Insist on these two features—nothing else but Clopays can possibly give the satisfaction that has put CLOPAYS into more than a million homes.

Be Sure You Get Genuine CLOPAYS...

With These Important EXCLUSIVE FEATURES

"No" wonder my neighbors thought I was joking when I told them my lovely Clopay Window Shades cost only 15¢ each. They are wonderful. The lovely chintz patterns harmonize nicely with decorative plans in my bedrooms and plain colors in others. I've never found their equal in any other kind of shade. Their attractive "creped" texture makes them hang straight, roll straight and wear amazingly. Won't crack, fray or pinhole. So easily attached to rollers with their "patented gummed strip, too—no tacks or tools. And you only trim one side to fit narrow windows. With all these advantages at such an unbelievably low price, can you blame my neighbors for following my lead in switching *IN* to Clopays? They're all doing it now."

Send 3¢ stamp for color samples.

16 Patterns
Solid Colors and Colorful Chintz Effects

Buy CLOPAY Shades At
F. W. WOOLWORTH Stores

CLOPAY CORPORATION, 1343 York Street, Cincinnati, Ohio

The Well-Known Works

(Continued from page 39)

the street lamps. William, profiting by the experience of others and like incidents in his career, jerked his hat down over his eyes and stormed away through a cross-allee.

After sailing two blocks at full steam, he heard a police siren, and, being wise in the ways, promptly slowed down to a saunter. Officers in flying squad cars have a habit of shooting at running men and asking questions of the corpse. He now hailed a cab and followed his routine procedure; a search for his counsel, one Bourke Hanlon, or to be familiar with the legal gentleman, "Ropes" Hanlon. He was certain he would need Mr. Hanlon because of the presence of Eddie Latimer at the scene. Mr. Latimer, he was sure, would promptly tell all, as melodrama puts it, for the majority of the gentlemen who follow his profession are police informers. It gains them a certain amount of immunity from rough handling. Mr. Fortune, in the shadows of his cab, cursed Eddie Latimer.

Now finding Mr. Hanlon entailed a search of the better class speakeasies, and it was outside of one of these that William spied a celebrated bank robber.

A thief, famous on two continents, must be a tall steel-eyed indomitable hero, or a slinky, shifty-eyed rat, depending on which school of fiction receives your patronage. But Fred Castle, or Ferdinand Kessel, was neither. He was a plump, sandy-haired Swiss. A dapper, little man sensitive of his lack of height, wearing high heels. He had the chubby, harmless face of a Poland-China maggot, but his devil, of cocaine, waved danger signals in his pale eyes.

The idea leaped full-formed into William's mind.

"Glad to see you, Fred," he greeted, pumping the small man's hand. "That was a bad break the boys got on that Berwyn payroll job, wasn't it?"

This was reference to a fiasco in which the police had received advance knowledge of a hold-up and had exhibited their usual lack of sportsmanship. They had ambushed the mob, leaving two of them dead and two others now nursed their wounds in durance vile. Fred had escaped and was in this woman, old lady, Dame Rumor, whispered that the lucky one was Mr. Castle. Mr. Castle was extremely desirous that this fact should never be proved, for he already was a two-time loser, and by the rule of the new habitual criminal law, he needed just one more tag to make it three times and out, nevermore out.

"Did somebody say it was my mob?" asked the robber mildly enough, but releasing William's hand and turning a shoulder to him. "By no means," denied William swiftly, "but if you meet any of the mob tell them I know who ratted on them. A pal of mine at the Bureau tipped me." "Yes?" said Mr. Castle or Kessel, "who?"

"A manary named Eddie Latimer," said William, "I just saw him up near the Elite on Clark Street." "I know him," barked Mr. Castle, signaling for a cab, "the dirty stool! Be seeing you, Bill." "That," decided Mr. Fortune, looking after the vanishing cab and enjoying the pleasant feeling of a man
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who has found someone else to do his rat killing; "should put a price after Eddie Latimer. Now where in the hell is Hanlon? That's the way with a lip, never around when you need him."

CONTINUING his hunt, he ran Mr. Hanlon to earth in the swanky Arts and Professions Club and, particularly, Mr. Hanlon was nearly sober. Thanking his stars for this unusual condition he led the lawyer into a private dining-room and swiftly explained his predicament.

"The facts," said the legal gentleman. "Let's get the facts."

He telephoned hither and yon to certain sources of information that were peculiarly his own. A certain coroner's deputy talked, then a police stenographer in the Homicide Department, then a clerk in the State's Attorney's office followed suit. All these various gentlemen gave out information that they had sworn sacred oaths, hand on the Book, to keep firmly locked within their several breasts. When Hanlon turned from the phone he was aware of the facts. Mr. Fortune had completely killed one Aurelio Suarez, 24 years old, medical student, part-time bus-boy, and full-time Lothario. Also, Mr. Hanlon was informed, one Eddie Latimer, witness to the crime, had sung his song, swearing to the Homicide Squad, under Sergeants Druby and Howard, that Mr. Fortune had perpetrated this murder. The squad was even now engaged in assiduous search for William Fortune, or as their John Doe warrants chillingly state, "his body."

"Billy," said the lawyer, "one of these days you are going to get into trouble."

"This," answered his client, "will do until real trouble comes along."

"Let me see," Hanlon rose, striding the length of the room, pleading his case before an imaginary jury. The man was pure theater. Even now, with no audience, his tone was dramatic, his gestures violent, now flat in palm, now arms out-flung, now pointing a finger. He thrust the finger in William's face.

"Certainly you killed this Flip," he informed the startled thug, "and why not? Why any man with red blood in his veins would have killed the filthy scum who seduced his sweetheart, a girl fresh from the sweet cloistered life of the convent, a girl who knew nothing of the crime."

"And," queried Mr. Fortune without illusion. "No good," Hanlon decided. "The prosecuting would put her on the stand and take her reputation apart and that wouldn't look so hot. I'd pull an alibi defense if it weren't for Latimer and Bee. She'll howl if they put the screws on her and she sang already."

"Don't worry about Eddie Latimer," his client assured him, thinking happily of the violent Mr. Castle. "He won't be around to testify."

"Another?"

"I didn't do it myself," Bill said proudly. "I tipped Fred Castle to a little phony information. I told Fred that Eddie sang on that Borwyn job."

"That settles that," Hanlon said, secure in this knowledge, for he had acquaintance with Mr. Castle, that gentleman being one of his clients. "Now about Bee?"

(.request to turn to page 62)
DON'T SUFFER CONSTIPATION—there is effective relief if you just

CHEW YOUR LAXATIVE

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(Continued from page 61)

Bee Morgan, entering her hotel—at least it had a hotel license—was not surprised to find a visitor waiting in the lobby. Mr. Casey Cohen lifted his eyebrows in involuntary wonder and sat down beside him. She did not look forward to the coming interview but it was decidedly unhealthy to antagonize Mr. Cohen.

"Hello, Sweet," said Mr. Cohen with no saccharine in his voice. "Nice day, ain't it? Boy, this is the kind of a day that a guy enjoys out in California. If I didn't have business holding me down—I, Bee, why don't you go to the West Coast, you got nothing holding you."

"I been there," Bee said sullenly, "I don't like it."

"It grows on you, Bee. I know a guy was dying here, and now out there he is as healthy as forty thousand dollars in bonds. You don't look so good, Bee. The Coast would be a healthy place for you. And I wouldn't let anybody know where I was going, kind of lay low and get a good rest."

"It costs money," she said still sullen. Mr. Cohen's eyes raised in mock surprise. "Money? I'm sure I've got plenty money. I'll give you five hundred and you take a jam for the West Coast. Quiet like."

"Five hundred isn't enough. You tell Bill I want at least a grand. I got to live, don't I?"

CASKY dropped his eyelids suggestively. "It ain't absolutely necessary. By the way, I ain't seen Eddie for some time. The last time was the night that Filipino got killed on Goethe Street. I wonder what happened to him."

"That's a grand I wouldn't go. Five hundred, yes. And the Coast is a nice place. Lots nicer than the drainage canal, for instance. Did you ever see a big fish in the canal?"

"Gimmie the five hundred. I'll go. It's a hell of a note though, when a girl gets run out of town just because she gives some somebody the air. Gimmie the five hundred."

"Forty-twenty," Casey said softly, "the other eighty went for this railroad ticket. Here it is. And just so you make no stiff remarks, I still will pick you up about this time tomorrow and drive you out to Englewood and put you on the Chief there. Just so nobody sees you leaving the Union Station. And, if I were you, Bee, I'd be careful how I acted on the Coast. Don't shoot off your trap. You know," he added suggestively, "we have friends out there and sometimes they get pretty rough."

"I've been around," Bee said, "I know what it's all about. Gimmie the money. And if I never see you or Billy Fortune again it's still about twenty years too soon."

"That's a good girl," said Casey Cohen with soft suggestion in his voice, "You and Mr. Hanlon sort of suited."

A murder trial is like a championship prizefight in many respects. There is too much at stake for the evening to be spoiled over anything. The lawyers know this and ride rough-shod over the judge. Judge Fry scowled at the camera foaming at the mouth and the spectators. He disliked murder trial spectators as a class. A mangy crowd of thrill seekers who haunt courtrooms to revel in the great gamble the defendant is taking;
The Well-Known Works
to gain a taste of how it feels to gamble with all the chips on the table.
Mr. Nayland, opening for the State, announced that two very important witnesses had vanished and insinuated that the defense could explain this act of malfeasance. Mr. Hanlon leaned to his feet and volubly presented this accusation. In fact, Mr. Hanlon seemed carried away by his feelings for he strode dramatically across the courtroom and shook his fist under Mr. Nayland's nose. The prosecutor shrugged out of his coat and advanced on Mr. Hanlon. The spectators leaned forward. This was quite according to schedule.

"Gentlemen . . . that will be all." Judge Fry scowled. "Never mind holding the gentlemen, bailiff, nothing is going to happen. For twenty years lawyers have been threatening each other with flintknives in my court, and I have yet to see a kickout or a drop of blood. We will now proceed. There will be no more ten-twenty-thirty dramatics, if you please. We are here presumably to try a murder case. Continue, Mr. Prosecutor."
The legal gentlemen bowed to the court and to each other. They murmured faint apologies for losing their tempers but the warning they heeded not at all. They had a public, the jury, and their public must see a good performance. Mr. Nayland continued. After him Mr. Hanlon, opening for the defense, spoke thirty minutes, eloquently and passionately.

Then Mr. Nayland placed on the stand one Veronica Lessing, rooming-house keeper. Under examination by the State, Mrs. Lessing stated that on the night of Sept. 12th, about midnight, she had seen one man pursuing another down Goethe Street in front of her establishment. Right, as she phrased it, before these very eyes, the pursuer stopped, drew a pistol and shot the fleeing one dead.

Mr. Hanlon, cross-examining the witness, produced admission that on certain rare occasions Mrs. Lessing took in paying guests who were, at the moment, a lost bag of luggage. Pursuing the trend, Mr. Hanlon persisted in addressing the lady as Madame, until she lost her temper, blew up, and climbed down from her chaise roughly discredited in the eyes of the jury. The twelve good men and true grinned broadly at her.

Mr. Nayland produced a working man, one George Kostis, laborer, a roomer at the home of Mrs. Lessing. Mr. Kostis' testimony bore out Mrs. Lessing's story. Mr. Kostis made a positive identification of William as the man who shot and killed Aurelio Suarez.

Cross-examining, Mr. Hanlon brought out the fact that Mr. Kostis suffered occasional attacks of vertigo. He enlarged on this disease until, when Mr. Kostis got down, the jury doubted whether the sufferer could have recognized his own reflection in a mirror, let alone a running man at night. Mr. Nayland then produced a cab-driver who testified to seeing Fortune's flashy roaster with its distinctive license plate number near the scene of the crime.

Hanlon matched him with a greasy mechanic in overalls, who testified that he, personally, had dismantled the motor of the defendant's roaster on the night of the 3rd and that it was, (Please turn to page 64)

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**CHECK YOUR SKIN TROUBLE**

- **COARSE PORES**
- **BLACKHEADS**
- **DRY SKIN**
- **OILY SKIN**
- **TINY LINES**
- **SALLOW SKIN**

---

**Nine Times Out of Ten "Paralyzed Pores" are the Cause!**

*by Lady Esther*

Coarse Pores, Blackheads, Sallow and Muddy Skin, Excessively Oily or Dry Skin—practically every skin trouble to which woman is victim—is but some manifestation or other of "Paralyzed Pores". "Paralyzed Pores" are due to nothing other than wrong method of skin care!

Ordinary methods are all right as far as they go, but they don't give enough! They reach the surface dirt of the skin, but not the subsurface. And it's that underneath dirt that causes all the trouble, leading, as it does, to "Paralyzed Pores".

**Everything But the Right Thing!**

In our efforts to remove this underneath dirt we do everything but the right thing. We use hot and cold applications which shock the delicate pores and render them crippled. We use strong alcololic preparations which do not remove the dirt, but only close the pores and seal it in.

We use creams which do not penetrate, but which have to be rubbed in and which only pack the dirt in tighter. Continuing the stuffing, the pores become enlarged and stretched to the point where they lose all power to open and close—in other words, "paralyzed".

When pores become paralyzed they become enlarged and conspicuous. Blackheads and whiteheads appear. The whole breathing and functioning of the skin is impaired and it becomes lifeless and drab and either too dry or oily. It is simply impossible to have a beautiful skin with "Paralyzed Pores".

---

**A Penetrating Face Cream!**

Lady Esther Face Cream is unique for the fact that it penetrates. It does not stay on the surface. It does not have to be rubbed in or massaged in, which only stretches and widens the pores. You just smooth it on. Almost instantly, and of its own accord, this face cream finds its way into the pores. Penetrating the little openings to their depths, it dissolves the accumulated grime and waste matter and floats it to the surface where it is easily wiped off.

**Also Lubricates the Skin**

As Lady Esther Face Cream cleanses the skin it also lubricates it. It replaces it with a fine oil that does away with dryness, harshness and scaliness and makes the skin soft and smooth and flexible. For this reason face powder does not flake or streak on a skin that is cleansed with Lady Esther Face Cream.

---

**At My Expense!**

I want you to try Lady Esther Face Cream at my expense. I want you to see the difference just one cleansing will make in your skin. I want you to see how much cleaner, clearer and more radiant your skin is and how much smoother and softer. Write today for the 7-day supply I offer free and postpaid. Just mail the coupon or a penny postcard and by return mail you'll get a generous 7-day supply of Lady Esther Face Cream.

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**FREE**

You can paste this on a penny postcard

Lady Esther
30 E. Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Ill.

Please send me by return mail your 7-day supply of Lady Esther Four-Purpose Face Cream.

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
City ____________________________ State ____________________________

(If you live in Canada, write Lady Esther, Toronto, Ont.)

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(Continued from page 63)

to his positive knowledge, still dismantled on the night of the 4th. This witness was due to appear out Mr. William Nap- mily's bill as . . . Special Service . . . $100.00. The State produced four more identifying witnesses, each of whom gave the defense attorney maligned to the best of his ability.

Mr. Nayland then placed on the stand a meaty-faced constable of police who swore that he had often arrested the defendant while the latter was in possession of a pistol. This was because of a strike against the tool that he had often been sued for false arrest. He deplorably forestalled the officer's attempt to explain that no copper is worth his salt unless he is sued often for this violation. This repression angered the captain who, if the redness of his neck is any indication, is a man very easily angered. The captain, unasked, offered, in a loud voice, the observation that the town would be a better place to live in if certain public improvements were made. The most important of these were, in the captain's estimation, the removal of Wil- liam Fortune and all his type of labor-racketeers. This was, of course, stricken off the record but it reached the jury's ears and Nayland grinned.

Then Mr. Hanlon decided it was time to wipe the grin off the prosecu- tor's face and at the same time provide an alibi for his client. He made an imperceptible sign and a young clerk from his office who had been lounging in the rear of the courtroom left hurriedly. And now the alibi, in the person of an attractive brunette, came down the aisle. Following her was a sullen-faced individual.

William leaped to his feet and pro- tested her appearance. She threw her arms about him and wept a little, daintily. William raged at Hanlon shouting that he had expressly for- bidden his client not bring the lady into court. The sullen-faced individual surpassed all previous records for glaring, giving Mr. Hanlon a venom in his eye. Bailiffs restored order, forcing William back into his seat. This was all per instruction.

On the stand, the young lady identified herself as Mrs. Janet Fundy, occupa- tion, housewife. Hanlon, putting the issue before the jury, deposed with himself. He had dressed her carefully for this show and she made just the right appearance, not flashy, but then again not. Jovial and respectable type of pretty young housewife that one sees shopping on a Saturday afternoon or strolling on the boulevard push- ing a trim baby carriage. The jury was sitting up. Out of the corner of his eye, Hanlon noted happily that Mr. Nayland's smile had been replaced by a worried frown.

Mr. Hanlon then showed the lady a legal paper and asked her if she recog- nized it. Yes, she did, it was the first notice in the divorce case of Fundy vs. Fundy. There was no news to Mr. Han- lon for he had a friend draw up the papers in this suit merely to use them as a stage prop. She was, she said, divorcing her husband. Mr. Hanlon then assured the judge that his next question was pertinent and asked the lady if she intended remarrying when she was free to do so. She was, she said and pointed out Mr. William Nap- mily to the judge as the prospective partner of her next search for marital bliss. Mr. Han- lon asked one more question. Had she seen William the night of Sept. 4th? She certainly had. She had met William on the North Cullvert of the Lithia Carriage and they had talked there until well after one o'clock in the morning. She could not be mistaken about the time as she remembered very well that she had at- tended a recital by Roland Hayes that afternoon at Orchestra Hall and she still had the program and the ticket. Also, the 4th had fallen on a Saturday which was her husband's payday and he had come home intoxicated and very disagreeable. Mr. Hanlon turned her over to Mr. Nayland.

That gentleman ranted at her but made no inquiry. His only comment was that his client always sounds better than fact because the recitation is well rehearsed. Mr. Hanlon then put the sullen-faced gentleman on the stand. This gentle- man, glaring at his prospective successor, admitted under Han- lon's rigorous questions that he had shared his life and pay check had been absent from his bed and board on the night in question till long after one. The jury was at a loss. They were playing a part in the unfolding of this pregnant drama. The scene and the characters had changed in the twinkling of an eye. Where previously they had been ready to cast William in the role of Cain, suddenly he had become Galahad. And the girl was a honey. And her husband abused her, the big heel. It was rather grim justice that he had been forced to help establish an alibi for Galahad even though Galahad was presumed decorating him with an ancient ribald headress. Well, men of the world must take a broad view of these things.

They took a broad enough view, in that they brought in an immediate ver- dict of guilty despite Mr. Nayland's hysterical closing speech. William leaped to his feet, pumped each of his hands, and went through the usual ceremony to celebrate that freedom. Judge Fry omitted the thanks to the jury and strode away into his chambers. Here he delved into a bookcase, and removed a book titled, "Suit in Trover with Malice Count," brought forth a bottle. He poured a drink and held it up to the light. Squinting through the amber fluid he could see his little plaster of Paris statue of that much imposed upon myth. Jovial and respectable type of pretty young housewife that one sees shopping on a Saturday afternoon or strolling on the boulevard pushing a trim baby carriage. The jury was sitting up. Out of the corner of his eye, Hanlon noted happily that Mr. Nayland's smile had been replaced by a worried frown.

WELL, if it ain't the Dolly sistren. Mama, that man is here."

The Four Hundred Club doorman gained little by this query for the leader of the "Dolly Sisters" dispassionately spanked him over the jaw- bone with a hard slap and stepped over his prone figure.

"Just in case," Sergeant Druby muttered in half-hearted explanation.

"Don't want no harm to you, twixs," Sergeant Howard made no answer. Having been teamed with Druby for some ten years at Homicide, he needed no explanation for violence. They

CLIMB A BUILDING! Walk through air! Conquer space! Anything seems possible, nothing beyond reason, when digestion is good, when irritat- ing little pangs aren't ragging your nerves.

Beeman's is a delightful and pleasant way to help keep digestion in order. For Beeman's is first of all a delicious chewing gum with a dif- ferent flavor—cool and refreshing —kept fresh always by the unique new Triple Guard Pack.

Chew Beeman's for its savory good- ness, its fragrant freshness. Buy a package today.

Chew-

BEEMAN'S PEPSIN GUM

AIDS DIGESTION

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
The Well-Known Works
didn't the stairs and entered the
grand Four Hundred, causing no little
collection as they passed through
the cabaret.
They crossed the dance floor and en-
tered the bar, squeezing hurriedly
through the crowd. William Fortune
was celebrating his legal vindication in
the royal manner. Bubbly wine flowed.
Druby edged his way to a position be-
hind William and seized him by the
coat collar. With his other hand he
pressed the muzzle of his service re-
volver against a spot just under
William's left shoulder blade.
"Just make a play. That's all. Just
make a play," Sergeant Howard hope-
fully assured Casey Cohen who had
put a hand under the bar. Mr. Cohen
decided on the better part of valor.
He put both hands on the bar in full
view.
"You can't make a collar in here," he
asserted
firmly.
"Of course not," agreed the Sergeant
soothingly, clamping metal bands on
the struggling William. He then ran
practised hands over the thug.
"What is this?" complained Fortune.
"You guys got nothing to put the collar
on me for. Don't you read the papers?"
"You're all buttoned up, William,"
quoth Howard, pleasantly. "This ain't
for knocking off the little brown guy.
Look—we fished Eddie Latimer's body
out of the Lincoln Park Lagoon this
morning. The coroner says he's been
in there about three weeks which makes
his take-off about Sept. 4th, and that
was the last night he was seen alive.
You proved you were in the park on
the night of the 4th. You didn't like the
guy—slugged him only that morning.
What the hell, this is right in the sack.
Presence at the scene, premeditation
motive, and the old well-known corpus
delicat. It's a cinch. You're all
wrapped, stamped and ready for mail-
ing."
Mr. Fortune's bluster faded. "I
don't do it," he said, paling.
"Why hell," argued the Sergeant,
surprised. "Who cares whether you
did or not. The point is you are going
to fry for it."

HOLIDAY TREATS
Nuts, raisins, and other delicious
dried fruits are among the tradi-
tional foods of the Thanksgiving and
Christmas season. This month's
food circulars contain dozens of new
recipes making use of these whole-
some products, as well as tested and
revised recipes for the old favorites.
Here are the subjects:
1. Prunes
2. Raisins
3. Dates and Figs
4. Apricots and other dried fruits
5. Walnuts
6. Brazil Nuts
7. Pecans
8. Almonds and other small nuts
If you would like copies of these
circulars, send ten cents to Rita Cal-
houn, care of MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55
Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Re-
member they are printed on loose
leaves so that you can keep them in
a loose-leaf binder.

"Let's see—how does
this walking business
go? Clench fists, put one
foot ahead of the other
—but what do I do after
that?... Oh, why did I
ever take up walking
anyway? I was doing
fine, getting carried or
going on all fours—"

"Well, so far, so good!
It won't be long now till
I get to that nice splashy
tub—and then for a
good rub-down with
Johnson's Baby Pow-
der!... Now which foot
goes ahead first? Might
try both at once—the
more the merrier—"

"Oops! Something
wrong with that idea!
Feet are all right, but
the rest of me's getting
left far, far behind!
That's an awfully hard
floor down there, too—
I remember it from last
time! Well, look out be-
low—I'm coming..."

"... Everything's O. K.
again, now that I've had my
rub-down with Johnson's Baby
Powder... Just test that powder
between your thumb and finger
—it's so smooth! Not gritty, like
some powders. No zinc stea-
rate or arris-root in it either."

Send 10¢ in coin (for convenience, fasten coin with strip of adhesive tape) for samples
of Johnson's Baby Powder, Soaps and Creams.
Dept. 74, New Brunswick, N. J.
MAKE-UP BOX

SETTING-UP EXERCISES FOR TIRED TEETH AND TWO ALLURING FACE CREAMS IN THIS MONTH’S BEAUTY NOTES

The Rule of Three

Do you know how to brush your teeth? Silly question? Not at all! There are three rules to remember: A good toothbrush with firm bristles, a reliable dentifrice, and a knowledge of how to brush your teeth correctly. Strange, isn’t it, that women who are so particular about the shade of powder they use and the color of nail polish they choose, are downright careless when so important a health and beauty accessory as a toothbrush is concerned. Now, this very hour, is the time to examine your toothbrush and replace it if the bristles have become soft and worn. The brush illustrated is made by a well-known maker of brushes and is designed to reach places in your mouth never touched by ordinary toothbrushes. What’s more, the bristles can’t come out. They’re fastened in by a new last-ever device. The little brush pictured with the toothbrush is for daily care of the nails. For detailed information on how to make your teeth gleaming and lustrous by the “robbery” brushing method, send for this month’s beauty circular which is yours for the asking.

A LITTLE IS A LOT

“A COMPLEXION like lilly petals in the sunlight” is the promise of this new liquid finishing cream which lends the complexion a softness as fresh and dewy as the early morning mist and a transparency as glowing. This delightfully fragrant liquid cream is much more than a powder base. Applied in the morning, it keeps the complexion looking fresh all day and ends fear of a shiny nose. A little of it goes a long way, too. Just a touch smoothed gently into the skin before applying make-up is sufficient. It’s available in four shades—white, flesh, cream, and tan. If you are at all doubtful about what color to choose, try cream. We were simply fascinated with the package—a leather-like pink box wrapped in transparent cellophane—and you’ll love it on your dressing table too.

A Lemon-Aid!

“KNOW’ST thou the land where the lemon trees bloom?” asked Goethe many long years ago. Well, Goethe may not have been sure of their location but we can tell you with enthusiasm where to find a lemon lotion and lemon cream that will do much for a very oily complexion or weathered skin. The fresh juice of lemons has an excellent effect upon oily skins, as we all know, and to normalize those busy oil glands, try spreading on this lemon cream as you do any cleansing cream. Wipe it away and pat on the lotion.

THIS month’s circular also contains news of an oil polish remover, a new polish of the cream type, and lipsticks in six grand shades from an English-American House... the shade called “poppy” has a tendency to make teeth appear whiter.

Let it dry by itself and the velvety finish is an ideal foundation for make-up.

If you would like further information about the articles described, and other beauty news, write enclosing stamped envelope to the Beauty Editor, Make-up Box, Tower Magazines, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

The MYSTERY, Magazine, November, 1934
I Go Sleuthing

(Continued from page 6)

He had said nothing else since his first remark or, if he had, I hadn't heard him. There was a great commotion, naturally, and I had been following my friend's technique in getting something for her paper.

"What's your name?" I asked, pretending that I, too, was a newspaper woman.

"Name's Muller," said the man, as if resenting the question; he deliberately ignored me and scraped a spot of mud from his shoe with the toe of the other. But I was determined.

"How'd you happen to get here so quick?" I asked. "Tell me what happened. We need color for the story," he said, "and I was slicing some bread at the time. The explosion scared me so that the knife slipped and cut my finger, see?" He held up a finger on his right hand and I saw a little streak of blood. "I threw down the knife and ran straight down the sidewalk. It's not far, you see. I had just got here when you came up."

I was pretty excited but I managed to remember what he said and, also, I was taking in what went on as much as possible. I thought I'd quiet my nerves a bit so I opened my small handbag and took out a cigarette. Then, since Muller had given me what I thought might be valuable color, I offered him a cigarette. He thanked me and took one, carefully keeping the cigarette from becoming covered with blood. He produced a match and we lit up.

Then, suddenly, I thought I knew what had happened. I took my friend to one side and told her my suspicions. She looked at me for a moment, then casually walked away. In a moment she returned with an officer who arrested Muller.

My friend immediately telephoned her story and then we caught a taxi and went to the precinct station, where we learned my suspicions were correct.

An officer said Muller at first had vehemently denied bombing the restaurant, but later had broken down and confessed when confronted with the little evidence I had given my friend.

Muller had said he was afraid the new restaurant would hurt his business and that he had planned to dynamite it. He had thrown the bomb through one of the windows in the alley, then stepped back up the alley out of harm's way, but a piece of flying glass had cut one of his fingers. When the crowd gathered, he had calmly walked out of the alley and mingled with it. I had become suspicious when he told me he ran from his cafe down the sidewalk to the scene for I had seen mud on his shoes and there was no chance of his getting fresh mud from the sidewalk. He also said he had cut his finger while slicing bread, but he had taken my cigarette with the same hand, the hand that was cut. He also lit my cigarette with the same hand and I figured that, naturally, he was right handed and that he would not have been holding a knife in his left.

After the whole thing was over and I found out that I really had suspected the right person, my nerves became so upset I nearly had to go to bed.

(See page 86 for contest rules.)

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
to shape the spinster schoolma'am aimed at the embryo author by refusing to remain in the backs of his mind. She forced her way into every situation, dominating the story and at last forcing Palmer to give in, and play her detective role. Miss Withers was born, almost, it might be said, in spite of her creator.

The response to "Penguin Pool Murder" was gratifying and immediate—and very shortly afterward Palmer was amazed to have Hollywood congratulate him on his creation of the perfect role for Edna May Oliver—whom he had actually never seen!

Seduced from the editorship of a New York publishing firm by the lure of Hollywood, Palmer spent months in the movie capital. His great delight was to slip away from the writing assignments which the movie moguls handed him, and get underfoot on the set where George Archainbaud was directing the film version of "Penguin Pool Murder." Unlike most writers in a similar situation, Palmer was unreservedly delighted with the treatment given his brain-child, and with the cast consisting of Edna May Oliver, Jimmy Gleason, Mae Clarke and Oscar, the trained penguin.

In New York, "Murder on a Wheel" had already been published in book form. From Hollywood, Palmer sent on the manuscripts of "Murder on the Blackboard" (one of the best-liked complete novels that MYSTERY ever published) and of "The Puzzle of the Pepper Tree," his first book for the Crime Club. This recounts the adventures of Miss Withers while on a vacation trip to Catalina Island, and will presumably be third in the series of Edna May Oliver detective films. "Murder on the Blackboard" (dedicated in book form to Edna May Oliver as "Miss Withers come true") is now playing neighborhood picture houses through this country and also in England.

In the meantime Stuart Palmer had begun devising a series of Miss Withers' adventures in short-story form, which he has been running almost without a break in MYSTERY MAGAZINE for the past fourteen months. Many of these stories have reached our editorial offices with London postmarks, and some from "Mousehole, Cornwall," where this wandering young man stopped long enough to set down his latest book-length mystery, "Puzzle of the Silver Persian," best-selling Crime Club selection of January.

At the present time Miss Hildegard Withers has become a familiar and well-loved figure in several million households, extending over America, England and France. The lean New England spinster with the equine visage, the Queen Mary has had a parasol and the sharp but kindly tongue has won for herself a unique position among fictional sleuths.

The author confesses that having seen the two movies already made from his books, he cannot visualize Miss Withers as otherwise than Edna May Oliver, nor the Inspector except as James Gleason. It is one of his highly cherished ambitions to write a play in the very future which will bring the Oliver-Gleason combination to the Broadway footlights.

Visitors to Stuart Palmer's modest apartment on 56th Street in Manhattan are always surprised to find him between wanderings, will see a tanned, boyish-looking young man proudly sporting his first few gray hairs. The visitor will also find that the window sill will be blue or silver Persian cat upon his knees, or a rough-and-tumble wire-haired terrier chewing at his shoes. And at his bedside are several penguin statuettes second only to that possessed by Roland Young, the well-kin

From sweet sixteen to queenly fifty, women of all ages the world over have learned that Maybelline Eye Beauty Aids are the safe, simple way to lovely eyes—eyes that instantly appear larger, brighter and more expressive. Beauty-wise women appreciate, too, the never-failing high standard of purity and harmlessness guaranteed by the famous name of Maybelline. Try these delightful aids to a new and more beautiful YOU!

Maybelline Eye Shadow Maybelline Eyebrow Pencil Maybelline Eyelash Tonic Cream Maybelline Eyebrow Brush and the world-famous, approved Maybelline mascara. All Maybelline Eye Beauty Aids may be had in purse sizes at all leading stores. Try them today!
What Goes into the Stuffing

(Continued from page 10)

as well as in the sunny South. Well seasoned mashed potatoes, boiled rice or noodles all have their advocates. When chestnuts are used for stuffing they are first cooked tender, then riced and mixed with dried bread crumbs. Oysters are combined with equal quantities of dried bread crumbs and melted butter and duly seasoned with minced parsley, lemon juice, etc.

Fruit stuffings are most easy to prepare. You may use plain sliced apples, or apples combined with raisins or prunes first soaked in boiling water five minutes and then drained.

The type of stuffing should depend not only on personal taste but on the type of bird you have to stuff. Duck, for instance, suggests a mixed prune and apple stuffing, mashed potatoes or a bread stuffing with sage and onion flavoring.

The mild flavor of chicken combines well with a chestnut or oyster stuffing. Chestnuts may be used in goose, but the great sweetness of the goose makes it desirable to use a minimum of butter or other fat in the stuffing. Almost any good type of stuffing is agreeable with turkey, the usual choice being a well seasoned bread-crumbs mixture containing enough moisture to prevent undue drying of the turkey meat, which is naturally less moist than that of chicken, duck or goose.

Here are new stuffings that may serve as inspiration for your own inventions:

**Brazil Nut Stuffing**

- 2 chopped onions
- ½ cup melted fat
- 2 cups sliced Brazil nuts
- Sage or other herbs
- Salt, pepper
- 8 cups soft bread crumbs

Mince onions and cook two minutes in the fat. Mix seasonings and nuts with bread crumbs and stir into fat. Cook two minutes more, stirring constantly. If a moist stuffing is desired, add a little water. This amount of stuffing is enough for a ten-pound turkey.

**Walnut Stuffing**

- Giblets from one turkey
1 onion
1 bay leaf
1 cup boiling water
1 large loaf of stale bread
1 tablespoon salt
1 tablespoons poultry seasoning or sage
- 2 cups walnut kernels, chopped fine
- 4 tablespoons melted fat or oil

Cook the giblets, onion and bay leaf in the boiling water until tender. Then chop the giblets fine. Remove crusts from bread and crumb the bread fine. Mix the giblets and crumbs with the salt, poultry seasoning or sage, walnut kernels and fat or oil. When roasting the turkey, baste with the water in which the giblets were cooked.

If you are interested in this month's recipe and menu circulars, please turn to page 65.

"I don't know why I refused so long to believe that Midol might help me, unless it was because I had tried so many things that never did. But I'm thankful I did try it, about two years ago, and haven't had a severe time since I learned to rely on this form of relief."

Some such endorsement could truthfully be given by numbers of women who have found, sooner or later, that Midol does relieve periodic pain. In many cases, these tablets have spared women even any discomfort at this time; nearly all receive definite relief.

Perhaps you have feared to take anything that acts as quickly, but don't be afraid of its speed! Midol is not a narcotic. Midol is quite as harmless as the aspirin you take for an ordinary headache.

Should you decide to try this remarkable form of relief for periodic pain, remember the name of this special medicine—and remember that Midol is a special medicine for this special purpose. Do not take, instead, some tablet that is made for aches and pains in general, and expect the same results. Ask the druggist for Midol. Do this today, and be prepared!

**An Invitation**

to try it without expense; just mail this to Midol, 170 Varick St., N. Y., and get trial box free.

**Name**

**Address**

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*The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934*
I was Starving for Romance

The bell caused them to take their eyes from the ghastly sight before them and look about the summerhouse. Here, an old, empty shell upright in a niche cut in the floor that was paneled like a ship's deck. There, a mast rose from the floor. Here, again, was a table on which sat an old dog, lying on his side, depending from the ceiling a figurehead staring gravely at them. A quaint place and a quiet place and through the windows the breeze from the sea blew gently; beyond, the sea and bay were placid; behind, the trees whispered softly to the breeze. But there sat that horror.

Ashel, shuddering, crossed the summerhouse and said that Dr. Mott had been handsome, a dark man, powerfully built, with a ruddy face. He was deeply tanned by the summer sun.

"From ear to ear, Mistuh Graney," said Ashel. He lifted Dr. Mott's head carefully and looked at the back of it. Ashel was a bloody brute there. "Made sure, didn't they?" said Sergt. Graney.

"Unh unh," said Ashel. "But that was just a tap. Somethin' big an' heavy, though." For a moment he stood gazing steadfastly at the corpse, then he peered more closely. About the mouth the skin next the lips seemed irritated, as if chapped. Ashel reached out and placed his forefinger delicately at the side of Dr. Mott's mouth.

There was a slight stickiness there. "What the hell, pop?" asked Graney. He was shocked.

"Don't rightly know, Mistuh Graney," said Ashel now examining Dr. Mott's wrists; always the rolled-down the physician's socks. And on either wrist as on either ankle, there was an irritation something that like about the mouth, but harsher, as if something had burned the skin. Ashel looked as if he had expected that, but his hair was the irritation on the right wrist he saw something that puzzled him. This was a break in the deep tan of Dr. Mott's skin, a band of white that completely encircled the wrist. Ashel frowned, tugged his mustache and left the summerhouse abruptly. Graney saw that he was scratching in the sod on either side of the short path that ran from the main path to the summerhouse.

"What you doin', pop?" he asked.

Ashel looked up. "Mistuh Graney," he said, "that fella got tapped on the head an' tied up mighty tight 'n' adhesive tape was stuck on his mouth. Then they haul him down to this place 'n' cut his throat. The wound in the throat's newen' the one in the head. Then they took off the rope 'n' adhesive tape and 'n' stole somethin' he wore on his wrist—a watch, probably."

"How do you get that?"

Ashel explained. "But why," he went on, "they took the watch, I don't get. Nothin' else gone from his pockets at all. Don't make a bit o' sense."

"Maybe it was worth lots o' dough."

"Maybe—" Ashel looked up from the sod—but Mistuh Graney why'd they go to all that fuss to tie him up 'n' gag him 'n' bring him down here after tappin' off the head, to take a watch? If it was a watch then cut his throat?"

Graney didn't know. Ashel went off like a hound on the other side of the hedge toward the house. Graney, following along the path, met him at the end of the hedge.

"No sign," said Ashel. "Brought him by the path, I reckon."

Officer Gray was sitting on the stoop of the side door to the Ring house. Officer Gray was grinning sardonically. "Guess y' didn't find much," he said.

"Reckon not."

"Guess I could 'a' told you that."

Officer Gray fanned himself languidly with his cap. "Guess y' got some more smart alecs over in Nyo York, smart man."

"Lissen—" began Graney, but Ashel interrupted.

"Did Doctuh Mott have a watch, Officuh Gray?" he asked.

"Guess he did. Guess he'd have one, bein' a doctor."

"Wear it on his wrist?"

"Guess I don't know."

"Reckon we'll go see Miz Ring," said Ashel, and then: "D' you ever go to sea?"

"Sure I went to sea. Everybody over here, pretty near, goes to sea one time or another, I guess."

"So I reckon you're pretty good with knots, Officuh Gray?"


UNITY RING awaited them, in her drawing-room. It was a quiet room, Colonial and charming, with Duncan Phyfe sofas and tables and with heavy old mahogany Windsor chairs. On the walls were fine prints of old clipper ships.

Unity Ring, herself, sat erect in a Windsor chair across from the room from the hall entrance, and both Ashel and Graney caught their breaths sharply. For Unity Ring was beautiful. Her hair was dark and long and her eyes blue and stately, with a hint of tragedy in their depths. The corners of her mouth otherwise turned down in an expression that told either of intense suffering or intense emotion. A rather tall woman, she sat oddly in her chair and she smiled at them.

"How-de-do, ma'am," said Ashel. "Sorry to bother you, but it's gotta be done, I reckon."

"Of course," she said. She rose and drew up two of the heavy chairs for them.

Her hands were long and shapely. Strength and character were in them. There was a dark and enigmatic, unfamiliar fascination about them. In a way they were beautiful.

"Do your own housework, ma'am?" asked Ashel.

"Why yes," she said, "I have to, since my husband—" she hesitated—"died. I can't afford a servant. Why do you ask?"

"Just gettin' placed. This house belonged to your husband's family?"

"For over a year. It was left to me, since he was the last of the line."

Ashel was thoughtful. The woman looked at him quizzically.

"I suppose," she said, "you found old David rather a trial."

"Unh unh, not so pleasant."

"You'll have to excuse him," she said.

"You see, they're rather provincial over
Her Husband’s Friend

here, I am, myself, I suppose.”
“Was you engaged—” Ashel’s question was startling—to marry Doctuh Mott, Mix Ring?”
She seemed confused. “Why,” she said, “we—that is, there was nothing really definite, but—”
“He wanted to?”
“Very much. . . . But, officer, isn’t this a little—”
“Maybe. He was your husband’s good friend?”
“His best. My husband worshipped Dr. Mott. They went through school together.” Her eyes filled. “There were those who thought Dr. Mott was not all he should be, but not my husband. He loved him. They were friends and confidants.”
“I see,” said Ashel. “Was your husband wealthy?”
“Not very. But he wanted to be. That’s why he made those speculations.” Again her eyes filled. “We would sit in the summerhouse on warm nights and he’d talk about it. He’d tell me his dreams there, looking out at the bay, and he was like a poet, then. He was very ambitious for us. His life’s dream was a hospital down there and he wanted Dr. Mott and himself to control it. That was why he wanted wealth, why he made those speculations. For the hospital. Next to myself, I think, came the hospital. And when he lost everything, when he realized his life’s dream was broken, why—” She brushed her eyes and looked at Ashel. “Do you know what it is to dream, officer?”
Ashel looked at her with kindly gravity. Did he know what it was to dream? There had been almost fifty futile years.
“Yes, ma’am,” he said. “I surely do.”
“Then you’ll understand, perhaps . . . I go there at night now and relive all those dreams.” She paused, shook her head. “I’m sorry,” she continued. “I’m afraid all this isn’t at all interesting . . . Is there anything I can tell you that you’d like to know?”
“Why,” he cleared his throat. “Just two things ma’am,” he said. “What—” he spoke softly— “did Doctuh Mott wear on his wrist?”
Her eyes showed her surprise. “Didn’t David tell you?” she asked. “Something my husband gave him . . . A voodoo charm.”
“Charm!”
Ashel’s voice was sharp. “Why yes,” she said. “My husband, like so many Pawhansett boys, went to sea. He got the charm, a wooden bracelet with a leather clasp, from a witch-doctor down in Haiti. It’s a rare thing, very difficult to obtain, and very valuable. Professor Provene was so excited about it. He really yearned for it—he specializes in things like that, you know—and said he’d give half his money for it. He was forever studying it—that is, until the bitterness between him and Dr. Mott. He tried to get it away from Dr. Mott, but Dr. Mott was rather superstitious. He put great faith in it and always wore it. But I’m afraid—” Her voice broke a little. “It didn’t work very well.”
“Did you know it was gone?”
“Gone!” She started. “Why that’s strange.”
“Professor Provene,” said Graney suddenly. “Don’t he work in witch-
(please turn to page 72)

“Sticky Hand Lotions are Impossible”

Mrs. Elly Colburnson

Famous Bridge Expert Keeps Her Hands Lovely This Time-Saving Way

I MPOSSIBLE, especially for bridge players. I don’t like to be conscious of my hands at a card table; they must look well and feel well if my mind is to stay on the game. I use Pacquin’s all the time because I don’t have to wait for it to dry,” says Mrs. Colburnson. “I just rub a bit on and each time I am amazed how quickly it goes in! There is none of that sticky film lotions usually leave. And it has an immediate softening and whitening effect. It’s really the only hand treatment for a busy woman. I take Pacquin’s everywhere I go. My hands can’t do without it.”

The reason that Pacquin’s does not make your hands moist and sticky is that this remarkable cream actually feeds your skin. It sinks right into the inner layers of skin where it is needed. Utterly different from the lotions that remain on the outer skin until finally evaporation dries them.

No wonder Pacquin’s gives you soft, white, smooth hands! Send for the introductory jar today.

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Dept. 2-A, 101 West 31st Street, New York, N. Y.
Please send me your generous trial jar of Pacquin’s Hand Cream for which I enclose 10c.
Name
Address
City
State

Pacquin’s Hand Cream

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
craft an’ voodoo an’ things like that?”

“Yes, he—” She stopped, her eyes suddenly wide with consternation. “No, no!” she cried. “You mustn’t think that! Caleb Provene would never— Even if Wilhelm and Prudence—”

“But who’d want the charm, ma’am? Why’d anyone take it?”

“I don’t know, but Caleb—” She breathed deeply. “Is there anything else you’d like to know, officer?”

“Yeah,” said Ashel after a short silence. “Miz Ring, why’d you ask all those people here together, knowin’ their feelin’s?”

Unity Ring managed to smile then. It lighted the tragic beauty of her face, mitigating a little the sorrow of her eyes.

“I thought you’d ask that,” she said. “Well, they were all my friends. I wondered—I hoped, since we’d all grown up together, that somehow they could be reconciled, but it didn’t work out that way. I’m sorry now. And after what happened—”

She shuddered.

“Do you s’pect anyone, ma’am?”

“Not a soul. Mr. Lingle,” she said, “could no more have done that horrible thing than Caleb Provene.”

“But they threatened him.”

“What of that? They were angry and upset because of my silly party, that was all.”

Ashe rose. “Come on, Mistuh Graney,” he said. “We gotta be on our way. Thank you, ma’am. You been a lot o’ help.”

“Have I?” she said. “I don’t see how.”

“Never mind.” Ashel smiled at Unity Ring. She was standing now, and again they caught their breaths. Unity Ring was statuesque; not over thirty, her beauty in full bloom. Ashe, watching her, felt a strange stirring in his heart. He sighed.

“Don’t worry,” he said.

SHE thanked him with her eyes. She lifted the heavy chairs, put them back in their places as Ashel and Graney started from the room. But Ashe stopped before a photograph that sat alone on a little table near the entrance. It was of a man who had strong, handsome features and the wide, affectionate eyes of the dreamer. The silver frame was polished and burnished and fresh flowers stood by it on the table.

“Your husband, ma’am?”

“Yes.”

“He must ’n been a fine fellow, ma’am.”

“I loved him,” she said, “more than my life.”

Ashe and Graney went outside. Officer Gray, still fanning himself, looked at them with disgust.

“Officuh Gray,” said Ashe, “’d you know that Dootch Mott wore a brace-let?”

“Guess I did.”

“’N’ did you know it was missin’ now?”

“Guess I knew that, too.”

“Then why’n’t you tell us?”

“Guess you never asked me.” Ashe heard Graney draw in his breath in an angry hiss and said hurriedly: “Reckon we didn’t. You c’n have the body taken to the undertaker’s now, Officuh Gray. You’ll do that, won’t you?”

“Guess I will,” said Officer Gray.

“Guess I c’d take care of everything, if it warn’t for smart aces from Noo York.”

“Maybe so,” said Ashe, grabbing the irate Graney’s arm. “Then I’d love to know how Dootch Mott got down here, Officuh Gray?”

“N-nope.”

Officer Gray turned and entered the Ring house. Ashe, still holding Graney, went around the house to the street.

“By Gosh! I can’t believe that guy was a little younger, I’d take a poke—He’ll get reported, though!”

“No he won’t, Mistuh Graney,” said Ashe. “He’ll f-tell. Officuh Gray’s all right in his way.”

“Why hell!” blustered Graney. “He acts like we was dirt. He—”

“Mistuh Graney, he acts like we was intruders.”

Graney, grumbling, fell silent. They walked on, but they were acutely aware that from the windows of the old houses gull-like faces looked out at them with hostility.

“God, what a town!” said Graney.

“What a woman!” said Ashe absently. “What an uncommon woman!”

THEY reached the residence of the Proveens and found it, like the Ring house old and dignified, surrounded by dense shrubbery. Their knock was answered by a woman in her early thirties with sombre black eyes and a grim mouth. But there were traces of an early beauty in her fading face. Once, it seemed, that beauty, well shaped, would have been beautiful in lasting; but the eyes, sombre and bitter now, might have been lovely with the light of happiness. She looked at them coldly.

“How-do-do,” said Ashe. “You Miss Proeven?” And when she nodded: “I’m Ashe Mayhew o’ the Homieide Squad, an’ this is Sergeant Graney o’ the same outfit. We come to look into that Mott business, Miss Proeven.”

The woman’s deep eyes clouded. “I suppose we’ll have to put up with it,” she said, “Come in!”

They followed her into the house.

“Caleb—she calls him,” said Ashe. “The New York police are here. We’ll have to tolerate it, I suppose . . . In here,” she finished, entering the first room off the hall.

It was a grim room, rather hideous in the Victorian manner. And in the corners stood strange objects. There were voodoo drums; there were fetches and totems; there was a curious stone with a cavity in the top of it. It was, Ashe knew, a primitive sacrificial altar. With Graney, he sat down on a horse- hair sofa across from Prudence Proveen. She looked at them with cold indifference. And they said nothing until Caleb Provene came into the room. He was a tall man, gaunt and bald, with burning black eyes and the same grim expression that marked his sister.

“Well,” he said coldly, “what is it?”

“Just a question —two,” said Ashe. “I s’pose you know ’bout Dootch Mott’s bracelet, Professuh Proeven?”

Proeven stared. He seemed confused, but he controlled himself.

“Naturally. It is a rare bracelet, only worn by certain voodoo people.”

“It is supposed to bring infallibility and invulnerability to the wearer. I always wondered how Amos Ring happened to get it.”

“You’d like to have it, Professuh?”
Her Husband's Friend

“Naturally. I would have given a great deal of money for it.”

“An’ I s’pose you know it wasn’t found on the body?”

Caleb Proveen started. Prudence Proveen, a peculiar smile on her face, her eyes reflective, said:

“It came true!”

“What you mean by that, Miss Proveen?”

“Why—” Prudence Proveen’s voice held a note of triumph—“he always said that if he ever lost it, disaster would overtake him. And it has! It has!”

“Prudence!” Her brother’s voice was at once reproach and a warning. He turned to Ashel.

“I suppose,” he said, “you are implying some connection between the murder and me because of the bracelet. That is your privilege. However, I can tell you you’re wrong. I’m glad that man is dead, but—” He paused. “And I’m not surprised. It was his destiny. The only thing that surprised me about last night”—he spoke as if thinking aloud—“was Unity’s extraordinary tactlessness.”

“You threatened Dr. Mott,” said Grane suddenly.

Caleb Proveen laughed with contempt.

“Quite right, and what of it?”

“Nothin’,” said Ashel. “Nothin’ now, anyway. Come on, Mistih Grane.” He rose. “An’ thank you so much.” At the door, however, he hesitated.

Caleb Proveen had vanished, but Prudence Proveen was showing them out.

“I s’pose,” said Ashel, “that Miz Ring is usually a very tactful woman?”

“Very!”

The door slammed in their faces.

“Cheese!” said Grane. “We ain’t what you’d call popular in Pawhanssett, pop... What about the Professor? That bracelet...”

“Mistih Grane, I doubt if Professor Proveen’d commit murder for that bracelet, although Professor Proveen might commit murder... Let’s go paver with Lingle.”

The hardware store was on Pawhanssett’s main street. Simon Lingle, behind the counter, looked at them peevishly as they entered. He was of medium height, fair of hair, blue of eye, rather plump, average and commonplace in general appearance. He was looking over a tray of knives as they entered. Ashel eyed the knives as he questioned the hardware merchant. But Simon Lingle, like the Proveens, added nothing to their information, at first, although he admitted threatening Mott; admitted, too, that the death of the doctor gave him satisfaction.

“He had it coming,” he said. “I’m not surprised. The only thing—” he paused, as Caleb Proveen had paused—“that surprises me about last night was Unity’s tactlessness.”

“Do you know where your wife is, Mistih Lingle?”

“My wife?” The commonplace face flushed. “Yes, I know where she is. I’ve phoned her every day—” his voice broke a little—“since she left. Lately, she’s been with Mott again and most of the time, if that’s any information to you.”

From the expression on Ashel’s face it was, and important information. There was excitement in Ashel’s eyes.

“But today,” Simon Lingle’s face (Please turn to page 74)

Shh, Betty!... You’re much too big to cry. Let’s get Aunt Alice to tell us why a nice little girl feels so weepy and cross all of a sudden.

“This little girl says she doesn’t want to play, either, Mother. Perhaps it’s constipation that’s making her so listless. I’d give her Fletcher’s Castoria tonight.”

“Oh, Aunt Alice!—I’m just fine today!—Yes, I had my Fletcher’s Castoria last night—and Mother says to tell you that she thinks it’s simply wonderful!”

“I’m so glad you’re better, Betty, dear! You tell your Mother that Fletcher’s Castoria is made especially for children just like you. And it hasn’t a thing in it that would hurt your little baby brother, either. He’ll love the taste of it just as much as you do.”

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News for Radio Fans!—“Razzy” and his gang are on the air for Fletcher’s Castoria now. Be sure to listen in on this genial Master of Ceremonies and enjoy the likeliest, merriest gang of fun and melody makers that ever set the airwaves dancing. Don’t miss it! Saturdays, 8 to 8:15 P.M. Eastern Standard Time. Columbia Broadcasting System—coast-to-coast network.
Her Husband’s Friend

(Continued from page 73)

suddenly glowed—"she phoned me. She's coming back. And—" he spoke almost fiercely now, as if defying them to blame him for his lack of pride—"I’ll take care of it!

He turned to wait on a customer. Ashel, still excited, beckoned to Graney and started for the door, but at the door they were met by a small boy.

"You Ashel Mayhew?" asked the boy, and when Ashel nodded, he thrust out a piece of paper from Ashel took it, the boy darted out the door.

"Get him!" snapped Ashel and Graney hurried into the street.

But presently, "Damn it!" he snarled. "These yokels're like clams. The kid's gone up in thin air!"

"Never mind," said Ashel thoughtfully. He handed the sergeant the paper.

And Graaney read:

"The wise wind. their own business. They find it ploy..."

The note was printed in straggly letters and in pencil.

"What is Graney looked angrily about at the people on the street. "I'll bring over some strong-arm boys an! take this damned town apart."

"Let's go home now, Mistuh Graney," said Ashel quietly.

They went, homely, strangely subdued, Ashel lost in thought, Graaney grimly attending to the operation of the boat. But when they were moored at the little anchorage in the East River near their homes, Ashel said:

"Mistuh Graney, you make the report. I'll go in!"

"What kind o' business, pop?"

"Business," said Ashel, as if the murder of Dr. Mott had vanished from his mind, "with the New York Stock Exchange...

But the murder of Dr. Mott had not vanished from Ashel's mind. That night he strapped on his holster and prepared to leave the house.

"Where you goin', pop?" asked Graney.

"Staten Island," said Ashel.

"Well, why'n you say so? I'll go along."

"Mistuh Graney, you’re not goin’. I gotta rob a house, maybe."

Graney seemed to have decided hurrying out.

The boat sped down the river through the summer moonlight, past the great piled illumination of Manhattan and Brooklyn, bounded out across the wide bay and out down the dark shore of Staten Island, turning as the coast curved southward. Ashel had stillled the motor before he threw a line over an old bollard on the wooden pier and warped the boat against the dock.

The boat, he hurried up the beach to the next stairway and ascended it softly. At the top, he paused, listening, no sound except the quiet of the night. Cautionly, then, he made his way through the trees to the edge of the Ring lawn, there listening sharply to work toward the front of the property. When on a line with the rear of the house, he stopped to listen again. But the only sound was the distant sigh of the sea and the murmur of the night wind in the old trees. The trees filtered the moonlight, mottling the lawn.

He started across the lawn, keeping in the shadow of the trees, but halted abruptly. Directly ahead, behind a huge oak, he had seen a shadowy figure. Who it was, what it was, he did not know. He could not be entirely sure it was anything. What he had seen was a wisp of movement, a shadow-like restlessness by the tree.

He remained motionless for a moment, then advanced slowly. And all the time he thought he was not prepared for the sudden rush of a man who stood behind the oak. The rush brought the man to Ashel, knocked the man from Missouri to the ground.

Silently then, they rolled over and over, Ashel holding a wrist of his assailant, bending the arm back fastening him farther and farther, for in the hand was a gun. His assailant suddenly loosed the hold he had on Ashel with his other hand and reached for the gun. But Ashel, who had struggled until he was now on top, had been waiting for that. His other hand free, it streamed out in a sharp uppercut to his assailant's jaw. Beneath him, the struggling form became quiet.

Ashel threw his flash on the man beneath him and stared, with wide eyes, into the sunken features of Officer Dolf Gray.

He frowned, but gradually a smile broke his face. He looked about the grounds, but saw no one. Apparently, Ashel had had no time, not even when he dropped to his knees and chafed Officer Gray's wrists. Presently, the old policeman opened his eyes. For a moment he stared vacantly, then glared as he recognized the detective.

"Damn you!" said Officer Gray. "You boroughlllllllllllllll." But Ashel had his hand over the policeman's mouth. Ashel, his voice suddenly and surprisingly hard, said, "Quiet! One more chirp out o' you, Oofch Gray an' I'll have you basted! I'll have you send up the river f'r inter- ferin' with justice, Oofch Gray!"

The sullen features beneath him contorted with anger, but then relaxed in a tangle of fear. Ashel rose and handed the old cop to his feet.

"Where's Miz Ring?" asked Ashel.

"In the summerhouse," said the old cop.

"Unh hunh," said Ashel. He grinned. "So you was gonna try for it, Oofch Gray? You guessed too?"

"Yeah," said Officer Gray.

Ashel stood in thought for a moment. "I reckon I'll have to do it, instead, Oofch Gray," he said. "Sorry." He handed the gun to the policeman. "Take that an' put it up, f'r the time bein'. I'm goin' in the house."

Officer Gray nodded. He seemed afraid of Ashel's hardness.

The man from Missouri, without so much as a backward glance at the old policeman, started again across the yard. He crouched, keeping below the line of the shrubbery, keeping within the shadow of the trees, avoiding the pools of moonlight that fell between them. At the rear door of the Ring house he paused, and then moved toward the summerhouse. But he could only see it vaguely through the trees. That meant, conversely, that if there were any within it was improbable that they could see him.

He opened the screen door and stepped within. The house was filled with a ghostly silence. Ashel, his steps painfully slow, moved down the hallway to the living-room entrance. There, a stairway ran up to the second floor and he halted abruptly. Above
Her Husband’s Friend

he had heard something, slight but definite. It was the creaking of the stairway. For a moment, he thought that it might be only the stirring of the old house, but the creaking became regular. Someone was descending the old stairs.

Ashel jammed himself into the corner by the front door. Whoever had been on the stairs was in the hall now and was moving stealthily toward the door. Ashel could feel the uncanny presence of a human body in the darkness. He heard the latch rattle, heard the knob turn, and then, slowly, a vertical beam of light widened as the door was opened cautiously. In it, Ashel beheld the figure of a man.

The man was moving slowly and stealthily, but he froze to the floor as the finger of Ashel’s flashlight struck him.

“Good-evenin’,” said Ashel.

The man turned. Ashel looked into the skull-like face, into the burning eyes of Professor Caleb Provene. The Professor’s lips drew back in a wolfish snarl.

“You scoundrel!” said Provene. “You devilish scoundrel!”

It occurred to Ashel that Professor Provene’s face resembled the ritualistic masks of the religions he studied.

“You guess I’ll have to take it from you,” said Ashel.

Professor Provene’s lips trembled.

“Take what?”

“I reckon you know, Professor Proveen. I reckon—” again the curious hardness crept into Ashel’s voice—“you know a thing or two, ‘cause I’m waitin’ on you, Professor Proven!”

By the source of the light in Ashel’s hand an old .44 gleamed. Professor Provene saw it and in his burning eyes there appeared a glint of fear. He reached in his pocket and jerked something from it, which he handed to Ashel.

Ashel thrust it into his own pocket. “Y’ see, I was after it, too, Professor Proven. Where was it?”

“In her bureau drawer,” Ashel nodded. “So you’d even commit burglary for it, Professor Proven?”

The scholar’s eyes gleamed wildly. “A sinner? No sir, sayd huskyly, ‘I reckon you don’t know. It’s a wonderful thing! It’s rare and precious. God, how I’ve wanted it!”

“Tough!” said Ashel and then: “Well, get goin’, Professor Proven, but don’t go too far. You won’t be able to anyway, but I’m still warnin’ you. I’ll warn you later, Professor Proven, an’ I don’t want you to have to hunt!”

The professor glared, then hurried out, closing the door gently behind him.

Ashel, with odd carelessness, walked through the house and to the path that was flanked with privets. He walked rapidly, but softly, down the path, until he came to the walk that led to the summerhouse. At the door of the summerhouse, he stopped.

Within the summerhouse, standing by the anchor beneath the figurehead and looking out to sea, was a motionless figure.

Ashel knocked on the door frame. The figure whirled, a little scream escaping its lips.

“‘S only me, ma’am,” said Ashel.

Unity Ring stared. In the moonlight that fell through the windows she could (Please turn to page 78)
Her Husband's Friend

(Continued from page 75)

see him plainly. The chime of the ship's bell sounded six times.

"You—you forgot something?"

"No," he said, but he smiled. "I just wanted to tell you something, ma'am."

"What is it?"

She sat down on the wall seat that ran around the summerhouse and he sat nearby.

"It's a story," he said.

"A story?"

"Yeah, a story about two men 'n a woman."

He glanced at her eyes and saw that she watched him intently. "These two men was best friends, ma'am, or, leastways, they seemed to be. An' one of 'em really believed they was best friends. But the other'n was jealous of his friend. He wanted his friend's wife an' he was jealous of his friend in professional ways, too. But he didn't let on.

"Gen'rally, he was a pretty bad man, an' several people used to do him in, but his friend was always loyal.

"Now this fella was good with women, so first off he goes after his friend's wife, An' she finds that blind, first off, she had a yen for him, too, so that's all settled. They knew the husband was plannin' big things cause they thought, he told the wife an' he confided in the friend, so they see a way to ruin the husband an' when the husband starts carryin' out the plans they take steps.

The plans got to do with investment an' speculatin' an' when the husband starts buyin' on margins, they, hain't no other broker, start sellin' short what the husband buys an' that ruins the husband.

That breaks him absolutely. An' then the wife runs the husband's account an' his plans an' dreams busted, but not knowin' the reason, gets depressed an' goes away with himself, as they knew he would, knowin' how sensitive he was.

"So then they're free to do what they like an' they got a lot o' money."

Ashel paused a moment but Unity Ring. She was watching him narrowly, her chest heaving with her labored breathing.

"Now that's all clear," he continued, "cause it's easy to investigate at the Stock Exchange an' at the brokers, an' the wife made the mistake of going there with the friend, so her part's clear's his.

"Well, everything looks good to the wife, she wants they was goin' to get married after a respectful period o' mournin'—but she'd forgot that he's a scoundrel like herself, an' suddenly he takes up with a woman he'd been goin' with before he made his play for the wife. Havin' the money an' the friend's professional practice, he don't care so much for the wife anymore. An' this is clear, cause the husband o' the other woman c'n testify to it.

"Well, it 'bout drives the wife crazy, I reckon, so she does a little plannin' all her own an' gives a little party an' invites everybody who's been hurt by this man, which makes 'em wonder 'bout her, 'cause with all her nastiness, this woman's always been smooth an' tacful.

"But I guess she sort o' wanted to round everything. Officer Gray was standing in the door of the summerhouse. He was staring at Unity Ring. Then he looked irritably at Ashel.

"Well, I guess you got her," he muttered. "Guess you did a good job, too,

An apple a day may keep the doctor away, but a carton of KOLs is a sure way to keep a comfortable smoking throat always on tap! KOLs are mildly mentholated to cool the smoke, to bring out the full flavor of the choicest tobaccos used. Cork-tipped to save lips. B & W coupon in each pack of KOLs good for attractive nationally advertised merchandise. (Offer good in U.S.A. only.) Send for latest illustrated premium booklet.

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Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp., Louisville, Ky.
but I'd 'a' liked to do it myself."
Ashel smiled. "Why?" he said,
"Officuh Gray, she's your pris'ner. I
just helped out, that's all. An' here's
what I'll clinch the case for you. Pro-
feessuh Proveen found it in Miz Ring's
drawer." He handed Officer Gray the
voodoo bracelet. "Professuh Proveen
was just leavin' as I went in the house,
but he won't go far so you c'n subpoena
him. He'll talk, too, 'cause no matter
how interested a man is in what he's
studyin', it ain't no license for burglary
so I guess he'll make a good witness in
trainin' off." Ashel grinned at the gap-
ing Gray. "You wanta take her over,
now? I got my boat down there. I
s'pect it'd be better, so's you c'n get
in your report."
Officer Gray was grinning, now. He
said nothing; he only held out his
hand.
"Guess you're a nice fella," said
Officer Gray. "Guess you know how
much this'll mean to me."
"I guess," said Ashel, but when they
were in the boat, speeding across the
dark bay, with the raging murderess
manacled to a seat behind them, he
said: "I got your note, Officuh Gray. I
wouldn't do that again, if I was you, no
matter how much I wanted to handle
a case myself. Just s'pose I'd 'a'
thought you might 'a' had something
to do with it? An' look how much
easier it'd 'a' been if we could 'a'
worked together."
Ashel looked owlishly at Officer
Gray. The old cop shook his head
thoughtfully. But later Ashel, after
listening to Graney's outraged sur-
prise because Officer Gray had been
given a medal for his solution of the
affair, said:
"Why, Mistuh Graney, Officuh Gray's
a smart man. He's a good cop."
And Graney, smarting from the
memory of Officer Gray's snubbing,
could not for the life of him tell
whether his sardonic father-in-law
was serious.

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No. 342—A dainty transparent hat-
stand cover.

No. 343—An engaging handbag
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3 circulars, or 15 cents for all six.
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**New shades LADY LILLIAN Nail Polish—in transparent and creme types—made to enhance the true color tones of your skin.**

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**Off the Record**

(Continued from page 23)

heroes from all the other states. The lawmakers always change the subject therefore when the floor in Statuary Hall is mentioned.

The statue of George Washington without a shirt is another of Congress' artistic worries.

In a little-visited chapel of the Smithsonian Institution stands this long-enduring shame of the Father of his Country.

It was back in 1832 that Congress decided it ought to have a statue of Washington for the place of honor in its Statuary Hall, and so commissioned one Horatio Greenough to sculpt it. He had achieved his reputation as an artist by producing naked cherubs in wholesale lots. If a man could carve a cherub out of marble, figured the legislators, he ought to be able to do the same for George Washington.

Greenough made the statue of Washington, all right, and then Congress' troubles began. The great figure fell through the bottom of a boat in a New England harbor. It cost $1,200 to rescue the statue and repair the boat.

The sculptor then brought it to Washington for the unveiling. When the cloth was pulled aside, Congress shuddered. There sat Washington, fifteen feet tall, with a marble sheet draped around his otherwise nude torso—even worse, Roman sandals.

That caused so much meleering that Congress hid its work of art in the Smithsonian Institution. There it has remained during the years. Tourist guides are careful to avoid it. So is Congress.

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**When the Truth Hurts**

THE Treasury Department is fitted with giant vaults, safes and such, which hold gold and which are supposed to be impervious to the blow torches and the drills of the most expert crackermen. The Treasury is that much has been reported in these columns before. In publicity handouts, formal statements and radio speeches Treasury officials always stress the impenetrability of their strong boxes. They think such news ought to keep robbers out of the Treasury. The Treasury is that no self-respecting safe-cracker would attempt to open a safe which wouldn’t open. It isn’t reasonable.

But:

The treasury had to hire a safe-cracker the other day to open one of its safes and—all the publicity notwithstanding—the blow-torch cut through the steel door like butter.

That presented a problem of conscience to Herbert E. Gaston, special assistant to Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr.

The safe held about $1,000,000 to pay off thousands of clerks on the first of the month. A lock slipped and jammed, department workmen wrestled with it to no avail, and a professional cracksmen was called in. He did his stuff in short order, the clerks got their money, and everybody was happy, save Gaston.

His job is that of press agent of the Treasury Department. He wondered whether he should deny that there had been any safe-cracking, and so uphold the legend of impregnability, or whether he should tell the truth. The truth hurt, but Gaston told it.

N. B. Those fake gold bricks, which some rascal swiped from a glass case in the Treasury’s lobby, still are missing, although the Secret Service sleuths under Chief W. H. Moran claim they’re still looking for them.

The gold-plated bricks, which were installed for the benefit of the tourist trade, aren’t worth much, but the Treasury wants them back, badly. Says its reputation is involved.

---

**How to Torture a Railroad**

THE Pennsylvania Railroad got a real scare when it ran smack into the Federal Commission of Fine Arts, composed of seven gentlemen whose duty it is to keep the nation’s capital pretty.

The railroad, which is electrifying its lines between New York and Washington, is erecting towers to carry the power lines and trolleys. Plain, ordinary poles are very well in New York and all the cities enroute, but when the pole setters reached Washington the Fine Arts Commission said, “Whoa, you can’t put up any poles until we see whether they’re artistic.”

So the Pennsylvania bought some supposed fancy poles and had them erected as samples. Then the Fine Arts Commissioners drove out, inspected the poles and finally allowed a part of the fancy electrification standards.

What might have happened had the Commissioners failed to approve any of the fancy poles, would be the mandate of the world template. Ask the Pennsylvania Railroad.

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The December Issue of

**MYSTERY**

will be on Sale November 1st. Get your copy early...The supply won’t last all month.
At the End of the Alley Was a Door
(Continued from page 51)

a fine income. As a matter of fact, Mr. Corcoran—when the patrolman called me over, when I came in here and looked at Clint, I didn’t consider suicide at all. I thought naturally, perhaps instinctively, that Clint had been shot. Of course, now, in the light of what this young lady said—Clint’s being depressed tonight—I am not so sure.”

They were interrupted by Bonno, who had been standing in the hallway conversing with someone. Bonno said, “Here’s an old lady from down the hall said that just after the shots she heard a door bang and like feet running.” “Yes,” said a little old lady in an antiquated boudoir cap. “Just about a minute after the shots.”

Tom Rockford barked, “Browning, what are you looking so scared about?” “Am I looking scared?” Browning asked flippantly. “By cripes, if that ain’t cooperation for you!” Tom Rockford stormed. “I ask him a question and he turns right around and asks me one!” He stamped his blunt heels across the floor and towered above Browning. “Young man, I didn’t like your paws when I first laid eyes on it and I ain’t getting to like it better. And I don’t like your wise-cracks, either. I suppose you didn’t hear a door bang, Mr. Browning?”

“I did,” said Browning. “I distinctly heard a door bang while I was up on the next floor above. It sounded—well, down below somewhere.”

Rockford turned on the girl. “Miss Powers, did you slam a door on your way out?” “No.”

“Did you hear a door slam?”

“I think—I think I did.”

“You think you did! You mean you think you slammed it?”

“No, I mean I think I heard a door slam. But I was so upset after hearing the shots, I can’t remember.”

Corcoran said, “Let’s go over and take a look at Dr. Sundstrand’s place. Do you mind, doctor?”

“Come on,” Sundstrand said, starting for the door.

Corcoran and Rockford went with him. They walked down the corridor, turned left, walked a matter of thirty odd feet, then turned left again and proceeded down a corridor similar to the one on which Devry’s apartment was located. Sundstrand explained that the apartments were built around a rectangular court, with the rear end open; his apartment was the last on the north wing, Devry’s was the first on the south wing. When they entered Sundstrand’s apartment, Corcoran noticed, except for the furnishings, it was structurally the same as Devry’s.

Sundstrand pointed to the window. It was open at the bottom, and above the opening the glass in both frames was shattered. Corcoran leaned in the open window, looked down, looked upward, and across at Devry’s apartment.

Rockford said, “Here’s the slug.” He was digging it from a panel of the wall opposite the window.

“All right,” Corcoran nodded. “Let’s go back.”

The three men left, and as they turned into the corridor on which Devry’s was located...
At the End of the Alley Was a Door
(Continued from page 79)

mody's apartment was located, they saw two uniformed cops rough-housing a man.

"Hey!" yelled Rockford. "What are you doing?" One of the cops turned, said, "We found this guy downstairs!"

"What do you mean, you found him downstairs?"

"Across the street, I mean. Me and Ike seen him leaning against a tree. We were grabbing a smoke downstairs. So when Ike called out the guy starts walking away. We ran over and cuffed him."

The young man was big and burly. His tie was hanging undone and the crown of his hat was lopsided. Brown hair bunched at his ears and his eyebrows were thick, bushy, and his face was red with anger and his breathing was heavy, noisy.

Rockford growled, "Well, young fellow, what have you got to say for yourself?"

"What have I got to say? I've got to say this to you: If these two muggs would chill their nightsticks and come in the street with me, I'd take 'em apart!"

"Oh, you would, would you?" said Rockford, slamming his fists against his hips. "You're a tough baby, eh?"

"Who said I'm tough? Did I say I was tough?"

"You open your mouth again in that tone, sweetheart, and I'll bust a tooth out," Rockford told him dully.

"That wouldn't surprise me a bit. With these two apes holding my arms, a baby could do that."

Corcoran said, "Look here," amiably. "You're all in two sweat and you're talking through your hat. Take it easy. You're not talking sense and you look like a pretty sensible fellow. When a murder's been committed, you can't expect policemen to go around mincing words or actions. What's your name?"

"Powers."

Corcoran and Rockford looked at each other.

"Come on," Corcoran said, and led the way to Dermody's apartment. Inside, he looked down at the girl. "Miss Powers—"

Her heels scraped suddenly on the floor as she saw the burly young man being thrust into the room. Her lips flew apart and an inarticulate cry was choked in her throat. The burly young man was scowling about the room, refusing to look at the girl.

"Miss Powers," Corcoran said, "I believe this is some relative of yours."

And I tell you to let her alone or I'll lick your face in.

Corcoran stepped between them. "Tom," he said, "pay no attention to him. Powers, take my advice and calm down. You're an unusually hot-headed young man, and doubtless you're able-bodied, but you can't—"

"Peter, Peter, sobbed the girl, "be good, Peter. Don't, don't get them angry, Peter. Don't—please, don't."

Rockford chuckled roughly. "Oh, so he's used to her."

"He's my husband," she said weakly.

"What!" exploded Tom Rockford. "You never said you were married! You never said—"

"No one asked me. You asked me my first and last name and I told you it was Elinor Powers."

Rockford pivoted and bent a chilled stare on Powers. "Did you ever slam a door behind you?" he demanded.

"Hundred's of times. What's it to you?"

ROCKFORD reddened with chagrin. He muttered, "Somebody remember to remind me to poke this guy in the snoot at headquarters. He looked at Corcoran mutinously. There's his wife. There's his Browning. Three people that've been doing an awful lot of closong around. And there's Dermody—dead. Marcus, I don't believe it's suicide."

Corcoran shrugged, said, "Tom, I never did believe it was suicide."

"And why not?" asked Jacobs, the coroner's man.

"Because," said Corcoran, "the fact that two shots were fired. Dermody's hobby was guns. You saw his collection in the other room. He was a member of a pistol club. He knew guns and how to handle them. He would have made a clean job of the first shot. I can't see any motive for a second shot. And I'm going on another premise—I think there've been powder marks if he'd shot himself."

Rockford was pointing. "Powers—his wife—Browning."

"One of them, Tom," Corcoran said; and added, "no, I hope it's not the young lady." He turned away. "I'm now going to make a thorough search of the apartment. He paused, then said, "By the way, where's the gun?"

"I sent it to headquarters with Schmidt for fingerprints," Tom Rockford replied.

"Five will get you ten if there are any prints on it."

"What's that?"

"If there are prints on it, they'll be Dermody's, and that'll mean suicide," Corcoran said. "No prints—and that'll mean murder. And this day and age murderers don't leave prints on guns."

Tom Rockford had a notebook out, pencil poised. He said across the room to Powers. "Your first name is Peter, eh? What's your age?"

"Twenty-five."

And your address, 695 Washington St.—"

"No, I'm living in a rooming house in Sykes Street—95 Sykes St."

Rockford scowled. "Put your wife's address—"

"Who said I was living with my wife? She's un- Mrs. Powers interrupted. "I'm living alone."

Rockford snapped his book shut. His

---

SOME women are "finished" at thirty. Then there's the type who never suffers defeat. At any age she's able to attract and hold men. Is it because she's so beautiful? Not always. At least half of these women are not beautiful. But they do breathe romance. They're glamorous. They know the art of being a woman, *of flattering themselves.*

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At the End of the Alley Was a Door

eyes and mouth became very round, and then his eyes grew very narrow, his mouth very stern, tight.

"I get it!" he muttered. "The young wife was playing itchy-kitchy with Dermo and young Powers took a bat at him and the wife is—by George!—the wife trying to cover him up! We've been blind, Marcus! Blind!"

Corcoran said bleakly, with a sigh, "You'd better arrest them, Tom. The three of them, Powers possibly as the killer, his wife and Browning as material witnesses."

Browning jumped up, a sneer on his face. "Swollen, red. I never saw these people before You can't pinch me—"

Rockford was to the point: "You're pinned, mister."

AT two the next afternoon Corcoran came briskly into his large, darkly paneled office, laid hat and lightweight chamois gloves on his desk and spent twenty minutes with routine matters.

No fingerprints had been found on the gun. It was obviously, definitely a case of murder. All that morning men out of Corcoran's office had been sent on various missions, here and there, throughout the city. Most of their reports, brief but full of facts, now lay on his desk. Corcoran, as early as nine that morning, had made a complete search of Dermo's apartment, in which, since the death, a policeman had been placed. He had found in one of the closest a small motion picture projector and several tins of exposed film. He had studied Dermo's collection of guns, of various calibers, various makes, all affectionately cloistered in plush cases. Not leather, because leather, in damp weather, is inclined to sweat and thereby the finish and operating mechanism of a gun are impaired.

At ten past two Corcoran's secretary looked in and said, "The sergeant just arrived with those three suspects. Do you want them in all at once?"

"No," Corcoran tossed some correspondence into a wire basket. "Browning first."

Browning, when he entered, looked a little less dapper, and this was due to the shadow of stubble on his face. He had not slept much and his eyes looked a little slimmer.

"Sit down, Mr. Browning," Corcoran said amiably, in a matter-of-fact tone, and picked up a slip of paper. When Browning had seated himself, Corcoran said in the same amiable manner, "Why did you lie about your name, Mr. Browning?"

"Lie about my name?"

"You ought to have known it was silly. None of my men checked up on you. It was simple. He merely went to the liquor concern that published those throw-aways and asked if they'd employed a Mr. Browning to dispose of them. They said no. He described you and they said the description sounded like their Curran, although Mr. Curran was not employed to dispose of the throw-aways. He was a salesman. Now what was the idea, Mr. Curran?"

The young man sighed. "Yes, yes, I'm Curran," he said.

"I know that. I asked you—"

"I know what you asked me," Curran interrupted sharply. "I can't tell you." (Please turn to page 82)
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"You mean you won't?" "Same thing. I'm nothing but a busybody. I can't be bothered with the inner workings of the building. My job is to keep the place clean."

Corcoran was not amused. He even smiled a little, dryly. "Do I have to remind you that you're being held in connection with a murder case? He met no one."

"I know all about that. But there's no law that says I have to answer your questions."

Corcoran leaned forward. "Mr. Curran, one of my men made a complete tour of that apartment house a little before noon. I have his report before me. He went to every tenant in the place. First he asked, 'Do you know a man named Browning?' Then, 'Do you know a man named Curran?'" Curran leaned back, his lips pursed, his high forehead wrinkled. "Do you know Mrs. Freed?"

Curran started, slapping his palms to the arms of the chair.

Corcoran said negligently, "Sure you do. She was the only one in the apartment house who got mixed up when my man questioned her. Now what about it, Curran? We haven't pinched her, but if you insist on stalling, we'll have to pinch her."

"Oh, no—for God's sake, don't do that!"

"Then what?"

CURRAN stood up and gripped the edge of the desk. His voice was low, clanged: "I didn't want to drag her into it. That's the level truth. I—you may think I'm a rat, sir—but—well, it's hard for you to understand. Please don't repeat this—please! Look—I love her. She loves me but—well, you know, she's married. To a guy she doesn't love—a guy that takes socks at her just for fun. I—I was in her apartment last night. He was out. I was just about to leave when the shots rang out, down the hall."

"The same corridor of the Dermody apartment."

"Yes. I was standing in Edith's doorway. I said good-bye quick and slammed the door and ran. I knew if there were shots there would be police and I didn't want to be there and answer questions."

"You ran past Dermody's door?"

"Yes."

"After the shots?"

"Oh, yes. The shots went off while I was standing in Edith's doorway. I guess I didn't start for a minute. Then I shoved Edith back, slammed the door and ran. I heard a thump as I went past the Dermody door, though of course at the time I didn't know where the shooting had taken place. When I got to the head of the stairs, I looked back, just for an instant."

"Did you see anyone come out?"

"No."

"Inspector Rockford's theory is that the killer left by the fireproof inner stairway—its door would then be down the hall past Mr. Freed's. You say you heard a thump?"

"Yes."

"Like a body falling?"

"No. More like some heavy object."

Corcoran said, "Mr. Curran, would you by any chance be trying to shield a woman member for the romantic element involved?"


"Yes. The only thing wrong with the inner fireproof stairway theory is that the building superintendent was at the bottom of that stairway, putting out milk bottles, when the shots rang out. He started up. He met no one."

Curran stared. "That is curious, isn't it?"

"Very. You will wait outside, Mr. Curran."

Elinor Powers and her husband were ushered in together. Corcoran, standing, nodded his head and said pleasantly, "Sit down, Mrs. Powers, Mr. Powers."

And when they had sat down: "Come now, when were you two estranged?"

Powers blew out an exasperated breath, rose and strode angrily around the office. His wife followed his movements with apprehensive eyes. Corcoran leaned back in his chair.

Powers stopped, exploded: "That's our business!"

His wife gestured to Corcoran, saying in a quick, panicky little voice, "Please—he goes off the handle easily but at heart he's—" She broke off to say to her husband, "Peter, please sit down, Peter."

He grumbled and sat down.

Elinor Powers said to Corcoran, "About a week ago—Peter left and went to live alone."

"Why?" Corcoran asked.

"He—he didn't want me to go out nights working."

"And you went out nights working?"

Corcoran nodded. "Yes," she said. "Why, Mr. Powers," Corcoran said, "did you object to your wife going out working at night?"

"Wouldn't you," demanded Powers, "get sore if your wife went out every night working? Am I a man or am I a mouse? I make forty bucks a week and we can live on that. Elinor is not so strong. I argued and argued with her and I got madder and madder."

Corcoran asked, "Did you object to her working or did you specifically object to her working for Dermody?"

"I objected to her working and I especially objected to her working for Dermody. He was a dirty old chaser."

"Peter!" her husband said; and then to Corcoran: "Mr. Dermody was a bachelor, and he did go out with a lot of young girls, but business was business with him. He was kind to me."

Corcoran looked at Powers. "Why were you hanging around in front of the apartment house last night?"

Powers scowled, shrugged. "I don't know. I—" he paused, waiting for Elinor to come out. I hadn't seen her in a week and I guess—Nuts! That's my business!"

"It's too bad, too bad," sighed Corcoran. "you haven't gotten an alibi."

Elinor Powers cried. "But I didn't kill Mr. Dermody! Peter wouldn't do a thing like that! He's hot-headed and all that but he wouldn't kill a man!"

Corcoran said knowingly. "Mrs. Powers, you'd try to shield him, of course. I'm afraid we're going to have to put you through a pretty tough inquisition—"

"If you guys think you can get tough with Elinor, I'll wreck the joint!"

He jumped up, his fists knotted.

Corcoran said, "I thought you'd left your wife. I thought you didn't love her any more."

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"Who said I don’t love her?" Powers shouted.

"Oh, Peter, dear!" Elinor cried.

The phone on Corcoran’s desk rang and he put the receiver to his ear.


THE limousine sped across town.

Corcoran sat in the back, his hat on the seat beside him. Gus, the chauffeur, tooled the big car expertly through a shifting web of traffic on State Street, hit Union Circle and made a left turn around the monument into South Broad Street. He cut over to Napoli Street and down Napoli.

Corcoran said, "Stop at the next block, Gus."

The district attorney got out in front of a shop specializing in artichokes. He walked up Levitt Street, dingy even at the height of the afternoon. John Warburg, one of his assistants, was loitering on the corner of Levitt and Bone. He was a small, young, commonplace man, and he said, pointed with his chin:

"The place over there."

It was an old frame building, its front door flush with the sidewalk. It seemed to lean to one side, a three-storied house, its paint peeling, its windows blank, empty. A For Sale sign was nailed beside the front door.

Warburg said, "See the alley on the right? He went in that. There’s a door down at the end of the alley. I saw him knock on that and go in."

"It figures," Corcoran said grimly. "I thought it did, too," Warburg nodded. "Should we knock?"

"No. We’ll take a chance either way, so let’s crash it."

"The side door?"

"No. If they hear a rumpus, they’ll think he was tailed to the side door and they’ll make for it. Let’s crash the front door."

They walked swiftly across the street. They did not pause to listen. Corcoran nodded and both men lunged at the door with their shoulders. There was a grating, splintering sound. They hit the door again and it whipped open and Warburg fell through the doorway. He was up in an instant. Corcoran went past him, drawing a gun. They were in a hallway. The rooms on either side were bare, dusty.

Corcoran ran down the hallway, punched open a door and burst into a kitchen. He saw an oil stove, lighted, with a large pot of steaming water on top. There was a stairway leading to regions above. Corcoran took the steps at a time, reached a corridor and saw a short, ragged old man stepping from a doorway. The man wore a coarse blue shirt. His sleeves were rolled up and he held a towel in his hands. Somewhere near at hand a door slammed.

Corcoran clipped, "Don’t make a move."

Warburg was at his heels gripping a small automatic.

"Cover him, John," Corcoran said, and strode past the small man into a furnished room. There was a door beyond and Corcoran grabbed the knob. The door was locked. The district attorney had entered.

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The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934

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(Continued from page 83)

...shattered the lock with two shots, kicked the door open and planted himself enthroned as Sundstrand was diving out of a doorway at the other side of the room.

"Stop, Mr. Sundstrand."

Sundstrand, still in motion, twisted part way around. Corcoran saw the gun. Corcoran fired and Sundstrand fell against the open door, slamming it back against the wall. His gun dropped and his mouth fell open. He remained standing against the door.

"Bad break, eh?" Corcoran said.

THERE was a man, naked from the waist up, lying on an operating table. This room was an elaborate operating room. There was a red smudge on the man's bare chest and the man lay quite motionless, senseless.

"What's the matter with him?" Corcoran asked.

Sundstrand breathed, "He's under ether."

"You were just about to operate?"

"He's carrying two slugs in him."

"Is there a phone here?"

"Down—in the kitchen."

Warburg appeared with the small old man manacled.

Corcoran said, "John, go down to the phone in the kitchen and call an ambulance. Leave the little fellow here. You put on a swell show, Sundstrand." Corcoran said. "It's too bad I decided to have your movements covered. There was a man watching your apartment from the time we left the murder scene last night. At that time, I suspected you only a little—and for no very concrete reason. This is, in fact, a very funny place for a swell doctor like you to have an operating room. Nothing like your excellent suite of offices on Webster Street. An operating room in an apparently empty house is very strange indeed. The unconscious fellow on the table looks a great deal like Dave Bonner, a racketeer."

Sundstrand said, "You should know."

"I do know. Those movie films of Dermody's gone wild? Well, they were taken about three years ago and one of them contained a lot of scenes of you and Dermody pitching horseshoes. Dermody was no good. You were excellent. Almost every time you tossed one it was a ringer. Then, on another reel, there were pictures of you and Dermody at some camp in the woods at target practice. He was excellent with a pistol. So were you. There was a close-up showing one of your targets on which you scored five times out of six in the black."

"In a check-up on Dermody I found that he was a strange bird. Anything for a story—even on his friends. Though he would always disguise names and places pretty cleverly. Among his notes I found one sheet of paper on which he'd written in long-hand, 'Notes for a book to be entitled Dr. Samartis.' He'd made only a few of his notes. One of his entries was this: I ought to lay the scene far away—possibly in San Francisco. The main character will be this tall, bald, so—society medico. He'll live among the right people, his practise will be among the very wealthy, his offices very elegant, indeed. I ought to place his secret office in an old abandoned warehouse near the river, where, for a stiff fee, he performs operations on, gives medical attention to the members of the underworld who have found Dr. Samartis. It was interesting. And I had you shadowed, on a long chance."

Sundstrand muttered in a slow, ironic voice. "Lucky, huh?"

"You've been here a long time. Last night you were sure one of those three killed him."

"I wasn't sure, Sundstrand. Nothing seems right but we had to hold them. You made it plain that you thought Dermody had not committed suicide and that you threw a cloud of murder—against the others. That was very clever. But the way things have lined up, the others couldn't have done it. Your someone was on the fireproof stairway at the time of the shooting and he saw no one escaping over that route. The girl was ahead of this chap Browning on her way down the regular staircases. Browning heard a thump inside Dermody's room as he passed it. The girl couldn't have seen it, because she was ahead, on her way down the stairs. And it was not the thump of a body. It was the thump of a gun falling on the floor. Dermody didn't drop it because there were no prints on it—and hence it wasn't suicide. And it wasn't Dermody's do, either that slammed. His door never did slam because no one, after the shots, came out of his place."

"What you did, Sundstrand, is this. You borrowed Dermody's gun. Exactly when, I don't know. He took good care of his guns. All those we found were nicely finished in each case. We did not, however, find the十三五e case for the murder weapon. When he lent you the gun, he lent you the case with it."

You destroyed the case. You saw Mrs. Powers leave his apartment and this was an opportune time for you to kill him, thus throwing suspicion on the woman. You aimed, shot, killed him instantly. You reached out of your window, fired from the outside of your window in through your own window pane, thus giving the impression that one of the shots, supposed to have been fired in Dermody's room, went wild, crashed through your window, imbedded itself in your wall. Then you took careful aim—you were wearing glasses and you had to be careful. You took careful aim and tossed the gun across the court into Dermody's apartment. Your expertness pitching horseshoes served you well. But you shouldn't have murdered him, Sundstrand."

"Why not?" demanded Sundstrand angrily. "He was the only one who knew about my place here. That in itself wasn't so bad, because Dermody would never have told anyone about it out and out. But the fool had a complex. The dramatic values of the situation got the best of him—and one night last month, when he was tipsy, he kidded me and said he was going to write it up, making names and places. When he was sober, next day, he denied he was going to write it. But I knew him—I knew his complex. I knew that if he wrote it people would begin to snoop around, suspicion. I—I couldn't take the risk!"

Corcoran shrugged. "So you took a greater risk—with murder. The district attorney smiled shyly. "And in a cock-eyed sort of way you brought a young estranged couple together."

Warburg said, "The ambulance is on the way."

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(Continued from page 35)

guage, impressing the victim with illusions of great wealth waiting to be plucked. Often this man doubles as the feeler.

Bookmaker—He who pretends to be an official of a racetrack betting exchange or an official of the stock exchange or a brokerage firm. He acts as scenarist and frequently handles the actual transaction in an aloof and indifferent manner.

Right jug—A bank that furnishes services for the transactions without questioning or suspicion.

Blow-off—The gentle act of taking the victim’s money while convincing him that it has been legitimately lost through a grievous error. This is always handled with a vast show of regret and sorrow and all of the boys always appear to have lost along with the victim.

Pay-off—Obvious from its terminology. The joyous division of the swag: fifteen per cent to the local police fixers; the remainder being divided among the gang, with forty-five per cent going to the steerer and fifty-five per cent to the footer. There are subdivisions within these percentages.

Recent Oddities, Attitudes and Other Things

The aged lately have shown distinct signs of youth. There is the case of an elderly gentleman, 94, of Hammonton, N. J., who fly with two shots at his wife, Ida, 70, “not,” he explained, “to kill or injure her, but to scare her.” Police, who held him in $500 bail, declared he was eminently successful in his plans. They also said that he claimed his wife, despite her three-score-and-ten years, was overly friendly with other men.

IN Two Rivers, Wis., Policeman Sol Mathies, although now a minion of the law, cannot forget that once he crooned softly in an orchestra. He loved popular songs, as witness his entry on the blotter after returning from settling a family argument: “Make papa love mama again, All O. K.”

Chicago has reported that its public enemies are dwindling. “Liquidating,” is the term the officials used. “But,” adds the report, with engaging frankness, “for the most part, the liquidating was done by the Public Enemies themselves.”

IN Turkey they have a new method of dope peddling. Police have uncovered a vast system by which drugs are transported and sold, stuffed into very tasty-looking, dressed chickens.

THE New York Post carried, not long ago, an account of a strange method of determining justice in the middle ages. The King of France, on October 8, 1361, decreed that Providence should decide the guilt or innocence of a man. The man, a Chevalier of France, accused of murdering a Monseigneur, was pitted against the Monseigneur’s dog in mortal combat, the dog having shown murderous (Please turn to page 86)

GET TWO SMOKE THRILLS FOR ONE MINT

A Life Saver after each cigarette gives you a cleaner taste in your smoke-tired mouth...a keener taste for the next smoke!

A FAMOUS FLAVOR... WINT-O-GREEN LIFE SAVERS

HELPS TO AVOID Colds

Vicks Va-tro-nol is real medication—yet is perfectly safe—for children and adults alike. And so easy to use—any time or place. Keep a bottle always handy—at home and at work.

Note! For Your Protection

The remarkable success of Vicks drops—for nose and throat—has brought scores of imitations. The trade-mark “Va-tro-nol” is your protection in getting this exclusive Vicks formula.

Always ask for Vicks Va-tro-nol.

TWO GENEROUS SIZES—30¢ and 50¢

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hatred of the Chevalier when brought into his presence. As the dog had accompanied its master on the fatal journey, this aroused the suspicions of the authorities. The dog won, and although the Chevalier was saved from its jaws, he was reserved for a more dignified, if just as sure, death.

TWO cops were held up in Chicago and robbed of $2,800 and their pistols. The money consisted of the receipts of four municipal golf courses and a swimming pool.

SOFIA, BULGARIA, went modern, after a military coup d’etat had established army rule, and aped the American cities. A city ordinance forbids Jay-walking now and the city’s jails are burdened.

BUTLER, MO., seeking money, raked over oldordnances and discovered one that promised a rich harvest in fines. It decreed that it was unlawful to operate a motor vehicle in the public square. The law was passed in 1906 and hundreds of motor cars now pass through the square. The city fathers tried, but had to abandon the matter.

A NEW JERSEY school-teacher, who, said the authorities, was too impressed by the poem “Lochinvar,” is being tried by the Cliffside Park Board of Education on “charges of conduct unbecoming an instructor.” Attempting to emulate the hero of his famous poem, he tried to kidnap his estranged wife, but only succeeded in sticking the finger in her eye in the ensuing struggle. The wife didn’t fall in with the scheme at all.

IN Budapest a man was convicted of libel for stating that a perfectly healthy woman was consumptive. He was fined heavily.

ROLLAND BLANCHARD, of Montreal, is superstitious. He knew Friday, the thirteenth, would be unlucky for him and it was. Blanchard operates a cafe in the Canadian city and on Friday, the thirteenth, his thirteenth patron held him up and robbed him of the day’s receipts.

THERE are 4,400,000 fingerprints on file in the Department of Justice at Washington.

POPULAR MECHANICS announced a new method of “risking” prisoners. Weapons of steel or iron may be detected instantly in the clothing of prisoners by electrical equipment recently developed. As the prisoners march single file between a railing and a sensitized wall plate, an alarm sounds if pieces of steel or iron are concealed in their pockets. A small hand coil enables the police to detect the exact part of the clothing where the metal is hidden.

RIVERTON, N. J., has revived the pillory. It will be used for speeders. If a driver is going fifty miles an hour he must sit in his car before the public gaze in a specially marked square for fifteen minutes. If his speed was sixty miles an hour he must sit for a full hour.

AN Havana man, haled into court, pulled a pistol and killed one policeman, wounded another. He was enraged over being brought to court because he had been posting public notices in prohibited places.

A PITTSBURGH woman sued for, and was granted, a divorce from her husband after naming the family automobile as co-respondent. He is said to have voted more times to it than he did to her,” she said.

IT is the practice of the Police Officials of New York each year to take space aboard some steamer and to carry out to sea all the dangerous weapons confiscated by the Police Department during the year just ended. This took place in July for the 1933-34 period and under supervision of the highest officials. These gentlemen were present, it was explained, because it was learned that a pistol supposed to have been dumped into the water during 1929 figured in an up-state murder of recent date.

Write Your Own Mystery

Do you know any actual events that have happened either to yourself or to your friends that you think constitute a real mystery problem? If so, try to solve it. MYSTERY MAGAZINE will pay $100 apiece for the best true “unwritten mystery stories” and their solutions submitted each month. All manuscripts should be no more than 1500 words in length, no less than 500 words, preferably typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only. Each month MYSTERY MAGAZINE will print one or more real mystery problems, told by MYSTERY readers, and their solutions. And remember—it will pay $100 for each of the best contributions published! Address your manuscript to the “I Go Sleuthing” Editor, MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.
Seven Meant Death
(Continued from page 43)

that Greifeld Platt was killed.
Lorrimer hastened along till he came to a
drug store and called up Monica
Greifer. Fortunately she was at home.
Her voice came back to him cool and
clear.
"I want to thank you for your as-
sistance the other night," he began. He
said it awkwardly and it rang almost
inaudibly.
"Yes?" she said.
He hesitated, then with an effort
managed to say:
"I would like to see you sometime—if
I may. I want to talk to you—could
you have lunch with me?"
She told him she couldn’t but added
that she was free that evening.
"Could we dine somewhere? You
will understand my reasons for not
wishing to come to your house."
She said, "Of course," and asked him
where she should meet him. On an
impulse he suggested the Three-Way
Club. He had a desire to see what the
place he owned was like.
"It’s not much of a place," he in-
formed her, "a rowdy night club, I be-
lieve. It might interest you though,
and we’d be reasonably sure of not
running into anyone you know."
"I’ll meet you there at eight," she
agreed promptly. "Good-bye."
He hung up and wandered off to a
nearby restaurant for lunch. After
that he spent most of the afternoon
talking around town. After his long
absence it was as though he were in
a foreign country. Just before five he
went back to Ronald Graham’s office.
"Have you anything to find
anything about the men whose names
I gave you?" he asked Graham.
There was an odd look in the other’s
eyes.
"Did you know," Ronald Graham
asked, "that all these men had at one
time or another been in prison . . . like
yourself?"
Warren Lorrimer nodded.
"Strange," said Mr. Graham. From
his desk he picked up some papers and
passed them to Lorrimer. "Here are
the preliminary reports," he said.
"They are apparently all men of
considerable means. Read them over at
your leisure. By the way, I received a
curious cover letter from you. It was
in reference to the case which I
mentioned." He picked up another slip
and handed it to Warren Lorrimer. It
read:

"Mr. Graham:
You have our assurance that Eddie
Cockey will not testify against
your client, Freda Hayward. We
were afraid that you might con-
sider the case hopeless and possibly
be induced to let your client plead
guilty to a lesser charge. This
would be nothing short of a mis-
carriage of justice. Freda Hay-
ward is innocent and we will see
that she is acquitted.

for THE TRIBUNAL

Paul"

WARREN LORRIMER arrived at
the Three-Way Club ahead of
time. He was anxious not to keep
Monica waiting. It struck him that
the patrons of the Three-Way Club
were an odd mixture of underworld
characters and perfectly respectable
(Fromturn topage 88)

A TRUE STORY
By A Mother

who brings up her four
children very differently
from grandma’s way

Here’s a story that covers three
generations. Mrs. G. R. Strong, of Cler-
mont, New York, sends us this letter.

"In olden days," she writes, "when my
mother was a girl she was a delicate
child. She tells me that at nine in the
morning she was given a patent medicine
for biliousness; at noon she took another
for chronic constipation; and at three
she took a blood builder. She has often
told me people didn’t know much about
health when she was a girl.

"I often contrast my four fine, healthy
youthsters with mother. We don’t fill
them up with medicines the way people
used to in mother’s day. Thanks to my
doctor’s directions we just use Nujo1
regularly. It has not upset their stom-
achs, and even when they had whooping
cough they only had serum and Nujo1.

"I could write a book about Nujo1
from my fourteen years of married life.
My husband’s father uses it, and at sev-
enty-four he is well and takes long walks.

"The children are Bud, age thirteen;
Roy, age ten; Elaine, age nine; and
Joyce, age four. All of them are bright,
active, and alert. They are advanced in
school, and up to standard in weight and
height. They love outdoor sports—hik-
ing, swimming, and so on. We think
we’re pretty lucky to have discovered
such an easy way to keep in good shape.

"You can publish this—maybe it will
help some other families to keep well!"

NUJO1, "regular as clockwork” now
comes in two forms, plain Nujo1 and
Cream of Nujo1, the latter flavored and
often preferred by children. You can get
it at any drug store.

What is your Nujo1 story? If you have
been using Nujo1 for ten years or more,
if you are bringing up your children on
it, tell us. Address Stanco Incorporated,
2 Park Avenue, Department 19U, New
York City.
Seven Meant Death
(Continued from page 87)

individuals to whom this noisy, gaudily decorated place represented the true night life of New York.

He stood near the coatroom where he had a view of the entrance. Presently he saw her stepping out of her car and he went to meet her. During seven years of imprisonment one is apt to forget what women are like. She seemed to him extraordinarily lovely, vivid and mysterious. Her manner was détaché, yet she regarded him with a sort of intense interest which she transferred to the place itself as they entered the main dining-room.

"Exciting, isn't it?" she said as she looked about.

WARREN LORRIMER inclined his head in agreement. He wondered what she would think if he told her that he actually owned the place. How did one come to own a place like this? What, for instance, would happen if he stepped up to one of those swarthy headwaiters and told him that he was fired, that he, Lorrimer, was the proprietor?

"Cocktails?" he asked.

He found her eyes resting on him intently. Then she smiled.

"A side-car," she said.

He ordered two of them. While she was concentrating on her menu, he studied her, wondering why she had come that night to the meeting place of the Tribunal. Her interest in him couldn't have been personal, not on such short acquaintance. Probably she was just sorry for him, sorry that her father was to blame for what had happened.

The waiter came and he ordered their dinner—hers with care, and his indifferently. She sipped her cocktail without saying anything, obviously waiting for him to direct the trend of the conversation. He braced himself and emptied his glass to a gulp.

"Why did you come to warn me that night?" he demanded.

"I told you," she said. "Greenfield Platt gave me the address, society, which was trying to enlist you as a member, away to my father. He was afraid something would happen and wanted to save his son's skin.

"Assuming, for the sake of argument, he said, "that there is such a society, why should you care whether or not I join?"

Her features grew suddenly blank, her manner became more distant.

"I knew about you," she said. "I knew that you had been convicted through the efforts of my father and had served a long sentence—of a crime of which you were innocent. I had met you earlier in the evening, read the bitterness in your voice—I don't blame you for this so that I couldn't bear the thought of your becoming involved in something else, something that would end in sending you back to the horrors from which you had just been released."

"Sorry for you, eh?" he said.

"Not exactly. Not quite that," she said candidly. "I just didn't bear the thought of it. And what if it had been just ordinary human sympathy? Is there anything extraneous in that?"

"No," he said harshly, "I suppose not."

At the table to their left there sat a group of young men and women. The young men for the most part were bald faced dissipated individuals; the women were blatantly noisy. One of the men, apparently was of more importance than the others. His air was nonchalant, arrogant, and the party hung on his words. Warren Lorrimer was aware of the fact that this particular individual had been eyeing the table at which he and Monica sat, throughout the evening. Now he saw him get up and come directly toward him. He stepped quite close to Lorrimer and there was a confident smile on his lips.

"I'm Eddie Coakley," he announced.

"I thought perhaps your girl friend would like to dance," he said. He left Monica Greffier and she turned away.

Lorrimer felt the blood rush to his head. With difficulty he restrained himself and said:

"I don't think so."

Eddie Coakley was unabashed.

"I guess you didn't get my name," he said. He paused and undershot down his sleek, plastered hair. "I'm Eddie Coakley. It's not healthy to interfere with me."

Lorrimer got up. His eyes were somnolent but angry.

"Nor with me," he said distinctly.

Very likely he was precipitating an unpleasant scene but he couldn't see what else there was to do. Some vague indefinable something was goading him on to show his courage, not to be browbeaten before this girl who was dining with him.

There was a look of contempt on Eddie Coakley's face. His henchmen weren't far away. He could make a bun out of this guy in two minutes.

"Sah," he began.

"I think," said Warren Lorrimer with a sudden inspiration, "that if you're smart you'll go and hide yourself somewhere else; that is, if you expect to go to the trial of Freda Hayward." A look of surprise came into Eddie Coakley's face. He lost for a moment his debeam manner.

"What do you mean by that... mugg?" he blustered.

"It's a tip," said Warren Lorrimer shortly. "A A tip."

"Yeh?" said Eddie Coakley.

His voice was firm enough, but his manner was uncertain. He stood there for another minute irresolute. Then he gave a short laugh.

"Thanks," he said. "Don't let it worry you. I can take care of myself."

Lorrimer said nothing and after a pause Eddie Coakley walked back to his table.

"Freda Hayward," Monica said, eyeing him keenly, "isn't that the girl who is about to be tried for the murder of some gangster?"

"Yes," he answered shortly.

"How do you come to be mixed up in that?"

At a loss for an adequate answer he made no immediate reply. Then:

"I'm not and I don't intend to be."

There was no question of the point of being rude. He ordered himself a brandy and soda and drank it while she watched him out of the corner of her eye. After a while she inquired:

"What did you want to talk to me about?"
Seven Meant Death

“You’re already told me what I wanted to know—the reason for your interest in me. You were afraid I’d be sent back to prison.”

“Will you see me home now?”

He nodded, summoned the waiter and paid his check. Outside he instructed the doorman to call a cab.

The doorman of the Three-Way Club was an imposing figure, an unusually tall massive person in a scarlet uniform, draping with gold braid. He was exceptionally dignified even for a doorman. Warren Lorrimef gave him only a passing glance until he discovered the man’s eyes were resting on him with fixed intensity. For some reason the doorman’s interest irritated Lorrimef. He looked at the man more sharply but there was nothing to read in that huge square face, the lower half of which was entirely concealed by a thick black beard.

The cab drew up. Lorrimef helped Monica in, gave the driver her address, then got in beside her, made the first half of the trip in silence. His mind was on Eddie Cokley but it wandered and came back to the girl beside him. He felt himself strangely stirred by her proximity and the subtle perfume that she used. He had heard, confirmed that she was Norman Greenwich’s daughter, that his life hadn’t been wrecked, that he was the Warren Lorrimef of seven years ago. The Lorrimef of these days could have made love to this girl, could have pushed her off her feet, could have broken down her reserve.

“When we get to the house,” she interrupted his reverie, “will you come in and speak to my father? He couldn’t help doing what he did, you know. He’d give anything to have it undone.”

“Why should he?” said Lorrimef. “Why should he want it undone? He made his reputation by convicting me. He ought to be tickled to death. It’s more of an achievement to convict an innocent man than a guilty man, especially if it’s a man of means who has the best lawyers in town to defend him.”

She drew back, momentarily shocked by his vehemence.

“I can understand your bitterness,” she said, a little hopelessly. Then she did a surprising thing. She reached over and took hold of his hand. “Don’t,” she said, “don’t get mixed up in this secret society. I know more about it than you think. I overheard most of what Greyfield Platt told Father.”

Her words meant nothing to Warren Lorrimef. He scarcely heard them. He was only conscious of that cool slender hand resting in his, of her nearness and her perfume. He found his hand closing hard over hers, holding it almost desperately. He found himself facing her, drinking in every line of her face. She didn’t draw back. If anything, she leaned a little nearer. Her eyes were brilliant and the look in them cryptic. There was a little smile on her lips. They remained so for seconds, seconds that were like an eternity, during which all of Warren Lorrimef’s life seemed to pass through his mind, particularly those last seven stark years. And then he realized that something was about to happen, a thing that he couldn’t prevent, that was inevitable. He released her hand (Please turn to page 90)

STOP THAT COLD IN ITS TRACKS!

Don’t Let It “Get Going”!

A COLD is nothing to “monkey with”. It can take hold quickly and develop seriously. Take no chances on inviting dangerous complications.

Treat a cold promptly and for what it is—an internal infection. Take a remedy that is internal and curative. It is expressly a cold remedy and not for a number of other things as well.

The wise thing to take is Grove’s Laxative Bromo Quinidine—for several reasons. Instead of a “cure-all”, it is expressly a cold remedy. It is also an internal treatment which a cold requires. And it is complete in effect.

Does the 4 Things Necessary

First, it opens the bowels. Second, it combats the cold germs in the system and reduces the fever. Third, it relieves the headache and giddy feeling. Fourth, it tones the entire system and helps fortify against further attack. Anything less than that is not complete treatment.

Safe!

Grove’s Laxative Bromo Quinidine contains nothing harmful and is absolutely safe to take. For more than forty years it has been the standard cold and grippe tablet of the world, the formula always keeping pace with Modern Medicine.

Grove’s Laxative Bromo Quinidine comes in two sizes—30 and 60’s. Thrice as strong by far the more economical “buy” as it gives you 20% more for your money.

Always ask fully for Grove’s Laxative Bromo Quinidine and look for the letters L.B.Q stamped on every tablet.

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Seven Meant Death
(Continued from page 88)
and threw his arm around her shoulder, leaned down and kissed her without restraint. Like something that was happening to another man, he was aware of her lips against his, soft, cool and responsive. She didn’t struggle and she made no attempt to release herself. He tightened his arms around her, drew her closer and felt her relax in his arms in sweet surrender. But that couldn’t have been right. Why should she . . . ? He let her go. His face was white, his hand shook a little.

"I shouldn’t have done that," he said. "I’m sorry. It’s a long time since I’ve had any contact with women. . . ."

But by the time they arrived at the Tribunal’s headquarters, the warehouse on West Street below Wall, they were late. A puncture had delayed them some ten or fifteen minutes.

The aged Angelus who had admitted them on the occasion of Lorrimmer’s first visit was still on guard and let them in. They hurried upstairs. The others were seated at the table with Paul, masked as before, in the center.

Warren Lorrimmer was again struck by the unreality of the scene. Yet the men who sat there, with the possible exception of Paul, seemed ordinary enough, conservative everyday business men—the thin Morris Grendier, the olive-skinned Greek, Mr. Anapolis, the heavy-set Denis O’Mara, and the stolid Dr. Volger. It was hard to think of them as conspirators.

"We were discussing the case of Freda Hayward, announced, as soon as Bracker and Lorrimmer had seated themselves, "We are unanimous in the opinion that if he is to be saved, Eddie Coakley must not be permitted to testify."

Two heads on each side of Paul nodded gravely. "And how is it to be prevented?"

Warren Lorrimmer demanded quickly.

He had given the matter much thought since his meeting with Monica Greffer and had arrived at a decision. He would not participate in anything that might implicate him in a further crime. Sometimes he had wondered how much this decision had been influenced by his meeting with the girl.

"There seems to be only one way," said Paul with studied significance. "New York will be a nice place to live in with one less Eddie Coakley."

A violent reaction to Lorrimmer’s lips, but before he could give utterance to it, Paul continued.

"I called an early start for Coakley this afternoon. I did my best to persuade him to listen to reason. He laughed at me. I was afraid it would be like that. Still, it’s all for the best."

Again the heads nodded solemnly. Warren Lorrimmer leapt to his feet, his lips tight, his body tense.

“Gentlemen,” he cried, “what you are planning is murder! You can call it what you want, it is murder. I am as much a party to the doing of you to this girl, Freda Hayward, acquitted, and I’ll do anything within reason to help her—furnish her with funds, lawyers—anything.”

“When you were tried, Mr. Lorrimmer,” Morris Grendier interposed softly, "you had the best lawyers that money could get you were you acquitted?”

Warren Lorrimmer shook his head stubbornly.

“I can’t help it,” he said. “Your motives are unquestionable, but I can’t be a party to the murder of even a despised character as this Eddie Coakley.”

He looked quickly from one to the other. All eyes were on watching him coolly, without anger and without emotion.

“If we interfere in every trial similar to this Hayward case, there will be no end . . . we can’t investigate every crime committed and substitute our Tribunal for the tribunal of the state. . . .” Lorrimmer had lowered his voice, but he spoke with insistence, in a desperate final appeal to reason.

“Full true,” Paul answered calmly.

“This happens to be an outstanding case and is, for our purpose, ideal.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“The publicity value is enormous. When it becomes known that we have been instrumental in freeing this girl, the morale of the people will rise, the terror into the heart of every perfurder witness, every crooked policeman and every self-seeking district attorney. In that way we shall accomplish more at one stroke.”

“When it becomes known! Are you mad?”

Paul shook his head.

“A brief account in the newspapers, judiciously released, will not hurt us. It will mention the Tribunal but not the name of its members.”

Warren Lorrimmer looked at the others; some were troubled, but apparently had no intention of opposing Paul’s plan. Was there no limit to their insane schemes—no limit to their daring? A cold chill went up and down Lorrimmer’s spine. His tone strained, he said:

“Gentlemen, I wish to be free. I must resign from the Tribunal.”

The others looked at each other, then, as they always did when an important decision was to be made, they turned to Paul. That immense figure remained silent for a time. When he spoke his voice was calm, unhurried.

“Mr. Lorrimmer, it requires the unanimous consent of all of the Tribunal to release one of its members. Your resignation will be considered and voted upon. You are entitled to that. It is a matter which requires some thought, perhaps, but it is no more than an hour. You have time to think.”

The jury in the Hayward trial has already been handed over to you. Our question or resign will be considered and voted upon. You are entitled to that. It is a matter which requires some thought, perhaps, but it is no more than an hour. You have time to think.”
Seven Meant Death

you that you will have no hand in his death, if that eventuality should take place. And now, gentlemen, we must adjourn. I anticipate that something will occur shortly, that will require my attention the rest of the evening.”

Warren Lorrimer opened his lips to speak. He wouldn’t rest content with that, and yet, as he gazed into those silent determined faces, he realized that for the moment he was helpless. It made no difference, he told himself, if he had in effect resigned. He was no longer one of them, and he would have it definitely settled at the next meeting.

“Your instructions for tomorrow night, gentlemen, will be given to you by Mr. Bracker,” Paul’s voice broke in on his thoughts. “You need have no fears. It will be very simple.”

At that icy pronouncement, Warren Lorrimer shivered. The others got up. Only Paul remained seated. They bade him good-night. They nodded to each other. Then, one by one, they trooped out of the room. Lyman Bracker and Lorrimer were the last to leave, saw Paul. He was still sitting there when the door closed behind them.

“It’s all right that way,” Lyman Bracker explained. “When we are gone, he takes off his mask.”

ALONE, Paul took out a little book bound in red leather. He ran through the pages until he came to the last entry:

5 Taxicabs — Profit $1,750.00
Three-Way Club 25,000.00
Bank Street House 4,500.00
With the stub of a pencil he tapped the table while he concentrated on another problem. Then he added another item to the list:

Warren Lorrimer $1,000,000.00

WHEN Eddie Coakley emerged from the Three-Way Club the next night, it was nearly midnight. His face was flushed with drink, his eyes were bright, and he felt pleased with himself. He had had a pleasant evening and the night was not yet over. The platinum blonde who was clinging to his arm was very attractive and he was looking up at him adoringly. They would go places and do things. It would be a night to be remembered and a fitting prelude for tomorrow, Eddie Coakley’s great day.

He would appear in court to testify against Freda Hayward. All eyes would be on him, the great Eddie Coakley, the most notorious racketeer in town. There would be pictures of him in the papers and the news would be full of him, denouncing him, saying that it was an outrage that he was still at large. The thought of that gave Eddie a laugh. But he got a bigger laugh when he reflected on what he would do to Freda Hayward. She would be in for a shock when he and Mrs. Cracket — well — she’d get hers now and at the same time he’d show the world what happened to anyone who didn’t play straight with Eddie Coakley.

He turned to the doorman, that monumental figure with the black beard, so resplendent in his scarlet uniform.

“Get me a cab. Havin’ a good time, Baby?” he said to the girl who was hanging on to his arm.

She looked up at him and nodded. The doorman blew his whistle. There (Please turn to page 92)
Seven Meant Death

(Continued from page 91)

were five cabs in that line and it was strange that although the doorman had blown his whistle many times during the course of the evening, he had asked had one of them moved an inch. They seemed content to allow cruising vehicles or cabs that were parked on the opposite side to sneak in ahead of them, and snatch their fares. But now it was different. Like a hawk the first car in line dashed forward, the pousseurs others moving up to close the rank.

Eddie Coakley reached into his pocket for a tip.

"Here," he said. "Say—you're new here, aren't you? What happened to the other guy?"

"They fired him," said the doorman.

"I've been here a couple of days."

"Well, here's somethin' to make you remember Eddie Coakley," Eddie said, pressing a five-dollar bill into the doorman's hand. "I always like to do things in a big way."

"Thank you," the man asked.

Eddie laughed. He poked the girl at his side in the ribs.

"We don't want any charaphore, do we, Baby?"

The blonde giggled.

"That's up to you," she said coyly. "I was going to take you out tonight," said Eddie to his henchman. "Call for me at ten in the morning. We've got to go to court."

The man disappeared down the street.

The doorman was waiting with his hand on the open door of the cab. Eddie looked sharply at the driver and didn't like his looks. He had nothing particularly against him, but he knew that if one took the first cab in line or the second even, sometimes strange things might happen, and Eddie Coakley had many a lazy day to push this bird was all right and then again maybe he wasn't. Strange to say, Eddie's intuition was correct, even though he had no idea that the man who sat so stolidly behind the wheel had never driven a cab before, that he was a certain Dr. Tolger, a respected scientist and a member of the Tribunal.

"I don't like this guy," said Eddie petulantly to the doorman. "Get me another."

The doorman appeared to see nothing strange in this. He banged the door shut, but drove off, and motioned to the next one to draw up. If Mr. Anaropolus, who sat behind the wheel of this cab, was hurt because Eddie Coakley didn't like his looks either, he gave no sign. He, too, drove off when he discovered that he wasn't wanted.

"What's the big idea?" said the girl who was with Eddie.

The third car was driven by Denis O'Mara, and the big open-faced Irishman satisfied Eddie. He nodded, pressed a second bill into the doorman's hand, and got into the cab and stepped in beside her. The doorman held the door open for a further moment. At the same time he blew two short blasts on his whistle.

Warren Lorrimer who was seated in a coupe, directly across the street, leaned over, turned on the switch and started his engine.

He had agreed to act this small part in the night's proceedings, without having the faintest notion to what extent he contributed to the event about to happen. Lorrimer liked Bracker and it was Bracker who had persuaded him to cooperate in the proceedings. He had told Lorrimer that he might want to escape from the scene at a minute's notice and wanted to have the car running if that was necessary. It seemed a small thing to do.

He stepped on the starter. The motor turned over, started and then began to backfire, backfiring with such a roar and such rapidity that Warren Lorrimer had a feeling that he was in the center of a battlefield. He was almost tempted to turn the engine off but didn't. His instructions had been to start it going and leave it that way. The doorman leaned into the cab. He said something to Eddie which the latter, of course, couldn't hear due to that hellish noise. Something fell to the floor with a thud but neither the girl nor Eddie noticed.

"Sit up, Eddie," said the girl. He had lurched heavily against her. "Sit up and tell him where to go."

But Eddie made no response. Worse than that, he suddenly slumped forward and fell to the floor of the car.

"My Gawd! He's passed out!" said the girl in disgust.

Then the doorman withdrew, banged the door shut and the cab drove off.

She leaned forward, put her arms around his waist and tried to drag him back to his seat. Then she gave a little cry. Her hand was wet. She drew back and looked at it and even in the dim light she could make out what it was. There was blood on her hand! Then she shrieked and pounded fiercely on the glass to attract the driver's attention. He turned around for an instant, then jumped out and then the man who was in front of the car, he jumped back while keeping his eye on the road. He managed to work the glass aside and shouted over the noise:

"What's the matter, lady?"

"Stop!" she screamed. "Stop! He's hurt!"

Denis O'Mara hadn't slackened the speed of his cab and he went another block before he replied.

"You say he's hurt?"

"Yes—he's hurt," she screamed again. "Stop!"

Dennis put on the brakes. The block in which they now found themselves was deserted. He got out and opened the door.

"What's the matter?" he demanded. "I don't know," the girl wailed hysterically. "I don't know.

Look—blood!"

"We'd better get him to a doctor," said Denis O'Mara. "I know where there's one a couple of blocks down on Bank Street."

He slammed the door shut, jumped back onto his seat and shot away. A few minutes later he drew up in front of a small frame house. He got out.

"You wait here," he said to the girl. "I'll go in and get someone to help me carry him in."

He ran up the steps, pressed the bell,
Seven Meant Death
and the door opened immediately.

The man who stood there was Morris
Grendler.
"Everything all right?" he demanded
anxiously.
"Everything went off nicely," de-
clared Denis O'Mara.
"Good."
Morris Grendler closed the outside
door, then beckoning to Denis O'Mara
to follow, he led him downstairs into
the rear of the house to a door that
opened on the back yard. They went
out together, walked toward the back
fence into which a door had recently
been cut and entered the next yard.
Morris Grendler had a key that ad-
mitted them into the second house. It
was in darkness and he lit the way by
means of a pocket torch until they
came to the front door and eventually
found themselves in the next street.
Here Morris Grendler's cab was
waiting. He had been the fourth
in line. Morris Grendler got in under
the wheel, and Denis O'Mara sat in back.
Then they drove off.

In the other street the girl waited
and waited for the taxi driver to re-
turn with the body. After a while she
could stand it no longer. She leapt
out of the cab, ran up the steps that
led to the house into which the driver
had disappeared. She ran the bell
furiously without getting any response.
In a sudden frenzy she pounded on the
door and when that proved unavailing
ran down the steps screaming until a
policeman came by.
"What's going on here?" he de-

manded.

"My friend—he's hurt!" she shrieked.
She directed him to the cab. The
officer poked into the interior. His
hand came into contact with a re-

volver. He stuffed it into his pocket,
then raised the limp form of Eddie

Coakley. He felt for his pulse, bent

down and listened for the beating of
his heart; then having propped Eddie
Coakley's body up on the seat, he
turned to the girl.
"Hurt, hell," he said. "He's dead!"

TEN minutes after that Warren
Lorrimer was shown into Lyman
Bracker's apartment on lower Fifth
Avenue. Before he could state the
purpose of his visit, Lyman Bracker
insisted on mixing him a drink.

"Now," he said, settling back in his
chair, "what's on your mind?"
"Your car," said Lorrimer, "it's still
standing in front of the Three-Way
Club. I started the engine, kept it
going for five minutes, as you re-
quested, then turned it off. It's so long
since I've driven that I didn't dare
bring it here."

"That's all right," said Bracker. "It
can stay there overnight."

He started to go on, but stopped and looked
thoughtfully at the Scotch and soda
in his hand. It was as though he were
debating with himself the advisability
of continuing with what he had been
about to say. "I know the way you
feel," he said, after a time, "but you
might as well know now as later. Eddie
Coakley was killed as he stepped into
the cab in front of the club. I don't
know whether you noticed that im-

mense doorman. That was Paul. The
five taxicabs were driven by Tolger,
Anapolouls, O'Mara, Grendler, and I
was the last in line. Eddie Coakley
took Denis O'Mara's cab and Morris
(To be continued on page 94)
Let 3-IN-ONE OIL HELP YOU SEW

Three-in-One makes sewing easier to do, and easier on your nerves. For 3-In-One not only lubricates the machine thoroughly, but keeps the action parts cleaner; free of rust. Use it regularly to keep your sewing machine always easy-running. Handy cans and bottles—all stores.

Tired, Nervous Wife Wins Back Pep!

Mrs. Morse did, and she didn't notice the sly look of triumph exchanged between Willie and his mother. Two tears and a grimy, broken-nails hands of the woman, and in that amount Mrs. Morse gave up a week's vacation of the two she had planned all year. Accepting the money, her visitor brushed away a furtive tear, while Willie looked on in grateful embarrassment. Willie was a born actor. Dressed in that rig, he could do an apalling similitude to perfection.

"And what is your name?" asked Mrs. Morse.

"Sarah Williamson," said her departing visitor. "And may you never see a day's want as long as you live, ma'am!"

Mother and son lumbered off down the hot street.

"Poor things!" murmured Mrs. Morse, feeling that she ought to have given the wretched woman the thirty dollars asked for that priceless heirloom. "Poor things!"

But if anyone was a "poor thing" at that moment, it was the good-hearted Mrs. Morse herself, and if anyone had been taken advantage of, it was she, as she stood there lost in pity. For the suburban housewife had just bought a machine-made lace cover and paid three times what it was worth to one of an infamous family "gang" that has infested the United States for the last thirty-five years, selling fake laces, Oriental rugs and furs to unsuspecting people—laces and rugs to the average woman, who ordinarily doesn't know the imitation from the real, and furs to the man in the street who is always ignorant of what he is buying in that line.

What would have been Mrs. Morse's astonishment if she could have seen Sarah and Willie Williamson dart around a corner three blocks away and into a smart little apartment where their daughter Willie's cousin Jessie sat at the wheel ready for any quick getaway in case of trouble! And what would the deceived lady have said if she herself had been driven not a mile off and repeated their clever hard-up performance, this time for a young bride who really bought a duplicate of the shamrock tablecloth, as well as a bureau scarf, both made by that same "grandmother"! And artful Willie won the bride's heart by playing with her Persian kitten and calling it "a puppy!"

Right here we may as well say that this "Irish" grandmother apparently lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, in a house that is made of iron, with hundreds of spindles merrily clicking out miles of that "hand-made" lace in table cloths, bed-spreads, luncheon sets, doilies, and collars and cuffs for personal adornment.

Some grandmother! She certainly belongs to fairy stories even if she does her knitting on the banks of the Ohio River!

However, Sarah and Willie had a very profitable day—some $85—in that suburban town outside New York City, and drove out of it that night, returning to the home-base in the Bronx, where Isaac Williamson and his wife Hughiana had temporary headquarters, and where their numerous children insisted on cooking this famous "fixing up" the machine-made lace preparatory to peddling it with the various colorful and engaging lies that are peculiar with peddlers.

Here, in a cluttered and crowded apartment, Sarah and Willie stayed the last night of six in their present sojourn, before Philadelphia, where they were to visit James and Jane Williamson and their large family, and try their luck in German-town before heading homeward for Boston, where they lived.

As may be inferred, the Williamson's are a big and widely spread family. Two generations of them are now at work swindling the public, and a third coming along! Forty Williams, or more, are active in this country, all of them with dramatic ability, persuasive tongues, and a slick trick of vanishing when things get hot. Arrested repeatedly, they elude or defy the law, even when "caught with the goods," for if found they pay the comparatively small sum for peddling without a license, and if held on bail, they manage to get the required bond and then jump it.

Usually, they travel in twos when out for prey, the women dressed shabbily by day; by night indoi the men in sailor rigs, to give the impression they are with a ship, to bear out their yarns of smuggled rugs and

Seven Meant Death (Continued from page 98)

Grendel followed. There was nothing for me to do except go home. An odd feeling of lethargy had fallen on Warren Lorrimor.

"How was he killed?" he asked dully. "Paul shot him with all his guns in the car. The back-firing covered the sound. Tolger is a chemist, you know. He put something into the gas...." Warren Lorrimor, realizing the significance of his glass, Unasked he mixed himself a second drink. He got up from his chair and paced the room. Finally he came to a halt in front of the mirror. His face was drawn, grim and puzzled.

"You know how I feel about these killings," he said. "But aside from that... it seems an elaborate and rather expensive way to do away with a man. Do you know this man Paul very well? Are you sure he's on the level with all the rest?"

The clock on the mantel ticked away minute after minute while Lyman Bracker said nothing. He only stared at Lorrimor, his lips tight, and gradually his face grew pale. Then he, too, rose and faced Lorrimor. A look of uncertainty came into his eyes.

"What are you suggesting?" he cried hoarsely. (To be continued)
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YOUR OWN CURTAINS

Curtains are important whatever your decorative scheme. You can make exactly the type of curtain you prefer with the aid of our New Method Circulars. Here they are:

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No. 260. Sally Ellers’ kitchen curtains with ball fringe trimming.

No. 261. Casement and draw curtains including Lilian Harvey’s dining room curtains.

No. 262. Formal draped curtains of the French type.

No. 63. Curtain rods and other fixtures.

No. 264. Measuring curtains.

No. 265. Fabric and colors for window curtains and draperies.

Write to Frances Cowles, care of this Magazine, enclosing 4 cents for any one circular, 10 cents for 3 circulars, or 15 cents for all 8. Be sure to indicate what circulars you want by the numbers given in the accompanying descriptions.

The Terrible Williamsonsons

furs. Some of the girls are so successfully forlorn (two of them are cross-eyed) that even the hard-boiled police have been sorry and soft under their skilful acting and let them off with a lecture and an order to leave town, time and time again.

Let’s see the teams at work in a typical month of operations. Sarah and Willie we’ve seen doing Westchester County, New York. Then there’s Maria and Charlotte combing through Oregon. And Mary and Janet Reeking the New Jersey coast resorts. And Jamesina and Christine, still in their “teens, marching through Georgia. And James and Margaret, a young married couple, tackling Michigan and Minnesota for the first time. And James P. and George and Robert and Isaac, Jr., putting on the rug-and-sailor act throughout New England. There are other teams, too, but it is bewildering to try and pin them down, for partners and names are changed at will. Similar names add to the puzzle, also. There are three Jameses and three Williams, for instance, and one of the latter (not Sarah’s Willie) was recently arrested in Waltham, Mass., where he pleaded “half guilty,” whatever that meant!

Of the younger women teamed up, Jean and Maggie Williamson appear to be the most active and ingenious, and the most arrested of the lot. Regularly, they turn up in city after city whether they have been caught in it or not before. From their own account (if they ever can be believed) they are sisters-in-law, and one of them has several small children who are used as “props” for sympathetic purposes if and when their elders are nabbed.

Jean and Maggie do not limit their efforts to private homes, but boldly enter hospitals, schools and places of business—in the last instance they endeavor to time their visits for the women’s rest rooms during lunch hour.

They are experts in accents—Irish, Scotch or Cockney, it is all the same to them. Getting an audience of office girls, nurses, or school-teachers, they vary their tale to suit the occasion. Putting on a brogue or a burr, they spin their yarns about the dear old grandmother, with variations of misfortune. Sometimes they confide that the lovely ladies were made in convents abroad and smuggled into this country, hence the ridiculously low price.

Occasionally, they tell of teaching this exquisite art of lace-making in some well-known institution. Their latest variation was that the laces were on exhibit at the Chicago Century of Progress Fair, and that they were disposing of their entire stock before going back to Dublin. So, it was an opportunity rarely, if ever, met! With one spool or another, it is not unusual for them to sell a hundred dollars’ worth of cotton lace to a group of girls.

Itinerant peddlers since they were sixteen, and repeatedly arrested, Jean and Maggie had their closest call in Chicago, seven years ago, when the Chicago Better Business Bureau and the police combined forces against them. Held for a $1,000 bail, they failed to show up in court. Subsequently, caught, the bail was set at

(Points turn to page 96)

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With F-0 I’m a winner

F-0 polish does not crack or peel... is made in five lovely shades... retains its original charming color until removed...

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FOR A LIGHTNING SHINE

The Terrible Williamsonsons

(Continued from page 95)

$16,000. But the evidence was not strong enough to convict, and they were released on a $1,500 bail, which they promptly "jumped." However, at the trial, the case was disposed of without any great accent whatever, and after experts had pronounced their laces machine-made, that they bought them from a Cincinnati mill (their tireless iron-fingered "grandmother"!).

At this 1927 trial in Chicago appeared the Williamson "sailors," who had also been rounded up in that city on a previous date and released. They were the elderly James and his son, James D., and his brothers William, young Isaac, George and Robert. Relationship to Jean and Maggie was admitted, and it was perhaps the only time on record when so many of the family were seen together by the authorities. Unfortunately, nothing to the cause of justice came of it. Eight of them in hand, but all slid through the law's fingers.

Oh, the Williamsonsons are wily. They pay fines and scrota, they make restitution of money on sales if demanded in court, or they forfeit bond as gaily as you please. But they always a few make their game. Doubtless, their gains are great enough to allow for a percentage of fines. It is their only overhead. Whether the various branches of the family have a common fund for fines and bonds is not positively known, but it is suspected by many of those who have encountered the members of the gang in the last fifteen years. Some of those who have lived close to the Thompsons suspect that they are even in cahoots with the lace mills people. At least the latter often come to their rescue in time of trouble with the authorities.

We wonder how much money these swindlers make a year—how much they have made in the last thirty-five years since the original Williamson sons landed here. Their stock-in-trade is a shabby appearance and a "poor mouth," but they travel in expensive cars, have first-rate camping outfits, and are never at a loss for cash when fines are imposed. Karl T. Finn, the President of the National Association of Better Fencing Bureaus, says of the Williamsonson finances:

"According to our understanding, the family has made a large fortune out of the peddling business and, interesting enough, according to the last report that I heard, all the money is in gold coins in the Bank of England." And Mr. Finn says further on the efforts to put an end to this country-wide flim-flam business:

"It is hoped that we urge the wholesalers to stop selling these people. But it is a hopeless task because the firms do a large share of their business with these peddlers, and they can righteously take the stand that what is done with the lace after it leaves their hands is not their affair."

As noted, the "sailors" of the Williamson family hit their10ing trail in pairs, and usually employ a Cockney accent in their sales. Dressed in the part, they invade offices and shops with fake furrs, picking on the men for easy victims. With a whispered yarn of smuggling, the "seamen" can dispose of an $80 fur coat for $250, or sell a "genuine platinum" fur scarf for $40 that is supposedly worth $100, but actually worth $8.00 and hand cheap goatskins especially treated. Frequently, the fur peddlers work from an automobile parked in a side street in a populous neighborhood, soliciting male customers with a wink and a stage-whisper of a great bargain. Worse, as they are in their furgypping—because women know fur values, as a rule—the Williamsonson "sailors" palm off imitation Oriental rugs on housewives without much difficulty. For example, George and Robert have rung Mrs. Arthur Shoals' bell in Brookline, and she has come to the door herself.

"Lady of the 'ouse," says George, the spokesman, "I 'ave a rare Oriental rug 'ere—"

"But I don't want one," replies Mrs. Shoals, "and if I did, I wouldn't buy one from a peddler!"

"Oh, bless your 'eart, lady, we ain't nothing of the sort," laughs George. "We 'ave just a couple of 'lobber fellers that 'ave picked up a few bargains in Turkey on our last trip—it won't 'urt you to 'ave a look!"

And the pleasant pseudo-Cockney unrolls these scattered rugs and politely beggar her portion wiggles past her into the house where he spreads them on the floor. For a rug on the floor is worth two at the door, the Williamsonsons have discovered.

"And such a rug," says George, enthusiastically, pointing at the gradiest. "It has too much brick-red in it for me," declares Mrs. Shoals. But evidently she has become interested enough for criticism, and George considers this an encouraging sign.

"Hah, you like the blue one, I see!" he exclaims. "You've good taste. We can let you 'ave it for twenty-five dollars and it's worth a 'undred."

"No, I couldn't spend that much," says Mrs. Shoals. "Besides, I don't want a mitey rug like that."

"Robert, who has followed them into the house, now speaks:

"Lassie, how 'bout 'eading 'em back in, and pulls George aside for a low-voiced conference. After which the latter says:"

"My pal 'ere reminds me we got to get back to the ship by tomorrow morning at eight, and we can't take the blood out of the car."

Here Robert cuts in again.

"Take two of 'em for thirty dollars, lady," he says.

"What's that?" cried George in apoplactic consternation.

"It's giving 'em away, I know," says Robert in mock helplessness. "But what else can we do? Lady, two of them rugs is worth two 'undred and five dollars 'olesale."

With a few more carefully rehearsed remarks from the seafaring and salty lads, Mrs. Shoals walked out and bought for $20 two rugs worth five and three dollars respectively, wholesale, at which price the brothers bought them. Hundreds of the same kind are on the floors offooled housewives all over the United States.

Are the Williamsonsons a "ring?" of crooks in which others of similar tech-
The Terrible Williamsons

nique are involved? Is the name Williamson put on and off like the accent? What relation have the Williamsons to racketeers in the same line who parade under the cognomns of Riley, Rafferty, McCallum, McCoy and other Irish and Scotch names? No doubt the names are as "faked" as the goods they sell. From telegrams found on the persons of a William McMillan and a Peter McDonald, caught selling these faces not long ago, it is evident that a "ring" or company of crooks is at work on a common basis. These messages read:

"Please notify all my friends that my two youngest children died this morning. (Signed) Jos. Williamson."

"Notify all travelers that John L. Williamson passed away today. (Signed) Janet L. Williamson."

"Please notify all travelers funeral will be August first in Cleveland. (Signed) Janet L. Williamson."

Obviously, these messages are in code, and have to do with a gathering of the juicy tribe in Cleveland. Similar evidence proved that the "family," or the "ring," had a meeting in Huntington, West Virginia, prior to the Cleveland date. So, we can deduce that the Williamsons have their lace-rug-fur "conventions" every now and again, where they exchange news and views, possibly shape a policy for the coming season, and take whatever action is necessary to their successful pilaging of a thousand lean pocketbooks and small pay envelopes. It isn't hard to imagine their talkfest:

"Lay off Columbus and Cincinnati this year. "Spokane is bad, too."

"But Memphis is ripe again."

"These buffet-suppers help the sale of the tablecloths in the Atlantic States-Sarah and Willie and Hughiana's family sold 400 of them in six months!"

"I see Maria and Charlotte cost us six hundred dollars this year—they'll have to make up for that."

"But their father, they tell me, made two thousand at the Chicago Fair!"

And so on, in check and countercheck, suggestions and reports.

Local authorities have coped with this thieving gang in vain. Only the Better Business Bureaus are feared by them. The trouble is, town and city ordinances are not severe enough to quell them. Federal action seems requisite to stop their daily depredations and protect the public. Meanwhile, Edward Greene, head of the National Better Business Board, advises us:

"Hard times and unemployment have induced a large number of people to earn a few dollars by selling goods from door to door. This gives a crowd like the Williamsons a new "in" and they make the most of it. The safest course for anyone is to reject any stranger's offer to sell rare or costly goods without bargain as to price. Just dispose of at a loss. Surely, this present exposure of the Williamson's racket should be a lesson to everybody."

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Millions use "HUSH"

"Hush" is a popular phonograph record for use on the telephone. It is available at all record stores. To order, send 50 cents per record, or send for free samples. Address all checks to BEBE SULLIVAN, 1500 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Illinois.
The Line-Up

(Continued from page 15)

you to change it, as there are some people who are sleuths and the others are so good, they make up for it.

My husband as well as myself cannot understand how you can publish such a magazine for the price. I told the store keeper it was the biggest value for ten cents that I had in a long time, and he said "I told you so." A well-a-magazine like MYSTERY sure deserves a lot of success and I hope to have many more hours of enjoyment through MYSTERY.

Mrs. G. Porter.

Granted

CHICAGO, ILL.—Every month I rush to the magazine counter in order to be one of the first to get my copy of MYSTERY MAGAZINE. Do I like it?

Yours is the very best mystery magazine I have ever read at any price. You have only to read the LINE-Up in order to see how well everyone likes it. In the face of those dozens of admiring letters, I don't see how I have the nerve to write in the tiny corner, but there is something I simply must get off my mind. Please, what has happened to Ripperger?

Ripperger? His estimation he is second only to Sax Rohmer, and that is saying a good deal. His unique character, Simeon Graves, had me waiting and praying that the days would grow real fast, so I could get the following issue of your magazine and see what was going to happen next.

Every month lately I turn first to the table of contents, but his name doesn't appear listed. Please don't think that I don't enjoy the other stories in MYSTERY, because I do—every period and comma of them. But I can't help being a little disappointed at not finding Walter Ripperger among the authors.

Will you please, Mr. Editor, take pity on me?

Gertrude Anderson.

Mystery It Is

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.—Mystery is my favorite magazine. It is the first to which I have ever written a fan letter. However I have so many bouquets to hand you that I can't restrain myself. You give the public what it wants. That is, a lot of stories of the kind we like by the authors who write them best. Thanks for printing so many fine stories by Ellery Queen. He is the best of all mystery writers. I also like Sax Rohmer, Stuart Palmer and Collier Harris.

Now come the brickbats: Why not have all your stories illustrated with drawings? I enjoyed "The Woman He Had to Kill" much better because of the drawn illustrations. They fit the author's description in the stories far better than the photographic illustrations.

Thanks for omitting those "Mystery Masterpieces" in pictures from the September issue. It is the first time in place, most of them were not actually mystery or detective serials. And, oh, how the poor things lacked up! Why ruin the works of a good author?

Remember, what the public wants in a mystery magazine is—mystery.

Betty Kepp.

For the Ladies!

GALVESTON, TEXAS.—Maybe we "high-school kids" don't know much about good literature, but we do know good stories when we read them. And I think MYSTERY MAGAZINE is just about the best I've ever read—especially for a dime!

I think the book-length novels are swell. I liked "Murder on the Blackboard" best of all. But I like the short stories, too. And I don't know why so many people object to women detectives! They can solve a crime just as well as men any day! Much as I like MYSTERY I might be tempted to quit reading it if you took some of the advice given and didn't have Hildegarde Withers or Nurse Keate or even Edda Manly anymore!

Marjorie Allen.

What to Do

ALIQUippA, PA.—I have been one of MYSTERY MAGAZINE's most steady readers for a long time now. For the most part I like it—but there are a few things that I am not so crazy about.

For instance—the pictures accompanying the stories. I don't think they get the idea in the story across to the reader. Another thing—there are too many short stories (complete on one page). Two such stories would be sufficient. Also (and this is the last of my criticisms) I agree with the lady from Oklahoma who thought there should be a few less lady sleuths. Why don't you give us a nice, young man detectives? So much for the parts I don't like!

Give us more stories about Professor Baker. Also give us some of Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu stories. I read all his books I can get.

Of all the book-length novels I liked "The Two Who Smiled" the best. I didn't lay the magazine down until I had finished it.

Ruth Rainbow.

A Good Eye

OSWEGO, N. Y.—Will you please point out to Ellery Queen in regard to his story "Four Men Loved a Woman" that in the Roman Catholic Church it is the function of a bishop and not a priest to confirm. In this story Father Anthony says that he confirmed Roger Bowen and that is incorporated.

Donald L. Hollanday.

Zowie!

WASHINGTON, D. C.—I have been quite enthusiastic about MYSTERY MAGAZINE until the September issue. These several stories disappointed me—"The Man Who Hated Rats," "The Strange Affair at the Middlebrooks" and "The Riddle of the Hanging Men." All were completely impossible while the second was a glaring example of forced writing in the style of a professional who is wearily attempting to complete his task.

And then you go and in that issue too many one-page true stories of persons murdered for insurance—"Profile" and "Late One Night" being conspicuous. The "I Go Sleuthing" department also was quite ridiculous. The author did not go sleuthing. The locale was a blind one and there were no facts to warrant a supposition of suspicion, merely a gossip's conception of that a guilty person.

Please do better next time because I had come to bank on MYSTERY MAGAZINE as the one bright spot in an ocean of bunk.

Paul May.

Amid the Drought

TOPEKA, KANSAS—I can't say just how long I have been reading my magazine but it has been long enough. I have purchased it in ten different states, and sent it to my sister once, but after that she bought it as soon as it came out.

During the Summer I work in my father's drug store, and I always recommend MYSTERY MAGAZINE first to all readers. I read practically every mystery magazine that is published, but yours ranks first in my estimation. My husband and I travel every Fall, Winter, and Spring and the best way we have to pass the time is for me to read yours.

When the new "batch" of magazines came in the store yesterday I took the MYSTERY MAGAZINE, the first book that it was the best mystery magazine published. My husband agreed, and my father said "I don't think so." I asked him which one he liked better, but he said he couldn't think of any!

Our favorite author is Ellery Queen, and we enjoy those two stories very much. I thought "The Two Who Smiled" was very good. I didn't even notice the heat the last two days while reading it, which is saying a lot as the thermometer has been 105.

I only regret that MYSTERY isn't published once a week. Let me also say that the paper is easy on the eyes.

Mrs. Loring K. Campbell.

What-a Fan!

CLATSKANIE, OREGON—I have been reading MYSTERY so long I cannot remember the time I got it. Being at Portland at that time I could buy it there, but since coming to this town have not been able to. I have repeatedly tried to get the dealers here to get it for me without success. Have no favorites but like it from cover to cover. It seems like I cannot do without it. I have made several trips to Portland at a cost of $2.50 round trip for the sole purpose of procuring my copy. What can you do about it? I don't want your money but I must have my mystery.

Arthur P. Prier.

Stories Plus

BRONX, N. Y.—Admire Stuart Palmer's stories and naturally my favorite detective is Hildegarde Withers. Being a school girl I get a big kick out of her antics. I am glad to note that Stuart Palmer is writing a series of stories.

Everyone seems to praise the stories in MYSTERY. How about the household and beauty hints? I find them very helpful and always look forward to them.

Miss Ruth Finkelstein.
A New Book-length Novel
Complete in this Issue

THE

MAD MURDER PARTY

By

COLVER HARRIS

"Three blind mice; See how they run—"
The Mad Murder Party

WHAT d‘you think?” said my sister Patsy happily. “We‘ve got a ghost!”

She speaks with a very slight lisp—so slight that if I were to spell it ‘ghost‘ it would be misleading. I shall have to ask therefore that you imagine the lisp—and remember to imagine it whenever you read Patsy’s speeches. Because that little shadowy catch in her words is a most essential part of Patsy. Part of her technique of being cute—and cuteness is the keynote of her small, but very effective, personality. She is just little enough, just plump enough, just pretty enough to be called cute looking. Her accent is just affected enough, her words just smart enough, so that her remarks are always followed by a wave of indulgent smiles and murmurs. “Isn’t Patsy cute?”

And, of course, Patsy is well aware of her reputation. Just how far back in her childhood she decided to adopt and cultivate that particular line, my second sister Irene and I are not quite certain—but at the age of twenty-seven (and looking a scant eighteen) Patsy has the technique so thoroughly in hand that we are quite unable to imagine her in any other attitude. And even in our more uncharitable moments, Irene and I are bound to admit that it is a highly workable code of behavior. Not Irene with all her gorgeous good looks and sophistication, nor I with my so-called efficiency and sensible intelligence, have been able to feather nests with one half the ability which dear Patsy accomplishes by her divinely simple formula of just being cute.

At the moment of that particular remark, Patsy was perched on the porch railing of her new summer home in Green Hill, smiling her wrinkled and squinty little smile (Irene vows she must have developed that smile before a mirror) at her assembled house-guests, and being her very cutest.

“What d‘you think?” brightly infected. “We‘ve got a ghost!”

The usual murmur followed.

Patsy paused to sip from a highball glass, and then went on. “A real live ghost, you know.” A small frown of childish earnestness (her only other expression) replaced the smile. “A ghost that everybody in the whole village knows about. That’s why the house has been deserted for so long.”

“And it was the main reason why my darling wife insisted on buying the place,” Ted Elliott, Patsy’s husband (and not the least of her successes) spoke cheerfully.

“But good heavens, Patsy,” the protesting voice came from a corner of the porch where young Jake Lecky had sprawled his lanky form across two wicker chairs, “since when have you been interested in ghosts?”

At the sound of Jake’s voice, Irene raised her perfectly waved head from the swing where she lay and cocked an eye in his direction. “I thought you were asleep,” she said.

Jake yawned spasiously. “I‘m kept awake,” he complained, “by this damn talk about spooks—and a craving for tobacco. Now if I could just reach those cigarettes—” he stretched out a long arm experimentally, and very nearly upset the chairs.

Instantly Irene was on her feet moving swiftly toward him. “Finish mine, darling, it’s just lit.” She leaned down to place the cigarette between Jake’s lips, and receive his grateful look. “Never let it be said”—she moved lightly back to the swing—“that Irene could bear to watch a man hunger.”

I watched her with a sister’s eye. So that was what Irene had been up to these past four days in Green Hill. Nor did I have to look too closely into her carefully casual expression to catch the gleam of the hunter—for I knew without searching that it must be there. Any time Irene would get up to wait on someone, there could be small doubt as to the ulterior motive. I concealed a smile in my highball glass—and the next moment started so violently that the rim jarred sharply on my teeth.

For I had suddenly become aware of the look on Madeleine Page’s face. At best, her expression was scarcely what you would have called sweet—but at that moment it was positively savage. And the glance that flashed out from beneath her close black brows was one of the bitterest hatred. Madeline was staring at Irene.

Instinctively I looked about to see who else was watching—but apparently no one save myself had seen her expression. Ted and Patsy were occupied with a matter of icucubes, Jake was staring straight up at the porch roof, and Irene, composed and lovely in the swing once more, was lying back with eyes half closed upon a preoccupied smile. Another look at Madeline, and I saw that her dark face had returned to its normal set of non-committal hardness. I breathed again. The moment of unguarded hatred had passed—unseen by all save me.

“Don’t tell me, Patsy, that you’re going psychic on us.” It was Madeline who brought us back to the topic of the ghost. Only a slight twist of sharpness in her naturally harsh voice remained as evidence of the violent emotion I had witnessed a moment before. “It’s scarcely your type, my dear, to commune with spirits.”

“Don’t worry, Madeline,” Ted answered. “As far as this ghost of Patsy’s is concerned—his function is purely conversational.”

I grinned at Ted, as I always do on the rare but encouraging occasions when a certain dryness in his tone indicates that his normal intelligence is not wholly lost in simple-minded adoration of my dear sister.

“Now Teddy, that’s not fair.” Patsy’s childish pout ignored both the edge of Madeline’s remark and her husband’s somewhat sarcastic answer. “You know perfectly well we’ve actually heard the ghost—and the very first night we were in the house a bell began to ring—”

“Save it, darling,” I interrupted her enthusiasm, “until Jonny gets back. He’s the only one of your guests who’s really ghost-minded—although why the scientific brain should take such a turn—”

“The scientific brain is like every other single-track intelligence,” the sharp incisiveness of Madeline’s voice cut me short, “it’s absolutely childish about everything outside that one track. The fact that my brother Jon is making himself revoltingly famous as a brilliant surgeon doesn’t

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in the least alter the fact that he hasn't an ounce of sense in the least bit of existence.

I found myself staring curiously at Madeline. Despite the fact that we had all known her for years, and that her strangely warped and soured personality was a byword among 368 us, I never ceased marveling at the inexhaustible supply of venom which she could inject into the most harmless conversation. I supposed that a good portion of her bitterness and vindictiveness was due simply to her brother's phenomenal success in his medical career—of his superior charm and popularity, but after all there must be something else, something more fundamental to account for an attitude as viciously as Madeline's overnight change. Whatever it might be, would also account for the rare, and apparently mysterious, devotion of Dr. Jonath to her. Possibly it was not for the fascinating Jonny's blanket loyalty to Madeline, she would probably have been left to nurse her nameless grudges in solitude. Certainly she would never have been included in this party of Patay's, for instance, had we not all been aware of Jonny's unspoken motto—"Love me—love my sister.' And, correspondingly: 'Invite me—invite my sister.' For the hundredth time I grappled helplessly with my mind for some answer to this double riddle of personalities—and I wondered suddenly how important might be that look of hatred which Madeline had flashed out in the moment of Irene's small by-play for Jake Lecky. Two years in the far West had left me pretty well out of touch with local affairs of the heart—but I was determined to grab the first chance to ask Ted where anything might have happened between Jake and Madeline. And I knew that Ted could be depended on for acute observation—provided Patay were not around.

The denunciation was mildly protesting Madeline's sharp denunciation of her brother's non-professional sense.

"Well, I don't know, Mad," his tone was airy, "I wouldn't say it was exactly due to his being engaged to the richest girl in the world—would you, Sue?

He looked at me, evidently sure of an ally.

"I hardly think he ought to be committed for it." I shook my head.

At my words, Madeline rose abruptly. "And I hardly think," her tone was icy, "that you know what you're talking about—either of you." She turned on her heel and disappeared into the house, leaving us to stare helplessly after her. Even for Madeline, that was a pretty violent reaction.

"Whew—" Ted collapsed into a chair. "Did I start that?

"We both did," I nodded, "and we ought to have realized that she'd take Jonny's engagement that way—no matter whether or not the fact that he'd made such a viziously grand catch simply makes her boil worse than ever. We'll just have to keep off the sore spot, that's all.

FROM his retreat in the corner Jake spoke disconsolately, "Add one more sore spot to Madeline's original charm," he groaned, "and you've got the perfect house-guest on your hands.

"Oh dear, I know it," Patay was frowning.

"Oh well—" Ted shrugged lightly, "everybody here knows about Madeline—so don't let it bother you. If she wants to act like a hyena with gumbosills no one will blame it on us.

"Personally, I rather agree with Madeline," Irene spoke pensively, "in thinking that you don't quite realize what Jonny has let himself in for with this engagement. Snagging himself a good clean heiress would be one thing—but Evelyn Tucker—Good Lord, it must be like making milk out of mint—" Irene's eyes were still half closed, so that she could not see, as we did, the approach of Jonny Page himself. Nor did Irene profit by our frantic signals for silence. She suddenly caught in an awkward situation that her technique for such occasions is not very well worked out. When, in the midst of her soliloquy about the difficulties of wooing the fabulous Tucker billions, she opened her eyes and found herself looking straight into Jonny's face, she simply stopped speaking.

There was a brief silence, during which the rest of us raked over some consecutive gem with whose to rush in and restore the social order.

But it was Jon, as usual, who thought quickest.

"You're right again," Patay droned down at Irene.

"Don't let me interrupt—but I've got a question for Patay."

We all rallied slightly. It was impossible to guess whether Jonny had really gathered the drift of Irene's remarks or not, but in any case he bridged the moment admirably. Trust Jon never to make a scene. It was only one of the ways in which his personality differed exactly from that of his sister, Madeline.

"Look here, Patay," he went on quickly, "I'm going to ask a big favor of you and Ted. That telephone call was from Evelyn—" quite naturally he pronounced the name, secondly unaware of its effect upon our social poise, "and she's in sort of a jam. Driving through to Boston, she got stuck in Albany with car trouble—and wasn't able to make the city tonight. I—we thought, it isn't too much to ask, after all than an imposition. No, I think, slightly. Odd, to see his perfect aplomb disturbed. "Do you suppose," at last he got the question out, "that she could stop over tonight?"

Patsy stared. For once, I was in sympathy with her round-eyed expression of childish wonder.

"In your infall, Jonny, that Evelyn Tucker wants to come here—" to the house?"

"Well—yes," Jonathan nodded. "You see, hotels and so on are pretty difficult for her—" he paused, evidently expecting us to imagine the precise nature of the difficulty for ourselves. "But if it's too much trouble—"

"Of course not, Jonny," with one accord Ted and Patsy rose to the occasion. "It would be swell," Ted added without any notice of conviction. "If—you're quite sure she wants to be really informal with us—" the doubt in Patsy's tone was even more evident.

For a moment Jon looked straight at them—looked as if he might say something rather sharp. Then, quite as if it had occurred to him, he looked down and said:

"That's darn nice of you," he turned away, "I'll ring her back at the Ten Eyck and tell her you said yes. They ought to make it comfortably by dinner time, the way Evelyn steams along.

Ted caught at the pronoun. "They?—" he said.

"Oh—yes." Jon was at the door. "You see, Eve has a female当今 her—sort of a domestic effect—and there's always no—" he paused rather helplessly, and then seemed to gather from our blank expressions that we had still failed to grab the situation. "Ike," Jonathan came nearer to us. "I made out the words; he imagined it was possible for him. "Ike is Evelyn's bodyguard."

"Of course," Ted came to the rescue, "naturally—" But Jonath had already disappeared into the house.

"Well, of all the cast-iron nerve—" Irene sat bolt upright in the swing. "Oh damn," Patay was pouting, "it'll simply spoil everything, Ted. Our ghost party won't be any fun at all—"

"Thank God for that," I murmured. "But look here, Pat, where can you put these creatures? Have you got room enough?"

"You and Irene," said our sister promptly, "will have to double up. A groan from Irene. "That will leave Sue's room for Evelyn. As for the duenna and the bodyguard, Patay made a rather effective face, "then I'll go to the Inn. I'm not going to house any such horde—"

"Hold everything, my pretty," Ted cut in firmly, "we'll have such arrangements as that. I don't care what you do with the duenna—but if the Tucker fortune needs a bodyguard—it will damn well have a bodyguard! I will not have this precious maiden lying around loose in my house unless Ike is on the job."

"I absolutely agree, Ted," Irene nodded emphatically. "And it simply proves my point about what Jonny has let himself in for. Don't you see how upset he is by the mere fact that his fiancée is stopping here for the night? Isn't it obvious from the way we're acting that one simply can't have a characterless, unhygienic, less like a human being? I tell you—" Irene was waxing oratorical. "she's not a human being—she couldn't be after all the publicity—" she got no further.

Madeline stood at the screen door regarding us all with a look so darkly sinister that Irene's words were frozen on her lips.

"Is it true," Madeline's voice grated harshly on the lazy hum of the summer afternoon, "that Evelyn Tucker is coming here?"

"Of course it's true," Patay's small lips lowered boldly on the heels of her brother's tragic query. "Jon asked if we could take her in for the night and we—"

Madeline ignored Patsy, as she frequently did, and faced Ted. "You did a dramatic job, Patay."

"Did you give Jon permission to ask her to this house?"

"Why—yes," said Ted reasonably. "I don't see anything so dreadful about it, Madeline. After all, Jon is engaged to her—"

"Then," said Madeline stonily, "you're a fool. And you're
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all fools,” her dark glance swept the rest of us, “if you stay here. Don’t you know that takes you about three times as long as your pause. Paused for its lengthened day and night by kidnappers? Don’t you know that she brings trouble wherever she goes? Don’t you realize, with final gesture of fatalistic warning, Madeline twitched upon the door of the only one last ten to ten? Don’t you realize that we’ll all be facing danger and death with that girl in the house.”

The screen of still—each of us jumped in varying degrees, depending upon the resistance of our respective nervous systems. Even Jake flopped over, accompanied by a great creaking of his wicker chairs, and raised a ruffled block of head.

“My God, Patsy,” his pale green eyes blinked absurdly, “you can lay that ghost of yours right now. This party is going to have some thrills we can stand without any help from the supernatural.”

“Oh I can’t, Jake,” Patsy was reduced to a wail, “because the medium is all invited—and whatever shall we do with her?”

We all stared stupidly.

“The medium?”

“Sent down from Albany,” Ted explained glumly, “to have a séance this evening. Pat thought it would be fun to see if she could make the ghost talk—”

“Oh God,” the shabbier lone place got young himself back upon the chairs and buried his head in a chin-till pillow.

“But couldn’t I give that ghost some pointers on what to say!”

II

The room, which due to the impending arrival of Evelyn Tucker and her retinue, Irene and I were forced to share, was so small that Irene suggested we dress for dinner in shifts.

“And you,” she observed with sisterly tact, “had better go first, since it always takes you about three times as any ordinary human being to get out of one dress and into another.”

I admitted, to myself, that this observation was substantially true of all my reputation for practical efficiency. I never seem able to get myself for the simplest occasion without untold fussing. Nor does the result of my strenuous efforts in any way justify the sheer horse-power which I put into the business of dressing.

When, at quarter of seven, Irene sauntered into our room, I was still struggling in a welter of water-wave curls, my hair, powdered with powdered and General confusion. The expression with which she surveyed my chaotic state indicated that she had expected as much.

“Don’t be ‘Darling’,” she lit a cigarette and perched herself upon the broad window sill. “If you leave me ten minutes it’ll be quite all right.”

Her superior tone was in no way soothing to my state of mind, but I proceeded in silence with the grim, three-way struggle of adjusting my dress, calming the wild disorder of my wave, and persuading some portion of my extreme incipient irritability to disintegrate.

“Ghost or no ghost,” Irene was gazing out upon the broad lawn beneath the window, “this is a lovely place.”

I muttered something from a mouth full of hairpins.

“And wouldn’t you know,” Irene sighed, “that Patsy would be the one to get it. Just when the depression has the rest of us by the ears and we try to figure out new ways of breaking city leases before they break us—Patsy points out the way to frugal living by snapping up this old deserted place and installing a couple of bathrooms. The shabbier lone place is the more it creaks and groans and sags—the more ‘atmosphere’ it provides for Patsy’s tales about the ‘haunts.’ I tell you,” Irene shook her head sadly, “the gal is smart—much as it wounds me to admit it.”

“Well, I tell you,” I removed the hairpins in order to make myself quite clear, “that she may be smart—but I don’t think she’ll have this ‘medium’ creature perform tonight. One more fickle on those raw nerves Madeline carries around and—” on a sudden impulse I shifted the direction of my remarks, “American ‘Darling’—” I made an effort to appear intent on the business of applying lipstick—“I don’t think Madeline precisely approves of your attentions to Jake Lecky. A slight pause. “Not will I think—concentrated upon the lipstick—that Madeline is the girl to accept rivalry in the spirit of good clean sport.”

To my terror, our landlord has made a practice, for once and all, of never making a request which I would not have carried out in the most complete silence. But this unexpected silence—I turned quickly.

Irene was staring, with an expression of thoughtful interest, at the tip of her turned-away cigarette. An incident of the recent remarks to Irene are seldom a success, but there was something about the silence which followed my words which made me suddenly uneasy. An injunction, sharply worded, to mind my own business would not have been more unexpected. Nor would a laugh.

“But, she turned me around slowly, ‘you’ll do. And with that extravaganza you’ve vanished. ‘Get in the corner, she said, ‘and paint your fingernails while I go into the old routine. You’ve only left me seven minutes—but the fireman’s child can do it.”

To her boast, Irene turned to the dressing table just as the old clock downstairs whanged out the hour—and very lovely she looked in pale flesh-colored chiffon turned and pink velvet bow and purple sandals.

“‘There!’ She snatched up a pair of amethyst earrings and adjusted them as we descended the creaky stairs.

“We’re prompt enough to suit even our darling Patsy.”

We were, it seemed, considerably prompter than that.

The big living-room appeared to be quite empty as we entered, but at the second of our arrival we turned to settle ourselves upon a couple of the old chairs which looked relatively comfortable, there came a startling groan from the direction of a remote sofa in the corner.

“Good heavens—With one accord Irene and I whirled around—only to sink back into our chairs. It was Jake, prone as usual, who had uttered the lugubrious sound.

“What is the matter,” I asked, “you were in extremis.”

Another prolonged groan.

“It’s Evelyn Tucker—that’s what it is,” the voice from the sofa was muffled in a chaise dressing-room.

“Do you mean she’s here, Jake?” Irene was all interest. An affirmative wail answered her.

“And is she as bad as all that?”

“I don’t know,” Irene looked at me.

“Jake, be serious.” She went over to the sofa and stared down at him with an old mixture of impatient curiosity and fetching fondness. “Is there really anything so awful about the Tucker—or are you just putting on this display of agony?”

“Putting it on?” Jake sat up indignantly. “Putting it on? Listen, my darlings, just for that I’ll tell you exactly how bad she is. About twenty minutes ago two cars came whirly by up to our place, chugging-as-chugging, and speaking with solemn intensity. ‘One of them was a Rolls—oh God and what a Rolls—and the other was a Ford—and God, what a Ford.’ That there was a roar of the Tucker caravan—heirress, maid, bodyguard, dog, and luggage.”

“ ‘That’s it?—’ ” Irene frowned, “what’s so terrible about that?”

“Patience, my pretty, I’m breaking it gently. The terrible part is—” Jake drew a long breath, “that the duenna came, who looks like a matron, with a little black parasol and, and the bodyguard Ike, whose looks are entirely beyond my powers of description, arrived in that unspeakably, immorally, evil-smelling Rolls that we took out of the mealy, lousy, infested little Ford! And why, you ask? That’s just what we asked—and along with many dimples and giggles we got the answer. Evelyn, the little rascal, just adores Jake’s darling old Ford instead of that awful ark of a Rolls that Daddy

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bought for her. Now do you see—" Jake's pale eyes blinked at us in comical surprise. "The medium," he added, "inexhaustibly is the blanket which has descended upon us? And to think that our Jon is going to wed—" with renewed groans Jake subsided into the sofa pillows. "For once I find myself sympathizing with the gripings of Madeline—I don't blame her if she does carry out her murderous plans—" Steve's voice cut in with a sharpness which made me jump. I turned abruptly to see, for the second time that evening, a look of unaccustomed intensity upon her face. The indolent smile with which she had received Jake as a substitute for her lover vanished entirely out of her face in a fleeting instant before a look of icy warning—then, quite lightly, she finished her remark. "Don't be too silly, my pet," Jake's hand passed quickly, but winnily, over the tousled head deep in the sofa corner. She came to sit near me, with a great show of being casual and amused. "Isn't he a crazy lamb?" Her eye very neatly met mine, which, for Irene, is an unusual display of directness. "Perfectly incoherent, of course," she indicated Jake with a gay shrug.

"Oh, of course," I joined politely in a light laugh, and was spared further insincerity by the very flurry of arrival of Patsy.

WHERE have you been?" Irene obviously welcomed a new possibility for conversation. "You, the prompt hostess—and here are your guests panting for their dinner—"

"I've been busy," said Patsy, with as much grimmness as her lip could allow, "pressing a little Chanel model from the wardrobe."

"We feared—Do you mean she asked you to iron a dress for her?"

"I mean—Patsy reached for a cigarette and began to smoke as though in utterest indignation—that she tossed out a little wisp of satin and asked me if my maid would please freshen it a bit. My 'maid' being also my hostess—and very near the point of desperation over the dinner—I got out the ironing board, and did it with my little hatchet."

A fresh howl arose from the sofa.

"I hope to God you scorched it," said Jake, "in the rear."

This time I echoed Irene's laugh with considerably more enthusiasm.

"Look here, Patsy," I said, "is the girl honestly as bad as you and Jake make out? If even half the unpleasantness you describe is accurate—then our Jonny must be quite a lazy fellow, designing intentions, and somehow, I can't quite see that."

"Well, of course we know, Sue darling," it was Irene's voice, velvety—told me, "that Jonny is your weakness—but I should think even the eyes of love would see something a wee bit fishy about the brilliant and promising young surgeon who contracts to marry the Tuckers and in my very private think tank I speculate that he'll have plenty of time over to flit an ash very delicately—that it will exactly bight Jonny's career to be made a Director of the Foundation."

I realized, with a feeling of exasperated helplessness, that there was not the slightest use in protesting what Irene so nastily implied. Nor, indeed, was there any real reason for resenting it—since it undoubtedly represented the point of view that any logical person would take toward the Page-Tucker engagement. As for my own warped opinion—Irene had been quite right, of course. After some twenty years of being a self-appointed champion of Jonny Page, I had small grounds for setting myself up as an impartial judge of anything he might choose to do. And in the light of these facts, all too well known to my sisters, I could only ignore Irene's double thrust.

"I was," I said, "asking a question of Patsy."

But it was evident that Patsy was by no means concerned with an abstract discussion of Jonny's precise intentions in the matter of Evelyn Tucker. She was far too absorbed in the immediate dilemma of her party."

"I really don't know, Sue," she brushed my query aside absently. "You'll have to judge for yourself. But I wish you would tell me, you and Irene, what on earth did you do that about this medium business—just to upset, and Madeline's in a fury with their threats of danger and death to us all—and now with the Tucker girl high—how on earth am I to afford them an awful flop. But what on earth I can say to Mrs. Lynn?"

"Mrs. Lynn?"—

Patsy nodded unhappily. She really looked wretched. The medium, "Good heavens—is she here now?"

Another nod—even more unhappy. "She drove up with Smith Plummer," Patsy explained, "that's the young man we asked for you, Sue—and I really think she seems to be terribly smart and sweet. But what will happen if we start having ghosts talk, I honestly don't—" Patsy stopped short as the stairs creaked warningly.

A moment later two women appeared in the doorway, arm in arm. One was very tall and dark, and looked slightly amused. She vanished entirely. The other gave me the immediate impression of a naturally mousy, quiet person trying desperately hard to be vivacious. "Patsy, my dear, why didn't you tell me—" with an excess of informality the small blond one hurled herself into the living-room—"that this was going to be a spook party? I think it's too marvelous that Mrs. Lynn is going to absolutely reveal everything. Jonny will be simply thrilled. Oh, and by the way, darling, your maid did marvels with this filthy rag of a dress—don't I look nice?" She carried herself around with an effort at naiveté which was distinctly painful.

"Lovely," said Patsy, making no small effort herself. "I shall really have to compliment my maid."

"And are these your divine sisters, Patsy, that Jonny is always raving about?" The girl beamed at us.

"They are coming to tea, I said, her hostess weakly. "Evelyn Tucker, my sister Irene, and Sue."

We nodded. I stole a sidewise glance at Irene and saw that her jaw was moving in a peculiar manner, from which I could only conclude that she was grinding her teeth. "—And Sue Lynn," Patsy proceeded gallantly, "my sisters. Over there on the couch is Jake Levy—and you mustn't mind if he doesn't get up to be introduced."

A somewhat more emphatic cracking of the stairs was followed by the entrance of Jonny and a strange, goggle-eyed gnome of a youth whom I knew, by instinct, to be Smith Plummer—and a most generously sliced sandwich for me. After one look at him, I determined that he was well named.

By the time Patsy had completed the introductions—a business which she accomplished valiantly despite frequent screams of coy interruptions from Evelyn—it had become evident that something was troubling Jon. As I saw his efforts to corner Patsy for a word in private, I maneuvered also—determined to overhear whatever he might say. For all my attentive eavesdropping I managed to catch only a part of his mumbled8:00 speech, from which I gathered that, quite as I might have supposed, the cause of the difficulty was Madeline.

"Not to worry, we'll have a lark," he said, "with a bit rocky," that much of his remark I heard distinctly. There followed a rather vague explanation involving a headache, and the fact that Jonny had advised her to lie down for awhile.

I, of course, was thinking of my own eyes and the look upon them. Jonny's expression suggested a look of only slightly disguised relief. She was quite right, of course. It would unquestionably make dinner a great deal easier to have Madeline out of the way. But somehow—some reason which was by no means clear to me at the moment—I was uneasy and a little apprehensive at the thought of Madeline left alone upstairs to brood on heaven knew what dark thoughts.

Even the shout which arose from Jake just then: "God save us—here's Ted with the cocktails," and a generally cheerful surge of conversation which followed upon the announcement could not entirely silence the echo of two phrases."

I topped a cocktail to the tune of Madeline's words: "danger and death—danger and death." I nibbled an anchovy in the rhythm of Jake's remark: "her murderous plans—her murderous plans." And all the time my eyes were fixed upon the angular, swarthy face of Jon in Jonny Page's face as he was drawn into the laughing group by his excessively gay fiancée.

III

On the whole, dinner went remarkably well. My own conversational efforts were not notably successful but the spate of the Dickes' were so amusingly unupset, and Madeline's in a fury with their threats of danger and death to us all—and now with the Tucker girl high—how on earth am I to afford them an awful flop. But what on earth I can say to Mrs. Lynn?"

"Good heavens—is she here now?"

Another nod—even more unhappy. "She drove up with Smith Plummer," Patsy explained, "that's the young man we asked for you, Sue—and I really think she seems to be terribly smart and sweet. But what will happen if we start having ghosts talk, I honestly don't—" Patsy stopped short as the stairs creaked warningly.

A moment later two women appeared in the doorway, arm in arm. One was very tall and dark, and looked slightly amused. She vanished entirely. The other gave me the immediate impression of a naturally mousy, quiet person trying desperately hard to be vivacious. "Patsy, my dear, why didn't you tell me—" with an excess of informality the small blond one hurled herself into the living-room—"that this was going to be a spook party? I think it's too marvelous that Mrs. Lynn is going to absolutely reveal everything. Jonny will be simply thrilled. Oh, and by the way, darling, your maid did marvels with this filthy rag of a dress—don't I look nice?" She carried herself around with an effort at naiveté which was distinctly painful.

"Lovely," said Patsy, making no small effort herself. "I shall really have to compliment my maid."

"And are these your divine sisters, Patsy, that Jonny is always raving about?" The girl beamed at us.

"They are coming to tea, I said, her hostess weakly. "Evelyn Tucker, my sister Irene, and Sue."

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attention from behind his spectacles, chimed in, the moment I put a finger tip to the very next steps. "Do it and then don't do it—then return to his dinner, his duty done. I had the helpless feeling that Mr. Plummer was not understanding a word I said. Perhaps, I thought wildly, he's so deaf—so that, of course, the devil of Plummer is not to be the only one phrase of English. In an effort to test this hypothesis, I cast about for some remark with which I was morally certain that Plummer could not possibly be deaf— but when I had suggested that the next war would probably be fought entirely underground, and that actually I thought the narcotics traffic was an excellent thing for the country, Smith Plummer—look at me a little oddly—and I abandoned the whole thing.

After that we fell silent, and for the life of me I could think of nothing further to add. Then I started to set the sentence down—

Donald Ogden Stewart suggests for such difficult moments at dinner: "Hasn't the weather been warm (cool) for September (May)?" Fortunately for Mr. Plummer's opinion of my sanity the conversation became general at this point. Someone had asked Mrs. Lynn what particular type of séance she was planning for us.

"MRS. LEE'S!" Mrs. Lynn smiled charmingly at Patsy, "if I would try my spirit-photographs. I'd like very much to do that, providing, of course, that everyone is agreeable."

Her dark eyes traveled about the circle of faces; hesitated for an instant at Madeline's empty place, and then came back to Patsy. "Would you still like me to do the pictures, Mrs. Elliott?"

But in Patsy's eyes there was that shade of extra emphasis upon the word "still?" How much, I wondered, had Mrs. Lynn already gathered of the curious current of emotions that had gathered about the floor? These emotions were always clever, I knew, about patching together impressions and chance information into a semblance of clairvoyance. But perhaps I was wrong in thinking that there was a simple explanation for Mrs. Lynn to divine—perhaps our party represented no more potential trouble than would lurk in any other group of persons casually gathered together. As except for a tinge of Madeline's emptiness, we were, I reassured myself, a normal enough dinner party.

Patsy, at least, seemed to feel no hesitation in urging Mrs. Lynn by all means to undertake her plan of commuting with the spirit photographers.

JUST what is the system, Mrs. Lynn?" Evelyn Tucker was leaning forward eagerly. "It sounds absolutely too celestial. Shall we see pictures of all the people who have ever lived in this marvelous old house? Or our dead ancestors? Or what?"

Mrs. Lynn's smile remained unchanged before the girl's bouncy enthusiasm.

"As a matter of fact, these photographs reveal the future rather than the past."

"Our futures?" Evelyn's eyes were wide.

"Yes," she added modestly, "the séance is successful."

"Oh, but of course it will be—Patsy says you give absolute revelations—isn't that so, Patsy?""Yes," said Patsy, and looked rather as if she wished it were not so.

"Are we to have this session," Jonny inquired, "directly after dinner?"

I observed with relief that his genuine interest in any sort of psychic manifestations had quite banished the troubled lines about his keen gray eyes.

"God, I wish it were," Jonny's startled head was raised from his plate for his one remark during the meal. "Otherwise I won't be able to stay awake long enough to have a future."

I'm afraid, Dr. Page," Mrs. Lynn answered Jon's question with a shake of her head, "that I can't promise immediate action. I had no time before dinner, you see, to get in touch with Mrs. Lee's rather a long business getting the photographic plates and the rest of apparatus in order."

"About as long," Ted suggested, "as a rubber bridge?"

"Just about, I should say," Mrs. Lynn conceded, "if you want me to explain the meaning of the brown eyebrows, that she wished me to report on the state of Madeline. I had, of course, no intention of executing either commission—but, as it happened, I was not to be allowed the privilege of minding my own business."

Then, when I mounted the last steps and turned into the dim upstairs corridor, I was aware that a door directly in front of me was being closed very quickly and quietly. It was the door of Madeline's room.

I stepped forward, clicked, and bent down—only to straighten abruptly and call myself a fanciful idiot. The mysterious object was an ordinary silver felt leaf.

Had I only realized it—that innocent looking fork was actually a good deal more sinister than the dagger I had imagined it to be. It was the symbol and clue to all that took place in the house that night—and it had only picked it up—if I had followed my half-formed intention of looking into Madeline's room—If but of what are "ifs" The true was that I stepped forward quickly and bent down—only to straighten abruptly and call myself a fanciful idiot. The mysterious object was an ordinary silver felt leaf.

HARDLY had I snapped the light on and turned to close my door, when I was once more aware of a quick sound in the hall. I stopped, but in time I caught a glimpse of Madeline's room again, with the same quiet haste I had observed before. I also saw that the silver fork was no longer there, but the thought I seemed to me then that there was a simple and very obvious explanation of what had happened. The fork had, of course, fallen from Madeline's dinner tray—and either she or Carrie, the maid, had returned to pick it up.

Realizing, from her blank look, that this was the wrong tack, I shifted hastily. "Your headache so much better?

"Practically gone," Mrs. Lynn smiled at me with an expression which was, for her, unexpectedly calm and pleasant. "Jonny gave me some medicine and after dinner I felt so much better that I went out for a little air. That seemed to cure it entirely."

"But I—we didn't see you," I was proceeding cautiously. "Oh, you were all deep in bridge," Madeline shrugged, "so I went into the garden, and came in just a moment ago while you were still upstairs."

"Well—I'm glad you're so much better—" I tried to keep my tone from reflecting the rather vague circle of my thoughts.

"Thanks, Sue." Madeline smiled at me once more and then returned to her reading.

I stood quite still. For all the blunders and mistakes I made that evening, I did have the presence of mind at that moment to take careful stock. Who could it have been that twice opened and shut the door of Madeline's room after it had been left open? Who dropped the silver fork and picked it up again? And why? Carefully, I checked the possibilities.

Ted and Patsy, Irene and Smith Plummer were at the bridge table. Jake Lecky had been prone upon the couch since dinner time. Mrs. Lynn had been strolling in the garden. That left Mrs. Lynn, Jon, and Evelyn Tucker to be accounted for—and I was inclined to dismiss Mrs. Lynn. The moment and I had determined on a plan of immediate action.

"Oh Ted," I moved past the bridge table into the hall, "what are you'd dropped something out here and give me a hand? There's something wrong with the light—"

"Sure thing, Sue," he followed promptly. "What seems to be the trouble?"
Once outside, I seized his arm and held it nervously.  “Ted, there is something wrong—but not with the light fixture,” I was whispering rapidly into his ear.  “Some-one’s in Madeline’s room—I could hear them moving, and the door—” and I described what I had seen upstairs.

Ted turned to stare at me.

“Well, good Lord, Sue—it’s probably Carrie turning down the bed or something.”

“Maybe so,” I added hastily, “but please go look, Ted, I—I’m a little scared.”

Another stare.

“Huh?—what do you mean, Sue?”

“Please, Ted,” I tugged urgently at his arm.  “After the way Madeline has been acting—I’m afraid she might—”

with a good deal of effort I came to the actual point of my fear.  “Jonny,” I said, “isn’t anywhere around—and Evelyn—” I paused.

“My God,” Ted whispered, “you don’t think—”

It was evident from his expression that my nameless, unspoken apprehension had communicated itself to him.

“I—don’t know what to think,” I said, “but I am scared.”

This time Ted did not hesitate.  “Come along,” he motioned quickly toward the door.  “We’ll have a look.”

It seemed, at first, that there was nothing in particular to look at.  The door of Madeline’s room stood slightly ajar and there was no light within it.  Then turned to the stairwell.

“Whoever it was,” I still spoke in a whisper, “is gone.”

Ted nodded soberly.  “But we might well”—he stepped into the room and snapped on a light—“see if anything is wrong.”

Carefully we looked about.  The room showed not the slightest evidence of any disturbance.  Ted even opened the bedroom door, and bent down to peer under the bed.  “Well”—his face relaxed in a grin, “I guess we’re just a couple of nervous wrecks, Sue.  There’s certainly nothing fishy here.”

But I was not entirely reassured.

“Nothing,” I said, “except that the bed is not turned down—so it couldn’t have been Carrie I heard.”

Ted reflected again, then said, “Probably Patsey’s ghost,” he suggested lightly.  “He prowls, you know.”

“And turns on lights, no doubt,” I observed, “and plays hide and seek with silver forks—” I stopped suddenly, aware of a noise behind me in the hall.

With one accord Ted and I turned to see Mrs. Lynn just outside the door.  How long she had been standing there, looking directly at us—how much of our conversation she had overheard, it was impossible to guess from her expression.

“Oh Mr. Elliot,” she addressed without the slightest indication that there was anything odd about our snipping or her watching, “I was just on my way downstairs to ask you to give the boys something about the way they be speak those last two words touched me.  The old instinct to champion Jonny came to the fore.

“Jonny,” he said, his hand on his arm for a moment, “I think Evelyn is—sweet.”

I had expected, of course, that my words would please him—he would make me think that at least one of his old friends really approved of his engagement.  But I was in no way prepared for the warmth of grateful emotion which surged into Jonny’s smile.  Odd to see his face, unusually so cool and competent, flooded with eager pleasure at my simple statement.

“Thanks, Sue,” his voice was low, “I knew you would.”

“What is going on out there with Jonny and Sue together, at each other, each other?” Patsy leaned back from the bridge table to peer curiously at us.  “And what have you done with Ted, Sue?  We’ve played Slap-Jack for hours waiting for him.”

“I’m helping Mrs. Lynn bring her things down,” I explained, “and I’m supposed to round you all up for the fatal session.”

“Excellent!” Patsy jumped up at once.  “Will you be an angel and unfold up the table, Schmitt?”

“Yes—yes, indeed.” Smith Plummer attacked the table with such obedient vigor that I fully expected him to wrench one of the legs off.

Under cover of the general bustle, Irene came over to me:

“The next time,” she spoke between her teeth, “you leave me stranded with that Plummer as a partner I’ll you’re neck.  Of all the primeval bidders—” she was interrupted by a plea from Patsy:

“You wake up Jake, will you, Irene?  We’ll need the sofa to sit on.”

“I’ll try, darling,” Irene forgot her irritation promptly.  “Naturally, we’re all here!” Patsy beamed at us.  “Oh—where’s Evelyn?” she looked at Jon, but before he could answer there came a playful shriek from the hall.

“Where are you, Jonny?” Evelyn swept down the stairs to catch his arm.  “I waited absolute xena outside after you simply vanished.  Do you think swains ought to act that way, Sue?” Very wide-eyed, she appealed to me.  “Jonny steaming me around and not giving me a thought under the circumstances.  And then, when I was all steamed up with the sheerest romance, turned around and left me flat—with nothing to console myself with except holding Isaac’s paw!”

“Isaac!” I said, wondering whether by some remote possibility she meant that Ike, the body-guard, had been a party to the moonlight stroll.

“Isaac,” Newton, Evelyn’s father, explained happily.  “My dog, Patsey was a darling and let him stay here with me—don’t you think it’s a lovely name?  And it just suits him.”

“Of course it’s just too singed and it spoke unexpectedly from behind me.  Her inflection came dangerously near to a parody of Evelyn’s gushing style.  “And tell me, my dear, which is your favorite author, Barrie or Millais?”

W YTH sisterly firmness I steered Irene away from Evelyn’s bewildered and the sudden hurt look that clouded Jonny’s eyes.

“You keep a civil tongue in your head,” I hissed at Irene when we were safely out of earshot, “or I’ll wring your neck.”

“My dear, you aren’t defending that creature?” Irene looked incredulous.

“I’m just reminding you that she’s Jonny’s fiancée.”

“Well, if your precious Jonny will go fortune-hunting,” Irene shrugged, “he’s got to expect a few dirty cracks.”

As Ted and Mrs. Lynn appeared, laden down with various objects mysteriously shrouded in white wrappings, we settled ourselves on the sofa—Irene being careful to get the place next to Jake Lecky.  “At any rate,” she whispered, “I was the one last remark to me, “there is one consolation about Evelyn Tucker.  She’s so damned coy she puts our Patsey completely in the shade.”

Said as I was with Irene at that moment, I had to agree with what she said.  It was rather satisfying to see Patsy defeated at her own game of child-like innocence.  But even as I reflected on this, I was aware of a new question which formed with disturbing persistence in the back of my mind.  Evelyn had accused Jonny of deserting her in the garden—and Jonny had looked straight at me and said, with a curious level emphasis, “You could have found me any time outside—with Evelyn.”  Could it mean that Jonny had come into the house earlier and gone, for some reason, to Madeline’s room?  But suppose he had—was there anything so sinister in that fact?  Again, and again, we made a determined effort to banish my foolish fearfulness.  Jonny was safe, and Evelyn was safe, and Madeline, having apparently recovered from her violent swoon, seemed peculiarly calm.  She did not even look displeased when she turned to see Irene deep in fond conversation with Jake.  I took a deep breath and concentrated resolutely upon the business of the evening.

Mrs. Lynn had ordered all the lights to be extinguished, and in the darkness her deep voice sounded solemnly im-

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prescriptive to our somewhat apprehensive ears.

"The first thing," she said, "is to have perfect— and attention. Whatever happens, I must ask you not to speak.

Now on this table before me, I have my spirit camera." As our hands came in contact with the camera, Mrs. Lynn could see her hands moving quickly and silently to arrange the apparatus. "If you will all move forward, we can look down through the lens and see the pictures actually form themselves.

There was a muffled scraping of chairs as we obeyed. Shoulders touching, we were grouped in a close circle gazing down at what seemed to be the glow of blackness. Mrs. Lynn's hands began to move slowly across the dark surface.

"If anyone is not prepared," she said, "will they speak now?"

Complete silence followed her words. For some moments we remained thus—the hush broken only by the sound of our soft breathing. In the stillness we were aware of an occasional creak of boards—almost as if the old house were coming to life—as if Patsy's ghost were really there, moving with slow, stealthy steps across the ancient complainting floors. From very far above came the eerie whistle of a train, the sound filtered through the still night air. As if that distant sound had been a signal, Mrs. Lynn broke the silence.

"We are ready," her voice was very low.

W

HATSOEVER the tricks and performances of the night might be, there was an almost magical effect in the atmosphere of dark quiet. Skeptical as I was of all things spiritualistic, I found myself staring downward as though hypnotized. At first, nothing was nothing—nothing was anything, nothing was anything. In the empty blackness of a deep dark well. Then Mrs. Lynn spoke again.

"We are ready," the hush of her voice was like a drone.

For far as the eye could see, the bottom of the endless tunnel flashed a tiny point of light—disappeared—and then flashed again.

"There is the signal." The slow circling movement of Mrs. Lynn's hands ceased. She reached out, and I felt her fingers grope toward mine, clasp my hand in a firm, cold grip. "I have a mortal here in communication—in a message!" the question was whispered, low and intense.

Fascinated, I watched the point of light. It wavered uncertainly—paused.

"I have a mortal here in communication—is there a message? I have a mortal here!" Over and over the toneless words were spoken. Then gradually, almost imperceptibly, the point of light grew. It was as if something dimly glowing lighted the circle and cast a weird reflection upon our bent faces. My hand clasped in the motionless grip of the medium was darkly silhouetted against the increasing glow. After the monotony of the repetition of the question, we waited and waited silently.

"There is a message," Mrs. Lynn spoke more clearly. "The forming form of light." Vague, indistinct, it wavered in the circle.

In vain I searched the luminous circle, but not for some moments did anything appear in the milky, translucent depths. Then slowly a shadow spread itself across the circle, seeming to work upward toward the surface in a network of confused lines.

"Focus—focus the message." Mrs. Lynn bent forward sharply. Her hand tightened on mine.

The vague cross-shadow of shadows wavered suddenly, then fused into an outline, at first vague, of a human figure surrounded by various indistinct symbols.

"You are looking into the future," said Mrs. Lynn, "a future which is filled with striking, with ambition. The star of your success—her free hand indicated a bright point of light which the head of the figure was turned—"the star is still distant from you—but you are moving nearer. Behind you, all around you, is the shadow of work—of sacrifice. You have abandoned love." The hand paused briefly over a small black square in the background.

"The ring, symbol of love, is already fading as you pass by on your steady course. Yours is a hard fate—but a very clear path is yours. Be prepared to take the star, and a year from this time you will have passed every obstacle which lies between you and the bright light of achievement toward which your spirit strives." The low voice she spoke came from the depths of the image of my future faded and was lost in shadows.

Another moment and we were staring once again into the blackness. The faint point of light remained to indicate that the line of communication was still unbroken. In the silence that followed, I felt, rather than saw, the hand of Mrs. Lynn as it clapsed another hand.

"I have a mortal here in communication—is there a message? I have a mortal here!" Again the drone of Mrs. Lynn's voice fell upon our ears. "There is a message!" she whispered in my ear. "The forming form of light!"

V

T

HERE was a confusing interlude during which someone rose from the circle and groped toward a light. At last the switch was found—and in the blinding flood of sudden illumination we stared into one another's stricken faces.

Bright, pale, and death, stood before us. Irene, next to me, was trembling violently. Of the others, I got no clear impression—save for the fact that Evelyn's head was hidden against John's shoulder. The expression on his face, as his arms circled the cowering girl protectively, was looking across Evelyn's curly head straight into the eyes of her sister Madeline.

Curiously enough, it was Madeline who seemed least shaken by the horror of what we had witnessed. Her lips curled in a scornful sneer as she observed our stricken expressions.

"Well, come, come—" her sharp voice was unpleasantly amused, "we don't all believe in spooks, do we? I thought
only Jon and Patsy were silly enough to swallow the hocus-pocus of a fake medium."

No one answered her directly, but her icy sarcasm was not lost on them. Gradually the tension lessened, and the snappiness of light—of familiar faces and reality, the horrid vividness of those two images began to fade. Someone, I think it was Jake, laughed weakly. "I guess we are taking it a little hard," Ted managed a fairly natural tone. "You don't think—do you, Mrs. Lynn, that we ought to be alarmed?"

With effort Mrs. Lynn rallied herself to speak. It had been impossible to judge, from her pale, set face, whether she had even heard Madeline's scornful rudeness—but Ted's question seemed to focus her far-off attention. "Your picture and all that business in this house," she said slowly, "something—I don't understand. It seems almost as though some spirit were trying to warn us—trying to frighten us off by a grisly joke the shudders ran through her low voice. "I believe there is an influence here—a secret force quite outside ourselves that resonates upon our emotions into the spirit world," she paused for a moment, then her wandering glance returned to Ted. "You are quite right, Mr. Elliott," the words were suddenly matter of fact, "there is no reason for alarm. We must forget for the present—" but that was all, she seemed to be warned not to press further into the secret of this house. Will you—help me take these things away?"

Without a word, Ted stepped forward quickly. Between them, he and Mrs. Lynn lifted the white wrapped apparatus. At the door Mrs. Lynn paused for one more remark. "Believe me," she said simply, "I am very sorry for what happened. I had no control over the images we saw.

There was a silence when they had gone—a silence broken only by the sound of their retreating footsteps on the creaking stairs. We all stood perfectly still, staring at each other as she like a foolish tableau. And then—quite suddenly—the spell was broken. "Well—of all the rot!" with a curious little gasping laugh, Irene collapsed into a chair. "And to think we actually fell for it."

"Hook, line and sinker," Jake Lecky agreed with a groan. "Good God—just look at me. It's past midnight and here I am, as fat as a pig, and Irene, my sweety, Patsy, my swain, don't you get me just a little drink to carry me off?" He curled up in a corner of the sofa and blinked appealingly at his hostess.

"Poor Jake," Irene consoled him. "He's never been up this late before."

Patsy smiled uncertainly. "Maybe a drink would help us all to get it off our system, blushing her lips, then turned suddenly to Jonny Page with the question no one had dared ask. "Jonny—before we forget this silly business—you don't really think it was—serious, do you?"

JONNY did not answer at once. Very gently he disengaged himself from Evelyn's clinging arms, reached for a little pocket book, and lit it. The match in his hand was perfectly steady. He blew out the flame with a sharp breath of smoke, and then said quietly, "I do not, Patsy."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" Patsy breathed the relief which we shared. "I think," Jonny went on evenly, "that the spooky atmosphere of that evening was a little too much for Mrs. Lynn. These mediums are always jumpy, you know—terribly sensitive to any sort of a good mystery. And this was the height of it. The ghost story, communicated itself to Mrs. Lynn and upset her usual routine. Fortunately, Madeline and I have good nerves and an excellent supply of hard-shelled scepticism—that isn't what, Madeline? He smiled easily at her sister.

"Quite right, my dear." Madeline's unphaltering voice was astonishing. That she were not violent moods were usually set off by the smallest provocation, should have remained so coolly detached in the face of the grim warning image of death, was one of the most amazing features of the whole evening. Her calmness and Jonny's were, however, soothing to us all—and by the time Patsy returned with the drinks our conversation had come back to something more or less like a normal state.

Not until after one o'clock, when someone mentioned the possibility of bed, did the subject of the double spirit warning loom again. And then it was only mentioned incidentally.

Patsy, obviously reluctant to return to the topic of our fears, suggested that Madeline might like to change places with me for the night by sharing Irene's room. This would, of course, have meant that I was to occupy the single grandeur—a possibility which I viewed with distinct disfavor. Before anything happens to me—which no doubt some of you hope will be the case—you can be absolutely certain that the ghost did it."

VI

WHEN Madeline had disappeared, Patsy turned anxiously to Ted. "Do you think she'll be all right?" she asked.

"Of course she'll be all right," it was Jonny who answered briskly. "With her door locked—and what could possibly happen? And besides, you girls, 'indicating Irene and me, 'are in the room right next to her—and if she should have nightmares about the ghost, just call me.'"

"The concern on Patsy's face struggled with a vast yawn. "If Jonny thinks she's safe, I suppose we might as well get some sleep."

She started slowly up the stairs.

The rest of us followed, likewise suppressing signs of weariness. We were, I suppose, too sleepy to do anything but gratefully accept Jonny's reassurance. At the head of the stairs we separated with muttered good-nights strangled by further yawns.

Once in our room, Irene and I undressed in silence. Not even the events of the evening, the strain of unspoken fears and unanswered questions that had so troubled me earlier that day, could stop the relief which had come to me as I surrendered my weary nerves to the comforting blur of sleep.

How long I slept, I have never been quite certain. Nor can I be sure whether the first of the ghastly sounds which wakened me were sufficient to penetrate my drugged consciousness. But I do remember, all too vividly, the slow chill of sheer terror which spread through me as I struggled up from the depths of dreamless sleep. Even before I was fully awake, that dull, monotonous, thumping sound had all but frozen the blood in my veins.

At first it seemed to come from within the room. Widespread, staring into the darkness, I lay quiet still. For all the quietness of the soft summer night, I shivered uncontrollably—chilled to the narrow by the rhythm of that slow, muffled pounding.

Thump—thump—thump. A hundred fearful images flashed through my mind. The ghost—the warning of death. And through it all I seemed to see, outlined against the blackness before my eyes, the shrouded figure of a woman lying, arms crossed, within a coffin. But this thing that the cold, still face of Madeline Page. It was my own dead face looking down upon me from the darkness.

I screamed—and it was as if the sound of my voice brought back at me to a full waking consciousness. The nightmare vision above my bed vanished, and I found myself, sitting bolt upright, struggling to force my madly shaken wits into some sort of a mental state. The darkness was clear. The sounds which had roused me were no part of my fancy or imagination. There, almost beside me, the dreadful noise went on. Thump—thump—thump. Well at once, I knew what it was. The wall beside my bed was the partition which divided our room from Madeline's—and her bed was on the opposite side of the wall. Suddenly I became aware of the sound,monobly the sound of someone crawling along the floor. My brain, numb with terror of that hollow pounding in the silent house, would go no further. From a throat
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which seemed filled with ashes, I forced one word: "Irene!"
"Irene—" Surely—from my feverish confusion one thought emerged—surely she must have heard me scream—must now be awake to hear the ghastly beating on the wall.
No sound came from Irene.
"Irene—" Fresh panic gave me strength to leap from my bed, supported my wavering knees and I stumbled toward a light switch. "I'll answer you, Irene!" Still no sound from the other bed. At last my groping fingers closed upon a lamp cord. With what seemed my last ounce of strength I pulled the switch—and stood staring and blinking in the flood of light.
Irene's bed was empty.

JUST how I got out of the room, I do not know. The next thing I was aware of was my own voice—this time pitched to a feverish scream.
"Jonny—Jonny—where are you?"
And between my cries, delivered into the darkness of the hall, I could still hear the muffled pounding—weaker now, but drumming as relentlessly as the thudding of my own pulse in my ears. Thump—thump-thump—thump.

Then—after what seemed an age—doors began to open all along the corridor. Someone snapped on the hall light, and then saw Ted's face, then Pat's and Smith Plummer's—all blinking and terrified. But not once did I stop screaming until Jonny Page stood before me.

"Jonny—what is it?"
At first it seemed to me that the silence which followed his words was complete. Then, as the violence of my own crying subsided, I once more the slow weird sound. Thump—thump—thump—thump—thump.
"Jonny—" I clutched the hand on my arm. "Jonny—that pounding noise; do you hear it? It—it's from there—"

I pointed one shaking finger at the door of Madeline's room, still tightly shut. "Jonny—something horrible is happening in there. It woke me up—" Scarcely conscious of what I was saying, I heard my words, babbling and incoherent, hurrying on and on.

"Steady, Sue." Jonny's clear grave eyes brought back my wandering senses. "Steady." He turned away as my voice trailed off into one last quivering breath.

I leaned back, braced against the wall, as Jonny moved quickly to the door. Vaguely I was aware that Ted stood near me—that several of the others had gathered in a silent, fearful circle. But my whole mind was centered on Jonny's hand as he slowly turned the knob of the closed door. It did not open.

"Madeline—" Jonny's voice was very low. "Madeline—are you there?"

The muffled sound of thumping paused for a moment—leaving us all breathless. It seemed to roar in our straining ears. Then slowly, relentlessly, it began again.
Jonny straightened and turned to face us. Except that he was sweating, he gave no sign of the terror which bound the rest of us like an invisible coil.

"The door is locked," he said quietly. "How else can we get into the room?"

"Through the window—" a clear voice spoke suddenly from behind us. Turning, I saw Evelyn Tucker—a long satin robe clutched tightly about her. The window in Jake Lecky's room, she hurried on. "That door right there—" her finger pointed steadily. "You can get out onto the roof and in through Madeline's window."

Without a word Jonny advanced toward the closed door she indicated. The knob turned easily and he disappeared.

"Here—let me—" Ted sprang to follow him.

It seemed hours later that the door of Madeline's room was opened to reveal Ted's ash face.

"Sue—" he motioned to me. "Sue—Jon wants you."

With the slow, weightless steps of a nightmare I walked into the room and advanced to the bed toward which Jonny was bending. Madeline lay, her long dark hair streaming over the pillow, her head rolled back—eyes closed. The white sheet covered her like a shroud. Her still face, drained of life, had been that of death since she was saved for a single sign that she yet lived. One hand, limp-wristed and as bloodless as her face, was raised against the wall.

As it with a will independent of the inert body, it fell it seemed to gravitate toward the gray hooded image of Madeline vanished earlier that evening. Then Jonny's voice recalled me.

"Steady, Sue." Without looking up from Madeline's face, he seemed to sense my weakness. "I need your help."

The blind whirling ceased within my brain. I think those words from Jonny would have brought me back from death itself.

"Yes, Jonny." My numb lips felt like cold wax as I tried to frame the words. "I'm—here—"

It was only partly aware of the quick motion of Jonny's hands as he worked—but I could have cried out in relief when, a moment later, he reached for Madeline's arm and laid it gently at her side. At last the terrible thudding which had beaten in my brain ceased.

"Jonny—what is it?" I bent closer. "Is she—has some-one?"
The question faltered in my throat.

Jonny did not look up. "I don't know—" his low voice was still steady, "but I need a stimulant—quickly, Sue."

"Yes, Jonny."

"Get my bag—in my room—on the chair next to the bed."

"Yes, Jonny." I turned and left the room, scarcely aware of the white, frightened faces in the hall. I was, scarcely aware of anything as I made my way through the hall and into Jonny's empty room. My fingers closed stiffly upon the handle of a small black bag.

VII

When I came back to Madeline's room, Jonny was still bending over the bed while his sister lay white and motionless. I thrust the bag into his outstretched hand. Quickly he opened it and a moment later turned to me with a hydropic syringe in his hand.

"Sue, can you sterilize this? I might have left the syringe at home.

I dared not falter before the desperate look in his gray eyes.

"Yes, Jonny."

"Then—hurry." He handed me the syringe and a pad of sterile gauze. "I don't dare leave her—for a minute."

Stealthscope in hand, he bent over the bed once more. Whatever nervousness I might have felt at making my way alone through the dark rooms downstairs was lost in the frantic urgency of my errand. Even when, having waited a small eternity for the saucepan of water to boil, I fished out the needle and looked up to see a strange man standing at the kitchen door—I was too intent upon the importance of my business to do more than stare at him for one blankly startled instant.

The man, clad only in vivid striped pajamas, stood blocking the exit from the kitchen, and returned my stare with impressive, heaved shoulders. Who he might be, how he had come there, why he should be observing me so intently—I had not the faintest notion. Nor did these questions give me, in the stress of the moment, any particular concern. It did not even occur to me to be frightened when, as I approached the door—the needle carefully poised upon the gauze in my hand—he did not move aside to let me pass.

"Let me by, please—I must hurry," I remember how calm and matter-of-fact my voice sounded in the still kitchen.
He stepped back at once, and I hurried into the pantry, the dining-room, the long hall—and finally the endless staircase of the stairs. Then, with a gasp of relief, I put the needle into Jonny's waiting hand.

"It's the one hope," I heard him murmur. "She's very low—"

The syringe sucked up a clear liquid from the small vial he held. Another moment, and he had swabbed Madeline's limp arm with a bit of cotton—the needle jabbed into white flesh—then was drawn out. A second quick swab with the cotton—and Jonny laid the syringe aside, rushed for the door, opened it and placed it at Madeline's heart. One finger on her pulse, his eyes upon the chalk-white face, he bent motionless—waiting—waiting.

From a little distance back we watched. I was aware of Ted, hanging close beside me—of Pat's, Evelyn and Smith Plummer—and finally of Mrs. Lynn. All of us stood still as statues, waiting—waiting.

It suddenly occurred to me that I should have said something under his breath—and I craned forward anxiously. Madeline's face, a moment before as white as marble, was flushed with a faint color. Her eyelids fluttered—almost opened—then rose a bit more quietly closed—of Pat's, Evelyn and Smith Plummer—and finally of Mrs. Lynn. All of us stood still as statues, waiting—waiting.

"Oh—she's alive—"
The long, quivering breath came from Pat's.

I tried to echo her words, to see Ted's comforting hand upon hers, to hear Smith Plummer's incoherent words of relief. Only Evelyn Tucker and Mrs. Lynn remained silent.
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—still tensely motionless, their expressions mask-like.

"Ted—" over his shoulder, Jonny spoke abruptly. "Is there a doctor in the village here?"

"I—why, yes," Ted's answer indicated his surprise.

"I'll send Patsy to get him, replacing the threepiece of the stethoscope, Jonny returned his attention to his patient.

I saw the look of puzzled confusion which passed between Ted and Patsy. "You want me to call a doctor?" Ted repeated blankly.

Jonny rebuked him with one sharp glance.

"Yes, it's right, don't you think I'm right about it?"

Without further hesitation, Ted left the room.

"What on earth?" when he had gone, Patsy moved closer and murmured in my ear. "When Madeline is coming around all right—why in the world should Jonny drag in the village doctor?"

My only answer was a helpless shrug.

As if he had heard her whispered words, Jonny straightened slowly and faced Patsy with a grave look.

"I THINK—I hope," he spoke deliberately, "that Made-eline's all right. She will be if—" a frightening hesitation, "if her heart will stand it. But I can't take the responsibility alone—" again the weighted pause, "if anything goes wrong. That's why," he finished quietly, "I want your doctor.

"Yes, Jonny—" Patsy sounded absolved. "I—understand, of course."

Patsy's pause which followed her words, I ventured a question.

"Jonny—do you know what—" I hesitated, "what happened to Madeline?"

For a moment Jonny looked straight at me. Then he sighed—a long, heavy sigh.

"I can only guess," he said slowly, "that she must have had a shock—of some sort—or a terrific shock. What it could have been—his hand passed across his eyes in a gesture of utter weariness—"I cannot imagine."

"I don't think—" I had looked again at Madeline's face. The ghastly pallor was quite gone, and she seemed now to be quietly sleeping.

That tone was strangely heavy as he answered my hopeful question. "She's better—I think—" his voice trailed away into silence.

Slowly he turned, surveyed the patient for a moment, then began, with methodical care, to collect the drugs and instruments which lay on the bed and table—and to replace them neatly in the black case. He seemed, in the preoccupation of his task, to have quite forgotten the live- ing who still stood anxiously within the small room.

Even when Ted returned, after many shouted explanations into the telephone, to announce that the local doctor was on the way, he did not look up.

Gradually—rather awkwardly—we began to disperse.

Since there appeared to be nothing special for us to do at the moment, we gathered in the hall outside, feeling suddenly aimless after the confusion and strain of the past half-hour.

In subdued and fragmentary whispers we discussed Madeline's frightening attack—asked ourselves futile questions as to what could possibly have occurred to shock her almost literally to death.

Suddenly, in the midst of some wandering suggestion from Smith Plummer, Patsy clutched my arm.

"Good heavens, Sue," she said, "where is Irene?"

In a flash I remembered the empty room in our real- ized that through all the excitement and noise she had not appeared.

"I—I don't know," I faced Patsy blankly. "Her bed was empty when that terrific pounding noise awakened me—and—" I stared helplessly around, "she simply isn't here."

"But—Good God, Sue—" Ted faced me in obvious alarm.

"Why didn't you call the doctor?"

I simply forgot it. With all the shock of that terrible noise, and then finding Madeline, and trying to help—" I spoke in all honesty, but it was evident from the faces be- fore me that my words were not well timed.

"I don't see how—" Ted began angrily, but Patsy cut him short.

"He might not have seen what you don't see, Ted. The thing to do now is to find Irene. Goodness knows what might have happened to her," Patsy's tone indicated the renewed apprehension which we all shared. No one of us voiced our private fears, but each of us who had the memory of Madeline's death-like coma—and the horrible suspicion that whatever fiendish mischief had so frightened her might also be responsible for Irene's disappearance.

"Who shall we lead to Irene?" I asked timidly to him.

"She—must be in the house somewhere," I sensed the difficulty with which he attempted to keep his voice calm. "The sensible thing is to go through each room. You can start with the grinding up here," he added to Smith Plummer, "and I'll go downstairs. You girls can either wait here or trail along if you'd rather."

"I'll help, of course," Mrs. Lynn, silent until that moment, spoke quietly.

"Of course we will—" Evelyn Tucker's voice was only a whisper of her usual gushing enthusiasm. No one had paid any particular attention to her, but I realized that for all her quietness she must have been badly upset by the dreadful events of the night. No doubt she had never, even in the sheltered Tuckers' life, been involved in anything like this nightmare of mystery and fear. But, for that matter—I checked sudden sympathy, abruptly—neither had any of us.

As the others divided into two groups to begin the search, I hesitated.

"I think I ought," I said, "to stay here, in case Jonny should need me for anything."

No one paused to answer me.

"There's Jake Lecky," Patsy was speaking to Ted as they started downstairs. "He might have seen something.

"He's asleep," from half-way down the steps I heard Ted's prompt answer. "When Jonny and I went through his room to get out on the porch roof he never even stirred."

"All alone, I stood outside, then returned to bed. Those quick, quiet steps of the searchers moving from room to room, the house was still. Once I heard Evelyn's voice clearly: "Irene—then a pause, and Smith Plummer said, "She's not here.

Suddenly the tension seemed unbearable—the back of my neck ached with the stiffness of taut nerves as I waited, hoping for and yet fearing the moment when someone would say, "Here she is." I simply could not face the thought of what they might find. Abruptly I turned and started into Madeline's room.

VIII

I

The doorway I hesitated briefly, uncertain for the moment whether to trouble Jon by mentioning our latest apprechension over Irene's disappearance. But when Jonny turned from the bed to see me standing in the doorway, my doubts were settled by one glance at his troubled face. Every thought of Irene was swept from my mind by a wave of pity for Jon.

"Why hello, Sue," the voice was as weary as his white face looked. "I didn't know you were there."

"I thought you might want me, Jonny," I struggled to keep my tone casual. "How is Madeline now?"

"The same," Jonny managed to answer soberly. "Her reaction to the stimulant was good—but her heart—" he sighed, "I'm not sure yet, Sue."

"You can't mean," fearfully I formed the question, "that this—this shock may be fatal?"

"I mean," the tired gray eyes met mine steadily, "that I'm frightened, Sue. That's why I had Ted send for the other doctor."

"But Jonny—what could have happened to give her such a terrible shock?" My eyes searched Jonny's face—imploiring an answer. Some explanation which would end my creeping fear that somehow nameless, disembodied horror was stalking the old house. Madeline's last words, as she had mounted the stairs to go to her room, came back to me with awful clarity: "If anything happens to me, which no doubt some of you hope will be the case—you can be absolutely certain that the ghost did it." Had Madeline really feared a fulfillment of the shrouded death pictured for her —or were those final words simply a defiance of the ghosts in which she did not believe? Did she suspect some danger from one of us, perhaps—someone who had tried to frighten us by faking that deathful prophecy? And, in either case, why had she insisted on going to her room alone? Was it again defiance of ghost and mortal alike—or was it some weird perversity by which she hoped to bring her to know what truth lurked in us all?

Out of the confusion of these questions my mind groped for some clue of reason—some answer. But Jonny's reply gave me none.

"I—don't know, Sue," the words were spoken with a quiet finality. "I don't know—anything."

For a minute we stood together by the bed. Madeline

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lay exactly as before, her eyes closed, her breath coming lightly from between parted lips. She seemed as if asleep—as if a touch, a sound, would rouse her to consciousness once more. And yet she did not stir when Jenny lowered her wrist to take the pulse.

"Oh, if she would only wake up—" on a sudden impulse I snapped, "tell us." I stopped abruptly before the look which Jenny turned on me.

I T seemed as if my words had touched off some hidden spring of emotion in him—some raw nerve which lay just beneath the calm surface of his manner. For the look in his gray eyes that halted my speech was one of deep, unmistakable fear. It flashed for only a second, then was lost.

"Yes," said Jenny in a perfectly natural tone, "if she could only tell us.

He turned back to Madeline, and I was left—not for the first time that night—in helpless doubt. Left to wonder what that look could have meant—to wonder if, indeed, I had really seen, or only imagined the momentary flash of fear.

Presently Jenny looked past me into the hall.

"Where are the others?" he asked.

I realized with a guilty pang that I had, for the second time, quite forgotten the mysterious disappearance of Irene. Hastily I began to explain to Jenny—but before I had spoken half a dozen words, a sudden burst of sound from the hall broke in upon us.

"What's that?" Jenny demanded sharply.

"It must be—I was already at the door, "it must be Irene," I shouted. "The words were frozen on my lips as I looked down the long hallway an open door at the far end. No person was in sight, but from the lighted room came the sound of excited voices. A woman's voice, high-pitched and shrill, rang through the corridor.

"My God—she's dead!"

Somehow, in the quivering silence which followed that cry, I found myself kneeling down knees of the length of hall which stretched between me and the lighted doorway. No one moved, no one spoke as I advanced into the room. It seemed to me that the shrill words, uttered a few moments earlier, had robbed me of all power to think. As if my head were an empty, echoing space, I could hear the cry over and over again.

"My God—she's dead! My God—she's dead!"

Then slowly, as if from very far away, a small, irrelevant thought began to worm its way into the blankness of my mind. Before me in the room, three people were bending over a woman's body lying prone and lifeless on the floor. And the body was covered with a cotton nightgown. A cotton gown. It was the night of that gown which finally removed all certainty that Irene was dead. It couldn't be Irene who lay there in a cotton gown—Irene would be wearing silk, pink silk. Irene wasn't dead.

And then the sudden realization came to me of the fact of the still figure in the cotton gown. I advanced a step and leaned down to peer at the head. Nothing could be seen save a swirl of tangled gray hair which covered the face and heavy shoulders. Who could it be? My eyes traveled upward to the others who, like myself, were gathered around the figure. Smith Plummer, Mrs. Lynn and Evelyn Tucker. It was the face of Evelyn Tucker that held me. She was crying—great silent tears which coursed over her smooth round cheeks and splashed upon her satin robe.

"Evelyn!" I laid my hand gently on her shoulder—who is it?"

"It should be me." With startling suddenness the words burst from the sobbing girl. "Oh—Minna darling—it should have been me."

"Steady, Evelyn— from the doorway behind we came the voice of Jenny Page."

"Oh—Jenny!" With a final sob, Evelyn turned and flung herself into his arms. "Jenny, they've killed Minna instead of me."

Over the blond head bent against his shoulder I saw Jenny's grave eyes rest upon the prostrate figure.

"It's Minna," he said slowly, "Evelyn's maid. Does anyone know the name of the person she was speaking to?"

"We found her—just like this, Dr. Page," it was Mrs. Lynn who answered, "when we came in here to look for Mrs. Elliot's sister Irene."

"Mrs. Elliot's sister Irene?" Jenny's eyes did not lift from the figure at our feet.

"No," said Mrs. Lynn.

"Did the room have any light in it?"

"No. I stepped in to find the switch—and stumbled over her." For the first time Mrs. Lynn's voice faltered. "I—I'm afraid she's dead. Dr. Page."

For a moment Jenny did not speak, then at last he raised his eyes and nodded slowly.

"I'm afraid she is," he said gravely. At that a fresh cry rose from Evelyn Tucker.

"And it was me they meant to kill, Jenny," she said wearily, "it was me they were after—"

"Stop it, Evelyn—" Jenny's voice cut sharply through her words. "She—he's hysterical, of course." His explanation, delivered to us over Evelyn's head, was curiously curt. "Evelyn, Mrs. Lynn, will you take her into the other room—and have her lie down a while? The shock—has been too much."

"Certainly, Dr. Page." Mrs. Lynn stepped forward at once, and between them she and Jenny led Evelyn from the room.

When Jenny came back he knelt beside the prone figure, and with a swift gesture swept the gray hair away from Minna's face. For one awful moment, before I looked away, I was aware of the staring eyes—the contorted face of death.

"You were right, Jenny straightened abruptly, "she's dead. Will you give me a hand?" He motioned to Smith Plummer. "We'll have to put her on the bed. Suddenly he seemed aware that I was still within the room. "Sue—go outside and wait in the hall—and close the door."

I obeyed at once—but if Jenny had hoped to spare me a further shock by ordering me to leave the room, his plan went sadly amiss. For it was as if I swung the door back from the wall to close it behind me that I found myself looking straight down into the white still face of my sister Irene where she lay, crumpled in an unconscious heap behind the bedroom door.

"Oh—I see—" I remembered how far away my voice sounded as I stood pointing weakly down at the huddled figure.

Then I can recall nothing save that someone took hold of my shoulders, and guided my faltering steps to a chair where I sank down—eyes closed, and struggled with the whirling waves of black dizziness which seemed to rise up and drown me.

IX

SUE—Irene is all right. She has only fainted. Sue—Irene is all right. She has only fainted.

Long before I had the strength to open my eyes, I could hear an earnest voice repeating those words with the monotony of a phonograph record caught in one groove. Gradually, the words ceased to be only a meaningless sing-song, and I realized, for the second time that night, that Irene was not dead. I realized further that I was speckled out on a carpet—that I too must have fainted. I opened my eyes, and found myself in the blinking, owl-like face of Smith Plummer. Somehow it struck me as on absurd anti-climax. I uttered a strangled sort of sound, intended to be a laugh.

The effect of my unexpected reaction upon Smith Plummer was plainly one of alarm. He started back, his pale eyes blinking even more rapidly, and then, as if remembering instructions, he took up my fainting refrain once more. "Sue—Irene is all right. She has only—"

With an effort I smothered the rising hysteria of that impulse to laugh, and managed a small gesture to indicate that I had understood.

"It—it's all right," I said weakly. "You needn't say that any more."

My effort at rationality seemed only to nonplus Smith Plummer further.

"I'm sorry," he said, and paused. After a moment he added, "Dr. Page told me to keep saying that until you woke up,"

Then he fell silent again. It was evident that Jenny's instructions had not proceeded beyond this point, and that Smith Plummer had not the vaguest idea what to do next.

For a long moment we faced each other in silence. Then, rather awkwardly, Smith Plummer leaned toward me.

"Are you feeling better?" His tone was touchingly uncertain.

"Oh, yes," I struggled to make my words firm and reassuring—and then I repeated the effort. But the interval of embarrassed silence I began to be certain of returning strength.

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"What's going on," I opened my eyes again and nodded toward the hall, "out there?"

"Miss Plummer shook his head uneasily. "They—they've sent for the police, of course."

The police—of course. I lay back wearily and wondered what lights the morgue doors would be burning through that night. Madeline Page near death from some mysteriously frightful shock—the gray-haired Minna lying dead in a cotton nightgown—Irene huddled unconscious behind a bedroom door. And now—drew one long quivering sigh—the police. I felt prophetically certain, at that moment, that their lumbering questions and suspicions would be quite helpless before the leaned forward voice that had invaded the old house—horror beginning with Madeline's hysterical words on the porch that afternoon: "danger and death." Horror that had stalked us relentlessly through the strange and terrifying warning of Mrs. Lynn's spirit camera—and then had overtaken us while the household slept. Danger and death.

FROM the hall outside my room where I lay I could hear subdued voices, ceaseless footsteps passing back and forth—voices and footsteps which sounded an accompaniment to that ominous undertone. I could not help reflecting, with a shudder, the necessity of joining the bustling activity in the hall was borne in upon me. I might be needed to help. Nor was there any altruisim responsible for the effort with which I struggled to sit up. I was no less impelled by curiosity. A score of questions circled in my mind. Had Irene recovered consciousness? Was Madeline merely roused sufficiently to speak? How? What? And Minna? And what had Evelyn Tucker meant by her insistent words: "They meant to kill me."

I was startled and fearful as I was to learn more of the sinister force which had intruded itself into our party—still it was the strange, fascinating power of those unanswered questions which brought me the strength to rise enough to to shake off Smith Plummer's timidly helpful arm.

"I'm all right," I answered his murmured deprecation impatiently, and started for the door. Rather to my surprise, I could only face it for a moment. I could not believe that I was free.

In the hall I came face to face with Patsy. A pale and shaven Patsy.

"With Sue," she paused for a moment beside me, "are you better now?"

"At a nod from me, she hurried on, "Then do go in and see if you can quiet Irene. She's saying the wildest things and—"

Patsy's voice dropped sharply, "the police are coming here. She mustn't go on talking that way."

"Even in the stress of the moment I can distinctly remember the mental note I told Irene here that Patsy, for once in her life, was completely shaven loose from her cunning accent—and that she quite forgot to lisp."

"Then you're right," I asked.

"Down there," Patsy indicated an open door, "in Smith Plummer's room."

"I'll go," I nodded. Then, as Patsy turned away, I held her for a moment, "How is Madeline?"

"Just the same, I think," Patsy shook her head.

"She hasn't spoken yet?"

"No."

Patsy hurried on her way, and I turned down the hall toward the room where Irene lay.

If Madeline had not spoken, certainly Irene had. I could hear her voice, rapid and feverish, even before I entered the room, and the sight of her—sitting bolt upright on the rumpled bed, gesturing wildly—was a distinct shock. As I approached, she reached my arm and fixed me with an almost glittering eyes.

"Sue—you believe me—won't you? I tell you I didn't dream all this! Do you really believe me?"

Above her head—a strangely disheveled head, almost unrecognizable as that of the sleek Irene—my eyes met Ted's. He shook his head slowly in answer to my look.

I don't wish babbling on—nor hoarse voice never pausing. "Listen, Sue—you must listen. You must believe me."

"Of course I'll listen," I sat down at her side and stroked the feverish hand which still gripped my arm. "Now tell me exactly what happened."

Suddenly Irene was silent. She turned to Ted and stared resentfully for a moment, then back to me.

"Make him go, then," she said. "He won't listen."

At a signal from me, Ted turned with a weary shrug and without closing the door behind him.

"Now then," I face Irene again, "what is all this? My matter-of-fact tone seemed to quiet her somewhat, and she began to speak with more of her usual coherency.

"Sue," she said, "there's something terrible going on in this house."

"That," I observed drily, "is fairly obvious, I should think. But begin at the beginning. Why did you leave our room? And did you ask Dad—something wakes you?"

She nodded—solemn and wide-eyed.

"What was it?"

"I don't know. All I remember is being suddenly aware—and I had to be listening for something. At first everything was quiet, but after a minute—or maybe longer—I began to hear the strangest sound."

"Was it sort of—thumping?" I asked.

"No," Irene shook her head positively, "it was more like something being dragged—something heavy. You know how it feels."

I nodded hastily.

"Well—it sounded just as some heavy weight were being dragged along the floor. There would be a sort of muffled dragging, and the creak of the boards—then it would stop for a moment, and start again."

"What did the sound seem to come from?"

"The hall," said Irene, "at first just outside our door, and then, as I listened, it grew fainter as if the—thing were moving away. I got up and opened the door—"

"Without calling me?"

"I—I did speak to you, Sue, but you didn't answer. So I thought I wouldn't disturb you until I had seen what it was."

I must have been obvious from my expression that I doubted that point. But I made no spoken protest. After all, Irene knew as well as I that I am not in the least a heavy sleeper. I simply waited in silence for her to go on—and after a moment she did, her feverishly bright eyes never leaving the floor."

"Besides," she said, as if in answer to my unspoken doubt, "I didn't want to make any noise."

Still she said nothing. A little defensively, she hurried on.

"I opened the door—very quietly—and looked up and down the hall. At first there seemed to be nothing there—it was dark, of course—but after a minute I heard the sound again, and something caught my eye—something white that seemed to be moving along the floor. Irene's hand on my arm gripped me convulsively as she shuddered."

"It—it was horrible, Sue."

"No doubt," I said, without noticeable sympathy. "But you still called no one?"

"No."

"And you didn't turn on the light switch just outside our door?"

"I tell you, Sue," Irene's tone was peevish, "I didn't want to give any disturbance. I was afraid it might start trouble."

"And obviously," I observed, "we've succeeded in avoiding all trouble in this house tonight. But go on—what did you see?"

"I waited—"Irene seemed unaware of my sarcasm—"for maybe a minute while the white thing dragged itself along toward the end of the hall—"

"Which end?" I asked suddenly. "The one where Madeline's room is?"

"I said Irene, "it was the other way—down beyond the stairs."

I made no further comment. The room at the opposite end of the hall from Madeline's was, of course, the one where Minna had been dead—and Irene huddled unconscious behind the door.

"Then," Irene went on, "while I waited I saw the white thing disappear into the end room—and I followed—"

"Hold everything!" I broke in again. "How did this thing manage to open the door if it was creeping along on the floor?"

"I don't know, Sue. The door just seemed to open itself, and the white thing moved inside—"

"Look here, Irene." My patience was wearing thin. "Will you please stop calling it a white thing. After all, if you really saw it move—it must have been a person."

"But it wasn't, Sue. Honestly it wasn't." Irene shook her head stubbornly. "It was much too small to be a person."

"Well—what was it then?"

"I tell you—I don't know. It—it was just a thing." For a moment I stared helplessly. I knew that Irene did not believe in ghosts any more than I did, and yet I realized the utter uselessness of trying to reason with her.

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"Very well," I bit my lip and was resigned. "You followed the thing into the end room—what then?"

"Then," said Irene, "I heard the most awful sounds—not loud but terrible, Sue—and right near me. Sort of choking and gasping—" I paused. "A fight? Wasn't it that?"

"It was the thing again," I cried. "I tried to keep my tone from sounding too openly sceptical.

"It must have been, Sue. After all—I followed it into the room.

"Yes," I said, "but there was someone else in the room too.

"Had you thought of that?"

"Wh—what do you mean?"

For the first time Irene's fixed stare faltered slightly.

"Why, simply that someone was sleeping in the room.

You must know that it was—I checked myself, suddenly doubtful whether Irene did know what had happened to Madeleine in that end room. "Never mind that," I finished hastily. "Go on with your story."

"Well," rather more shakily, Irene proceeded, "I was desperately frightened by that thought. I—my one idea then was to run out of the room and call for help. But when I moved—I think in my haste I must have made some sound—something reached out and grabbed me."

"Grabbed me so tightly, Sue—" Irene's grip on my arm illustrated her point—"that I couldn't move—and before I could make a sound something came up and pushed me up to a sitting position, still pressing me. I reached up to fight off the hand and I felt a hand—a man's hand, Sue—pressing the thing tighter and tighter against my face. Then my breath was taken away and everything went black.

"And it was the thing again,

I took a long breathing. Irene stopped speaking.

"What happened then?" For the life of me I could not believe that her famous story was true, and yet she told it in a matter-of-fact tone that held me fascinated.

"That—was all," her voice dropped to a dull whisper.

"The next thing I knew I was here in this room—and neither Sue nor I knew how we got there."

"But you believe me, don't you, Sue? You must know I'm telling the truth." Irene's eyes, wide and intense, seemed to glare appealingly. I took a long breathing.

"No," I said steadily, "I don't. And furthermore—" I engaged the hot clutch of her hand, and rose. "I don't think anyone else will believe that your story is the truth—the whole truth."

"Why—Sue?" Irene shrank back against the pillows.

"I'm sorry," I said, "but I was trying to explain to you how I was learning you. The police have been sent for, and you'll have to explain to them how you came to be unconscious in the room when the thing reached out and grabbed me. I tell you that no policeman in his right mind is going to swallow a story as full of holes as the one you just told me. And so, I turned abruptly away from Sue's white face. "I'll leave you to think it over—and think fast."

"I was half way to the door before Irene delivered her parting shot.

"All right, Sue Belmont—if you won't believe me, then ask Jonny if I'm not telling the truth."

The savage thrust of her sudden words stopped me short.

"What do you mean by that?" I whirled about to see Irene crouching forward on the bed. Her eyes were narrowed into glittering slits.

"I mean," she said, "that it was Jonny Page who pounced on me in the darkness and half smothered me. Now will you listen—you and your precious police?"

"Irene!" I made for the bed and seized her hunched shoulders. "Irene—you're out of your mind. You can't possibly know what I was attacked by the—"

"Oh—can't I?" she flung the words at me defiantly. "What do you mean? When I reached up to fight off that smothering grip I felt a man's hand—and on the hand was a twisted metal ring. I hardly need to tell you—" Irene's voice rose hysterically, "that Jonny Page has worn a ring with a little finger of his left hand for the past ten years."

"Well?" Out of the long silence Irene spoke at last. "Do you still advise me to tell the police the truth—the whole truth?"

"Don't know," I wavered uncertainly. Irene's last charge had shaken me badly. How much of her story was true—how much fantastically invented or imagined—I still could not guess, but I knew that if she accused Jonny outright of half strangling her in the dark bedroom, it would set the police to hounding him. And—desperately as I tried to fight off the thought—it was impossible. Other things pointed an ugly suspicion at Jonny Page. The spirit photograph of a hangman's gallows, and Jonny labeled MURDERER, the faint flicker of fear in his eyes when I suggested that Madeline might tell us what had happened to her—and now this wild accusation of Irene's. In a hasty and menacing sequence these things flashed through my mind. I felt the old instinct to champion Jonny was challenged as never before.

"I'm going," I said with sudden resolution, "to talk to Jonny now." At the door I paused with one more thought. "Irene, have you told anyone else about the ring?"

She shook her head. Then don't," I said, "for another ten minutes," And without waiting for her reply, I closed the door.

Jonny was in Madeleine's room when I entered. A glance at the bed told me that the patient was still in a coma.

"Jonny," I said, "I've got to talk to you a minute—very seriously."

"Yes!" His tone was grave and quiet as before.

"I want to warn you. I—I must warn you before the police come." Briefly I told him what Irene had said of the attack in the dark—of the man's hand and the twisted metal ring. Jonny watched me impassively. When I had finished he spoke quietly. "I understand exactly what means, I continued slowly, "any of it. But I wanted you to know—and be warned."

Thanks, Sue. After a long interval Jonny nodded. 

"I—I hesitated. "You trust me—don't you, Sue?"

"Of course."

Then—go on trusting me," his voice was very low.

"That's all I can say." He turned away.

I had hoped for his confidence—for some explanation to prop up my wavering faith in him—I saw then that I was not to get it. Plainly he had no intention of saying more.

"But Jonny—" I made one final attempt to reason with him. "I'm trusting you. Will happen when the police begin asking questions? How will you answer Irene when she accuses you of smothering her into unconsciousness in the room where a woman died mysteriously?"

"It's even worse than that, Sue," over his shoulder Jonny spoke gravely. "The woman didn't only die mysteriously—she was murdered."


"I don't know who did it, Sue, nor why," the quiet voice cut short my fumbling questions. "But she was killed at some hour before midnight, and he had just left just below the east with—" he hesitated briefly, "a long thin blade which penetrated the base of her brain."

"Stabbed—" My mind flew back to the image of Minna struggling upon the gallery door, her gray hair covering the head and shoulders. "But—Jonny, there wasn't any blood."

"No," Jonny shook his head slowly, "there wasn't. Because—"


"Was it—yours?"

"Yes," again the words were dull—utterly expressionless. "I must have been taken from my bag sometime before the murder."

"Jonny?" What reserve I had managed to maintain up to this point was shattered suddenly. "Jonny, don't you see how dreadful your position is—how awful these things look for you?" I pursued anxiously. "I promise honestly I'll do anything to help you."

"Of course I see it, Sue," the words were sharp, "Do you think I'm an idiot—and a blind one at that? But after all, his voice dropped back into the old dull hopeless, "what can I do now?"

It was on the tip of my tongue to say, "You could tell the truth," but something in the weary set of Jonny's eyes told me to hold my tongue, for that I trusted him. When I spoke, it was to return to the subject of Irene's charge.

"If she sticks to that story," I said, "about the ring—you'll have to answer it somehow."

"Jonny thrust out his hands for me to see. "I'll answer it," he said, "by that."
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I stared. The fifth finger of his left hand, where for almost a dozen years I could remember he had worn the ring made of three twisted strands of gold, was bare. Blankly, I lifted my eyes to his face.

"It's gone," he said.

"Do you mean," I was frankly incredulous, "that some-one took your ring?"

"It's gone," he repeated stubbornly. "That's all I know."

"But Jonny—"" you never take it off, do you? Even at night?"

Before he could answer, there was a knock at the door.

"Excuse me—" Ted entered quickly. "Dr. Jenks is here."

JONNY'S hands, still outstretched before me, dropped to his sides. He squared his shoulders and advanced to meet the small, fussy-looking man who followed Ted—and I marveled to see how effectively he was transformed from the weary hopeless Jonny who had faced his moment before into the competent and assured Dr. Jonathan Page.

"Dr. Jenks," said Ted, "this is Dr. Page."

"How do you do, Doctor?" The small man raised his beetling eyebrows and peered at Jonny. "Seem to be having trouble here?"

"I'm afraid so," Jonny nodded gravely.

"Indeed! The eyebrows bristled in a frown. "Well, now, let's see." With bustling efficiency the little man approached Madeline's bed, bent to take her pulse, and said: "Hmph." He lifted one closed eyelid and peered, said: "Humph again—and straightened abruptly. "Como," he announced.

"Yes," said Jonny, "I——"

"Suppose you tell me, Doctor," the older physician cut in, "you've done."""

"Dr. Jenks," Ted spoke suddenly, "I'm not sure you understood me. This is Dr. Jonathan Page."

Unburdened by circumlocution the effect of Ted's announcement would have been even more comical. The little man's officiousness popped like a balloon. The bushy eyebrows flew upward once more and remained poised as two barbed hawks.

"Dr. Page—the surgeon?"

"Yes," said Ted.

"Well now, sir, the stumpy paw of Dr. Jenks was thrust out to shake hands all over again—as if he meant it this time. "This is a pleasure, Doctor, a great pleasure. I may say in honor, sir,——"

"Thank you, Doctor," Jonny smiled faintly. "Now about my sister—"

"Your sister?"

"The one you were telling me about, Jonny nodded.

"Ah—yes indeed. Most unfortunate," Dr. Jenks shook his head sadly. "Now—what is your opinion, Doctor?"

"She suffered an attack," Ted said. "As near as I can make out, it must have been a shock of some sort—a bad one. We have no way of knowing what it was—or how long she lay here before she could reunite anything at all; before the o'clock this morning, Miss Belmont heard my sister signaling for help. Rapidly Jonny proceeded with the account of my alarm, of our finding Made- line, of the locked door. "She was extremely low, Doctor, when I got to her. The pulse was faint and irregular, blood-pressure less than seventy. In fact, it would barely register. I saw that the only hope of reviving her was a powerful stimulant."

"Of course," Dr. Jenks nodded sagely.

"So I gave her a hypodermic of strychnine—even though, with her heart condition, it was something of a risk."

"Heart condition?"

"Dilatation," Jonny nodded. "Chronic mitral regurgita-tion. Naturally, I was aware of the weakness—but under the tremendous shock, he shook his head, "there was nothing to do but risk strychnine. She reacted, as you see, quite satisfactorily so far as the stimulant is concerned. But her heart——"

Jonny sighed, "is making hard work of it. Whether it will stand the double load of the preliminary shock—plus the injection—— Well, that's why I wanted your opinion and advice."

"But, quite, Doctor," the older physician looked heavily reflective. "You were right of course, in risking the stimulant, but with a heart like that—" he shrugged. "I'll never know."

"For a moment the two men stared in silence at the still figure. Behind the medical backs Ted and I exchanged a look. We didn't speak, but it was evident that both of us were struck by the same thought. Certainly we had not known that Madeline suffered from any sort of heart trouble. Perhaps—a possible answer to a long unsolved riddle flashed through my mind—and perhaps it was why Jonny had always been so devoted to Madeline—had for years never been separated from her. But I had no chance to pursue the reflection further.

Dr. Jenks was speaking. "How long has the patient been like this?"

"Going on two hours," Jonny glanced at the clock.

And there's been——"

Jonny sighed. "No change. The stimulant has just kept her alive—but the heart hasn't rallied—yet."

"Him—" the older man shook his head, considering.

"We might try further stimulants, of course," Jonny's tone was doubtful, "but I'd like you to listen first, if you will, Doctor."

"Ah—certainly, certainly." From his coat pocket Dr. Jenks produced a weatherbeaten stethoscope. "Now then—" he bent over Madeline, "let's just see——"""

Ted nudged me presently. "I don't think we need to stay any longer.

Nor did I. Neither doctor appeared to notice our quiet exit from the room.

In the hall Ted turned to me.

"Good God, Sue," his face was very sober, "does all that mean that Madeline is going to—die?"

"I—don't know, Ted," I answered slowly. "Poor Jonny, for a moment Ted stared curiously at me. Then he shook his head.

"Yes," he said, "it looks—pretty bad for Jon."

"I didn't mean that—" I answered sharply. "I meant—in case Madeline should die—"

Once more Ted watched me with an odd expression.

"Of course—his tone was mild, "that's what I meant too. What else, after all, could I have meant?"

"Nothing," I turned away abruptly to see Patsy hurrying up the stairs, her small face puckered with distress.

"Hi, Ted," she said, "there you are."

"The police are here—downstairs, and they want to search everything and question us all. They say—" her eyes were wide, "they say it must have been an inside job—but, Ted, it just can't have been of us—or could it?"

Desperately she searched his grave face for some reassurance—and found none.

"Oh Ted—" her voice broke in a sob, "it's all so—so horrible."

"Take it easy, Pat," He stroked her shoulder gently. "We've just got to face it, I guess. One murderer, and now—" he checked himself suddenly, "but I saw his nervous glance at the door of Madeline's room. "Well, there's no use borrowing trouble—God knows we've got enough. I'll take the cops in hand, Patsy, while you and Sue round up the others and tell them all to come downstairs."

With a final pathetic sniff Patsy nodded obediently.

"Come on, Sue," she said.

And I observed that she had recovered sufficiently to remember her lip again.

XI

It was after five o'clock when we began to straggle into the living-room where the police were waiting with their questions. The early summer sunlight, pale and slanting, made our sleepless faces look more haggard as, in various degrees of hasty dress, we gathered in a subdued and shivering circle. A wood fire and some hot coffee, provided by Patsy's bewildered maid, improved our facade somewhat—but still no one had the heart to speak in more than gloomy monosyllables.

"Well—" the tall, scrappy and ancient constable, who, with two uncommunicative State troopers, constituted the delegation of local police, surveyed us sternly and cleared his throat. "Is everybody here, Mr. Elliot?"

"Yes, Chief," said Ted. "That is, all except Dr. Page. He was in consultation with Dr. Jenks in caring for Miss Belmont's sister—very ill. They can't be disturbed, of course. The rest of us—are ready."

"Well—" said the Chief, and cleared his throat again. "But we aren't all here, Ted," from a corner of the sofa, Evelyn Tucker spoke unexpectedly. "There's Ike— Ike. Evelyn's bodyguard, of course."

"There is?"

"Here," said a curiously deep voice from the dining-room door behind us. We all turned to see a smallish man, of indeterminate age, dressed in dark trousers and a collarless shirt. He stood quite still, apparently absorbed in a minute examination of his fingernails.
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"That’s Ike," said Evelyn Tucker, somewhat relieved. Ted launched into an explanation of Ike’s identity for the Chief’s enlightenment. At the word “bodyguard” the constable froze ominously.

"Bodyguard eh? So you were expectin’ trouble?"

"You see, Chief, Miss Tucker is a dangerous woman—her position—her wealth—her非常 careful. "With considerable difficulty Ted managed to explain the necessity of guarding the heiress to the Tucker billions, while the Chief, still frowning heavily, scowled at his suspicious glances between Evelyn and Ike. It was evident that he was going to make the most of this first clue.

For my own part, I concentrated on Ike. It had suddenly dawned upon me that this was the man whom I had encountered in the kitchen, when, during the night, Jonny had sent me to prepare his dinner. Since I had been on duty, I had no idea of what he was doing in the kitchen.

"Where do you live?" the Chief demanded of Ike, "were you when this trouble was goin’ on?"

Ike did not look up from his fingernails.

"In my room."

"Yeah? And which is your room?"

"The one next to Miss Tucker’s."

"Ike means," said Evelyn, "he means he was next to the room that was supposed to be mine. As a matter of fact, I tramped with poor Minna—"

"Oh, you did, eh?" the Chief’s baleful stare shifted to Evelyn. "Why was that?"

"It—it was because—" Evelyn bit her lip as if to steady her voice, and then went on bravely. "It was because Minna thought I would be safer—in her room."

"Safer?" With obvious relish the constable seized upon this second indication of the life of Evelyn Tucker had been in danger. "Safer from what?"

"I—I don’t know exactly," the girl spoke slowly. "But when I went upstairs to bed, Minna was waiting in my room. She wouldn’t explain anything, but she told me that it all—" Ike swung his glance away from Evelyn. "I know where I was sleeping—and so after everyone else had gone to bed, she put me in her room—and she went back to mine."

"So—it was the Chief’s keenest secret, "the room where she sleeps—" he glanced menacingly at Ike, "where this lady was killed was the one you were supposed to be sleepin’ in? It that right?"

"Yeah," Evelyn nodded miserably, "that’s right. It’s what—I—tried to say earlier—when they found Minna—but Jonny wouldn’t let me. Don’t you see? It was me that they were trying to—kill—and—poor Minna died because she knew—" "the girl’s voice broke in a choking sob.

"Sure—" said the Chief, "sure I see it." He paused for a moment to gnaw his mustache thoughtfully. Then, with abrupt suspicion, he advanced upon Ike. "Looka here," he said, "you’re supposed to be this little lady’s bodyguard, eh?"

"Yep," said Ike. "And you was sleepin’ in the room next to where this Minna was killed?"

"Yep."

"Well—" said the Chief, "you’re a hot bodyguard. For all you knew, Miss Tucker was bumped off in the night—and you say you stayed right in your room."

Still not looking up, Ike shifted his weight from one large foot to the other.

"I’m Miss Tucker’s bodyguard," he spoke with complete indifference, "not Minna’s."

"Say—what’s your name?" The Chief’s glare took on a baffled look.

"Ike," Ike’s drawl remained unmoved, "I’m a hotter bodyguard than you think."

"Looks here, you," the constable’s chin shot out bellicose, "you say what you mean. Did you know which one of the ladies was sleepin’ in the room next to yours, or didn’t you?"

"Yep," said Ike with unaccustomed brevity. The direct answer did not appear to improve the Chief’s temper in the slightest. "Well—how did you know?" he demanded. "Did this Minna dame tell you? Or Miss Tucker here?"

"No," said Ike. "Then how in thunder—" the Chief’s voice rose to a bellow, "did you know?"

"The dog," said Ike. "If I means— from between her subiding sobs, Evelyn gulped an explanation. "He means Isaac Newton. Don’t you, Ike?"

"Yep."

"Say—" the Chief swung his lowering glance from Ike to Evelyn and back again, "will you two start talkin’ End of the line. Who is this Minna’s brother?"

"Isaac Newton isn’t a bird," Evelyn sniffed. "He’s my dog, and Ike means that he always sleeps outside my door. Isaac, I mean."

"That right?" the Chief demanded of Ike.

"Yep," said Ike, with perfect unconcern. "You claim to of seen this dog outside Miss Tucker’s door, and that’s how you knew which room she was really sleepin’ in?"

"Yep?"

"Is this here Newton dog supposed to be a watch-dog?"

"He’s not supposed to be," Evelyn put in indignantly, "he isn’t."

"Yeah?" said the Chief. "Well, what was he doin’ when Minna got killed, then? And what were you doin’—" he glared at Ike with renewed emphasis. "Here’s this Minna with a bodyguard sleepin’ in the room on one side of her—and a watch-dog sleepin’ on the other side—and she gets killed without so much as a peep out of either one of ’em! What kind of guardin’ and watchin’ do you call that?"

The Chief thrust his final question at Ike.

For a long moment it seemed doubtful that Ike was going to answer at all. Then, shifting his weight carefully back to the other foot, the odd young man raised his eyes for the first time, and gazed at the hard-breathing Chief with an expression of magnificent detachment.

"My job," he said, "is to look after Miss Tucker. And the dog’s job is the same. As long as nothing happens to her—we’re supposed to mind our own business. And we do."

"Well, for Gosh sakes!" The Chief’s eyes bulged. "Do you mean to stand there and tell me you heard a woman get murdered—and you didn’t do anything about it because it wasn’t your business?"

"I didn’t say," said Ike, "that I heard anybody getting murdered."

"But in the room right next to you—" the Chief’s rage was degenerating into a helpless splutter. "You must’ve heard something."

There was another pause while Ike studied the angry face before him as if he were looking at a stuffed bird in a museum. "I don’t hear anything," he said at last, "that isn’t my business."

"Well," said the Chief, "I’ll be—" he checked himself abruptly, evidently deciding to abandon the futile topic of what Ike might have heard, lest he succumb to actual apoplexy. With a final glare for Ike, he looked away again. "You were in the room on the other side of Minna,” he managed a tone of relative calm. "What did you hear?"

"Nothing—" Evelyn shook her head emphatically. "Oh—I would have done anything to save poor Minna if I could have—but honestly, I never heard a sound until Sue’s screaming woke us up."

"Sue?" said the Chief. "Who’s Sue?"

I spoke up, and it was my turn to be glared at. "What were you screaming for?" the Chief demanded.

"I was awakened," I said, "by strange sounds from the room next to mine—and I was alarmed."

"I’m Miss Tucker’s bodyguard," he spoke with complete indifference, "not Minna’s."

The Chief launched into the story of my awakening, of the sounds from Madeline’s room, of my calls for help which roused the sleeping housemaid. I had not had the slightest faith that my evidence would be valued. He nor the testimony of the others which followed mine, would provide the baffled Chief with any real clue to what had
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happened in the house that night. But there was, after all, nothing to do but to answer his questions, and I had to admit that his investigation, while it hardly brightened my case, put a new perspective on it. By the time he had finished with us, he had extracted a pretty thorough account of the night's events, as set down earlier in this chronicle.

In consequence there was none. Mrs. Lynn, when questioned about the possible meaning of the spirit photographs which had foreshadowed at least a part of the night's events, simply shook her head and insisted that the pictures were quite beyond either her control or explanation. And Irene, in giving her account of how she came to be unconscious in the murdered woman's room, simply mentioned that the increased curiosity which had been aroused earlier gave. As for the others, Patzy and Ted, Smith Plummer, and Jake Lecky, they all disclaimed any knowledge of what had taken place—simply stating that they had been in their rooms and peacefully asleep until the moment when my screams for Jonny had awakened them. (The only variation in this account being Jake's statement that he had not awakened at all until Ted had roused him for the business of police questioning.)

It was plain that the Chief was by no means inclined to believe all that we told him. But it was equally plain that he had not formed any constructive hypothesis of the crime from either the truth or the falsehood of our various testimonies, nor had he given the group questionning, the Chief stood for a long moment, gawking furiously at his haggard mustache. Then, with a last look of dark suspicion at the completely indifferent Ike, he delivered himself of his final statement:

"Well—" he said, "one thing's sure. It wasn't ghosts that done murder. And if it wasn't ghosts, it must've been something that person leaves tracks. He touched his heel and started for the door. "You folks stay here," he said, "while I go have a look for the tracks. There's no use tryin' to settle anything with talk anyhow. Especially not in a case like this, which included all—" when folks talk too much. Maybe this Dr. Page and his sister will say somethin' sensible—but if they do they'll be the first—"he added with a chuckle, "I got no faith in either of them.

"Just a moment, please—" from the hall beyond came a new voice.

"Is there a police officer in charge here?" in a voice as expressionless as his set face, Jonny addressed the Chief.

"Yes."

"Well, I'm Jonathan Page. If you want to question me—I'm quite ready. But for my sister—you are too late."

Still the words were tonelessly mechanical. "My sister is dead," said Jonny.

The prompt denial was obviously a surprise to the Chief—and, I think, to a good many of us also. Certainly I did not realize that Madeline and Evelyn were meeting for the first time, and I still have no idea how they will finish the story.

"Say—" said the Chief, "I thought you said you were engaged to Dr. Page here."

"Am," said Evelyn, "but I just hadn't happened to meet his sister until I came to this house last night—and if I'd known—" she stopped abruptly and bit her lip.

"Why?" said the Chief. "If you'd known what?"

"I—nothing," Evelyn subsided with a little pout.

"Say—" Very much to my surprise, the Chief turned on Jonny who still stood in the doorway. "Why don't you butt out and let folks finish—than say it?"

"I—don't know what you mean," said Jonny quietly. But it was plain from the look on Evelyn's face that the Chief had thought it correct. Jonny looked at her and seemed to have fallen in with it. "if I had known?—; and the Chief, with a hitherto unsuspected subtlety, had detected the signal even though it was delivered behind his back.

The first hint that the perceptions of the local constable were perhaps somewhat sharper than his face and manner would indicate was surprising and at the same time not at all disturbing to me. If he should actually prove to be a sleuth of any ability whatever, then it was inevitable that he would discover, sooner or later, the several arrows of suspicion which pointed straight at Jonny Page. And my earlier conversation with Jonny had not left me with the slightest assurance that he could or would offer any adequate defense or explanation for those curiously incriminating circumstances.

But I was relieved to see that, for the moment at least, the Chief did not intend to linger on the matter of Jonny's interruption of Evelyn's testimony. Doggedly he returned to the question of who had known the condition of Madeline's heart. Mrs. Lynn, of course, disclaimed all knowledge of it, and Patzy was in the midst of an appealingly lapsing denial when Ted broke in impatiently.

"Look here, Chief," he said, "there's no use going on with the individual questioning. You're simply wasting time. I can tell you positively that none of us had any notion that there was anything the matter with Miss Page's heart. It's true that some of us had known her for years—no one except her excepting—except that he stopped suddenly—obviously realizing the implication of his words.

"I—mean," the sentence ended lamely, "that questioning on the point won't get us anywhere."

It was evident at once, from the glance which he turned
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on Jonny, that the Chief had not been deceived by Ted's attempt to cover the unfortunate remark.

"Well, now, Mr. Elliot," his drawl was mild, "I don't know as I'd say it didn't get us anywhere to know that Docinglehere was the only one that knew about the lady's heart."

"But look here, I didn't mean—" Ted protested quickly.

"Natural" Madeline's own brother, and a doctor besides, would know—"

"Sure—" the Chief cut him short with an amiable wave of the hand. "Sure it's natural, Mr. Elliot. I was just getting things started. That's all." He paused to regard Jonny with a thoughtful air.

I FOLLOWED his glance, and observed with some relief that Jonny met the look squarely. He seemed, indeed, completely undisturbed by the Chief's reaction to Ted's blundering statement.

"I understand," said the long silence Jonny spoke levelly, "that Dr. Jenks is waiting to talk to you, Chief. He will explain more fully about my—my sister's condition."

"Naturally," said Jonny a little slyly, "I'm anxious to get this business over with as soon as possible. You seem to forget that it's my sister, after all, who—" His voice faltered and stopped. "It hasn't been," he added slowly, "good to her."

"No," said the Chief, "I reckon it hasn't. And I'm not forgettin' it your sister." He gave the musette a final squeeze and swayed abruptly. "Come along, Doctor," he directed, "if you want to get it over with."

As the two men stepped out into the hall, Irene rose suddenly and followed them.

"Oh Chief—" She caught him at the door. "I wanted to ask you if the rest of us might go to our rooms for awhile. You see, we've practically no sleep all night—and it's been a terrific strain. I think we'd all be more helpful later on if we could rest a bit—until you need us—" she paused, head on one side, and gave him a fetching smile. "You sure can, little lady, the answer, as unexpected graciosely.

"Oh thank you so much," Irene started past him toward the hall—and was detained by a grip on her arm.

"When," the Chief added firmly, "I get through searchin' the rooms. For now, little lady, you'll wait right here—within the rest of 'em."

"Oh—" Irene drew back in quick indignation. "But that's perfectly ridiculous. You can't go around searching rooms in a文明ized house."

"And I don't, either. But people don't get murdered in a civilized house. You can just think that over while you're waitin'."

When Irene was gone Irene returned to her place on the sofa, still sputtering angrily.

"The old fool," she said, "rummaging around and thinking he's a great detective. I don't believe he has an arrest warrant or something—"

"Calmly, old girl, calmly." From his place beside her, Jake Lecky reached over to pat Irene's head. "Remember murder's been done and we're all in one hell of a jam. Besides," he yawned enormously, "I don't think the old sleuth's so awful. He may even find out something—if he doesn't bite off his mustache first. Why should you worry about a little harmless prowling? If you're innocent, my sweet, you have nothing to fear—and if you're guilty—" he paused for another jaw-breaking yawn, "you'll simply learn the truth and won't.

"Be quiet, Jake," Irene shook off his hand impatiently. "Can't you see that this is no time for your stupid nonsense?"

I looked at her in no little surprise. It was not like Irene to speak sharply—least of all to Jake. But it wasn't strange, after all, that her nerves were on edge. I glanced after what she had gone through that night. I wondered, indeed, that any of us could sit there so outwardly calm in the face of the ugly situation that confronted us. Murder—perhaps two murders—already done—and the murderer somewhere among us. I glanced about the circle of serious, tired faces, and tried—for the hundredth time—to realize the actual truth of that thought. A murderer among us.

"I tell you," Irene went on presently, "there's no knowing what that old idiot of a sheriff, or whatever he is, might find up there—that would get us into all sorts of trouble.

Honestly, Ted, I think you ought to send for a real detective—or the city police—"

"Oh for heaven's sake, shut up, Irene!" It was my turn to be irritable. "We're all in this mess together—and we're not getting anywhere by griping over the deficiencies of the local police."

"But Sue, you don't realize," Irene persisted stubbornly, "what that man might take into his head if he finds some silly business he thinks is a clue. After all, we may as well face the fact that our party wasn't exactly one big happy family when we gathered here last night. And if the old snooper finds out that a couple of us were more or less at words—points—especially after Ev—" she checked her words at a warning kick from me. "Well, anyway, she finished, "there were some pretty pointed differences of opinion represented in this house last night—and I think you all know what I mean."

Before anyone of us could think up a suitably soothing remark, Evelyn Tucker answered for herself.

"Yes, we do know what you mean, Irene." Her small chin was lifted defiantly. "You mean me. As someone started to protest, I didn't alter the expression of deep contemplation with which he studied Jonny's face. "You mentioned that already a couple of times."

"Naturally," said Jonny a little stubbornly, "I'm anxious to get this business over with as soon as possible. You seem to forget that it's my sister, after all, who—" His voice faltered and stopped. "It hasn't been," he added slowly, "good to her."

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I told you," Irene went on presently, "there's no knowing what that old idiot of a sheriff, or whatever he is, might find up there—that would get us into all sorts of trouble.

B Y the time Evelyn's fit of hysterical weeping had worn itself out, I had made up my mind to one thing. I was going to manage somehow to have a talk with her—alone. Whether there was any basis of truth in the girl's wild insistence that she was to blame for the night's double tragedy, I did not know—but I was convinced that she knew more than she had told us—and it seemed to me that my one remaining hope of helping Jonny lay in winning Evelyn's confidence. And when finally her sob had subsided and her whimpering echo of their former violence, I leaned down and took her hand in mine.

"Evelyn," I said, "don't you want to come out to the kitchen and bathe your face?"

She raised her tear-dimmed eyes to blink at me. "I—" she gulp a little, "I'm all right now."

"Yes, dear, but you don't want Jonny to see that you've been crying—and a little cold water will help." I pressed her hand a bit more firmly.

"Oh no—" she shook her head at that, "Jonny mustn't know."

"Then come along," I said, "quickly, before he gets back."

"Yes, Sue." With unexpected meekness, Evelyn rose and followed me.

"We won't be long," I called to the others, "if anyone

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should want us." No one answered me. They were, I imagine, glad enough to have me take Evelyn in charge—and get her out of that room so that they could discuss her releases outside. Only Ike, still standing in pensive silence near the dining-room door, paid any direct attention to our departure. I saw him glance at Evelyn as we passed him; that glance was with slightly lifted eyebrows. It was the nearest thing to a change of expression that I had yet observed upon his impassive features. He did not, however, make any move to follow us, and when I looked back from the kitchen door, I saw that he had resumed his apparently endless and engrossing study of his fingernails. I made a mental note that, for one thing, I would take this chance to ask Evelyn something about her completely enigmatic bodyguard.

When she had dozed her face with cold water, and smeared Evelyn looked better. There now.” I dabbed her round, childish features carefully with a kitchen towel. “Isn’t that better?”

“Much,” she nodded bravely.

I WAS surprised, and not altogether pleased to see how very young Evelyn Tucker seemed when she dropped the mask of forced enthusiasm and gushing which she had exhibited the night before. Quite as I had guessed then, her sallow chatterbox conversation had been part of a deliberate pose, intended to cover the meagre bulk of her naturally passive personality. Which was all very well—and no doubt Jonny loved her (if he did at all) for this timid child-like little self that I saw now—but the identity talking, it seemed quite inconceivable. It would be, I thought, utterly impossible to convey to this child my involved state of mind toward the problem of Jonny Parge—my uncertainty, my lack of faith in him which struggled with the growing conviction that he was entangled in the circumstances of Minna’s murder and Madeline’s death in some way which he could not or would not explain. I was, Indeed, on the very point of abandoning my plan to confide in Evelyn, when a question from the girl surprised me.

“Sue May was watching me with shy intensity, ‘you—wanted to talk to me—didn’t you?’

I hesitated only a moment before answering. After all, I might as well learn what I could from the girl without divulging my own complicated suspicions.

“Yes,” I said, “as a matter of fact I did.” I paused then, not quite certain where to begin, and another question from her startled me by its unexpected directness.

“Was it?” she asked, “about Jonny?”

I nodded.

“You’re worried about him, aren’t you, Sue?”

“Sue May,” I admitted cautiously, “a little.”

“Well,” said Evelyn, “I’m not. He didn’t have anything to do with what happened, you know.”

“Oh, I’m sure he didn’t.” I agreed hastily. Evelyn looked straight at me.

“I don’t think,” she said steadily, “that you are—quite sure. Not, anyway, as sure as I am. You see, Sue, I’ve been—”

I was, as I have said, in the middle of an explanation when I was interrupted by the voice of Sue May.

“Ike told me.”

“Ike told you what?”

“That Jonny was in his room right up to the time you began to call for help. So, you see, he couldn’t have done anything to poor Minna or to Madeline, either.”

“Might as I wanted to believe the truth of what she said, I could not accept her implied faith in the omniscience of the cryptic Ike. How could I be certain that Ike, when he was in his own room?”

“He knows everything, Sue,” the girl insisted, “absolutely everything. He always does. And he told me—”

“Look here, Evelyn,” I broke in impatiently, “you must stop talking nonsense. Unless your Ike was actually on guard in the hall all night, then he can’t possibly know whether Jonny left his room or not. Ike says he knows everything—”

“He knows who did go into Minna’s room and kill her.”

“I think,” she nodded with placid conviction, “he does.”

“You think he knows who the murderer is?”

“Probably,” said Evelyn calmly.

“Well—for Heaven’s sake, why doesn’t he say so then?”

I was hard put to it to resist the sudden realization of the absurdity of my question. “Of course he doesn’t know.” I said shortly, “any more than the rest of us do.”

Evelyn did not appear to be disturbed by my scepticism. “You just don’t know Ike,” she said. “He never says anything about what he always knows—”

“Yes, yes,” I put in bitterly, “he always knows everything.”

“Well,” said Evelyn, “he does.”

I squeezed my lips firmly. For the life of me I could not decide whether the girl was actually as simple as her words would indicate, or whether she was playing some sort of a deliberate game with me. But at any rate I was determined to end this idiotic conversation about the accomplishments of Ike.

“Look here, Evelyn,” I tried a fresh tack, “a few minutes ago you started to tell the Chief that you would never have come to this house last night if you had known that Madeline was to be here. Isn’t that what you went up to say to Jonny when he signaled you to stop?”

She nodded.

“And yet,” I went on, “you told him that you had never seen me until you got here. Was that true?”

Another nod.

“Then why would you deliberately avoid meeting my future sister-in-law? When the girl did not answer at once, I began to wonder, “Was it,” I asked, “because Jonny had told you that Madeline might not be—very friendly?”

“Almost,” she replied to that quickly enough. “Jonny didn’t know anything about it.”

“About what, Evelyn?”

“About—” she looked uncomfortable, “Madeline not—willing Jonny to be engaged to me.”

“But, my dear, if you had never seen Madeline, how could you have known?”

Evelyn looked at me and smiled. “You see,” she spoke with obvious reluctance. “I’d been getting letters—sort of threatening me about marrying Jonny.”

“I see.” I stared. “Are you saying that Madeline Parge dared to threaten you?”

“Oh yes,” she nodded solemnly, “and she wrote to Father too—warning him that unless I broke my engagement to Jonny that I’d be kidnapped, or maybe—” she hesitated, “may be worse.”

In a flash I remembered Madeline’s words the evening before. “Don’t you know,” she had said, “that Evelyn is under constant threat of kidnapping?” Still I stared blankly at the girl. The whole thing was too preposterous. For all Madeline’s strange and violent dislikables, I could not believe that she would actually dare to threaten Evelyn Tucker. Suddenly another possibility struck me. “Father had a lot of detectives working on it—and we only found out a few days ago where the letters were coming from.”

“Do you mean, Evelyn, that your father had the police on Madeline’s trail?”

“Oh no,” again she shook her head, “it was all done privately. You see, Father never wants anyone—no publics—about anything. That’s why he wouldn’t let me tell anyone—not even Jonny.”

“But good heavens,” I protested, “he couldn’t keep it a secret forever. If the detectives were really sure that Madeline had been threatening you—what did your father plan to do about it?”

Evelyn’s eyes faltered suddenly, “I don’t know— exactly. But he always does these things very quietly.”

“So I should judge,” I observed dryly.

Father just told me that everything would be all right as long as Ike was with me.”

“Ike again,” I sighed.

“What, I inquired with as much patience as I could manage, “has Ike got to do with it?”

“Why,” said Evelyn, “he’s the detective that found out about Madeline. And father said that we could trust him to work his own way or no way. He even sent any publics—”

“ Ike is—detective?” I echoed helplessly.

“Oh yes, indeed. Father says he’s the best one in the whole country. That’s why father got him for this case.”

“Look here, my dear child,” I interrupted, “he was simply your regular bodyguard. And the Chief—don’t you think he ought to be told about all this?”

“Oh, I wouldn’t dare tell him,” the blue eyes widened emphatically. “Father said that no matter what happened I wasn’t to let anyone know about the letters. I don’t think—I looked apologetic, “that I ought to have told..."
even you, Sue. But I know you won't let anyone else know. You see, now that Madeline is—well, dead—there won't be any more trouble, and there's no reason why anyone should ever know anything about it."

"Oh, yes. Father turned them all over to Ike as soon as they came. That's how he found out—who sent them, you see—""'

"Yes," I was suddenly hopeful, "yes, of course I see—"

"Tell, then," Evelyn started abruptly for the door, "shall I tell the Chief now?"

"No—wait." On a sudden impulse I detained her again.

"I think before you say anything—you and I had better have a talk with Ike. If—" I paused doubtfully, "you can make Ike really talk."

"Of course I can, Sue." The girl seemed surprised at my scepticism. "Ike is really a perfectly fine sort of fellow, you know."

"Oh, I haven't a doubt of that," I smiled brightly. "Not a doubt.""

"Shall I call him now?"

"For heaven's sake—no. Once more I restrained her impulsive move toward the door. 'We've got,' I said seriously, 'to work this carefully, Evelyn. No one must know that we're planning anything particular now.

"Well," Evelyn looked disappointed, "what am I supposed to do?"

"You must keep perfectly quiet about this whole thing," I tried to look at her in a way which would be impressive, "until we manage to slip away from the others for a few minutes and talk to Ike. If you get a chance to speak to him—tell him I sent you. Tell him, but for goodness' sake don't let anyone hear you. Now—I fixed her with a stern eye, 'do you understand?"

"Yes, I understand, Sue," she nodded earnestly.

"I'm sure I can." I tried to sound more convinced than I really felt. "I'll tell you all about it when we get away. There's no longer any danger."

"Yes," Evelyn's voice dropped to a frightened whisper, "you don't really think that they—they suspect Ike?"

"They don't," I said firmly, "they will before long. Didn't you see the Chief look at him when Ted said that Ike was the only one who knew about Madeline's weak heart?"

"No," I snapped, "but let me remind you that you're the only one who does know it—" you and your silent little go-between who want you to get this terrible mess you'll speak up and speak quickly"

This time my words hit the mark. I saw her expression warp into all the anxiety and sudden uneasiness that came from Johny's case. Now will you believe me when I say you ought to tell the Chief that Johny didn't know anything about this situation between you and Madeline?

"A moment later I was almost regretting that I had spoken so brutally. The girl's face went dead white before my eyes."

"Chief?" she drew one long quivering breath, and then clutched my arm with an imploring gesture. "Oh, Sue—I didn't know—honestly I didn't. I'll tell—tell anything—do anything—if it will only help Johny. I'll swear he's innocent."

"Easy, Evelyn, easy," I quieted her frantic words as best I could. "It won't help Johny a bit to have you fly off at him like this. We've got to go at this thing just right—you and I."

"All right, Sue," she faced me bravely. "I'll do just what you say, no matter."

I nodded approvingly. "Now then—the first thing will be to figure out some way to make the Chief believe you when you tell him about Madeline's plot against you."

"Why, Sue—" the blue eyes opened wonderfully, "of course he'll believe me when I tell the truth."

"Or, if you would count on that, Evelyn. I shook my head. "In an investigation of this sort, the police are not very much inclined to accept any statement just because one witness claims it's true."

"But," said Evelyn, "it isn't just one person. I say so, and Ike will say so too."

"And that," I shook my head more firmly, "is not going to help, do you know? You'll have to tell the Chief that Ike deliberately confused the Chief a while ago—nothing Ike says will be received with any particular faith."

"Not even if we tell the Chief that Ike is a detective?"

"No," I said with decision, "not even then. I have a creeping hunch, in fact, that to tell the Chief that Ike would only make things worse." I must realize, Evelyn, that after the way Ike deliberately confused the Chief a while ago—nothing Ike says will be received with any particular faith."

"Oh," Evelyn brightened at that. "But we have proof——"

"What is it, Ike?"

"What do you mean?"

"Madeline's letters," she said. "Ike has all of them——"

"Evelyn!" I grasped her arm eagerly. "Are you sure of that?"
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"Patsy, that's perfect nonsense—and you know it. How on earth could Irene have been mixed up with Evelyn Tucker's maid?"

"Don't say—" she shrugged again. "But there's something funny about it. And another thing, Sue—she's as nervous as a cat because the Chief said he was going to search the bedrooms. You must have noticed that—""You noticed with some reluctance, "I did notice that she was pretty jumpy about it."

"And she's getting worse every minute," Patsy declared. "I think this fellow about notifying the city police—and snapping poor Jake's head off every time he tries to calm her down a bit. I tell you, Sue, Irene is hiding something big."

"But Patsy—that's absurd. What could it be, after all? I think she's simply on edge after all she's been through—"

"All right, then," Patsy turned away impatiently, "if you challenge me to see the place I'll take you through it from the top to the bottom. I've been over it for the last six months, and I could show you every night how those' eyes can be on Sue, like a cat's on a mouse. And the way she flinches—"

"Hold everything, Pat. In spite of myself I was impressed by the conviction of her words. What are you driving at?"

"I turned back to give me a long look. Then she shrugged. "If I tell you," she said, "you'll only laugh. You and Irene always laugh at my ideas."

"I'm not going to laugh at you, Pat. Good lord, Jake Lecky of all people. You know perfectly well he slept like a log through the whole trouble—and anyway he's as mild as a mouse."

"I was Patsy, "and you're as blind as a mouse. But if you won't listen to me—I know someone else who will."

Once more she turned away impatiently. "I can't tell you either," Pat, I said to her in sudden alarm. "Pat, what are you going to do?"

"But this time she would not be detained. "I'm going," she said with dignity, "to speak to the Chief."

And before I could protest again she was gone—and I was left with one more vexing problem. What on earth could Jake Lecky be up to? He had treated me to a huffy glare—which I could only interpret as meaning that she was still determined to carry out her silly threat of going to the Chief. And I ignored the look as best I could, and glanced about to take stock of the others.

Evelyn Tucker, I was relieved to note, appeared rather more composed than our usual talk. She sat in a big armchair, her chin resting on one hand, and stared thoughtfully into the fire. Next to her, in a corner of the sofa, was Irene—looking anything but composed as she sat, bolt upright, her hands twisting and twining in her lap. From time to time she would glance at the hall door —and Pat, I knew she was waiting to see the Chief return—and after that unwarranted glance she flinched impatiently. But if, as Patsy suspected, the secret of Irene's obvious nervousness lay in some anxiety about Jake—Jake himself certainly did not appear to share it. He slouched, in a disconsolate heap, at Irene's side—his tousled blond head nodding drowsily. Apparently he had given up trying to quiet Irene's complaints after the occasional jerk disturbed his doze, he seemed not to notice her at all.

Mrs. Lynn, Smith Plummer and Ted all appeared to be feeling up well enough. They sat quietly in their respective places, staring, like Evelyn, into the fire. Aside from a tendency to bite his nails on the part of Smith Plummer, none except Irene gave any sign of nervousness. Yet at the moment when the Chief at last came slowly down the stairs and strode into the midst of our group, every one of us straightened a bit—ever eye was fastened on the weatherbeaten face, the ragged mustache. If a few weeks before the Chief had hired for his lawn a vigorous more than an amusing village character—there was no trace of mockery in our faces now. He might be a mug in the loose-fitting clothes of a musical comedy "Sheik"—but he was a Sheik. The moment there was not one of us who could afford to be amused by the Law.

"Well, Chief," after a pause Ted spoke a little hesitantly, "did you—discover anything? I mean," he hurried to add, "about what could have been responsible for Miss Plummer's death?"

The Chief took his time answering—and I saw him glance about the circle of faces before he spoke.

"Yes," he said at length, "and no." He paused again, obviously seething under his visible irritation.

"That is," he cleared his throat, "I did—and I didn't, so to speak. One thing, anyways, I did make sure of.

"Yes?" Ted's tone reflected the anxiety which we all felt.

"Yes," said the Chief. "She may of died of fright, like the doctor claims—but if she did, it wasn't any ghost that did the frightening!"

We relaxed slightly at that. After all, it was scarcely a surprise to discover that the Chief shared our scepticism concerning the supernatural angle of the past night's events.

"No," he repeated slowly, "it wasn't any regular ghost thing. In fact it was sure a regular ghost thing—but the thing he always heard about don't have to dress up in sheets—like the one that was walkin' around this house last night."

"What do you mean, Chief? Ted's question was tense.

"Fears, the Chief replied. "If you don't know me, you don't know how a bunch of fears can get hold of a man—and start gnawings at his mustache, "I mean that somebody in this house was playin' ghost—and they left a bunch of sheets stuffed under their bed. That's what I mean."

INSTANTLY I looked at Irene, remembering her insistent account of following the mysterious "white things" through the dark of the night. Irene had been the first to see her perched forward upon the sofa, her eyes fixed upon the Chief's face with a stare of frozen fear. A moment later she spoke, "Yes, little lady. But all I want to know is how you happened to know about the things under my bed—don't you?"

The Chief eyed her long and thoughtfully. "Patsy told me," he said at last. "I reckon maybe I do. You ought to know."

The rest of us were watching Irene in blank astonishment. So that, I thought, was the reason for her nervousness about the search. But the idea of Irene masquerading as a ghost in sheets and pillowcases was too absurd.

"I haven't the least idea how they happened to be put there," Irene faltered. "Mystery. And just the way I never saw a steady gaze. "I wasn't in my room, you know, for a good part of the night. And anyone who wished to —to hide the things could have put them under my bed. With either my back to it or the inside of it."

"Sure—" the Chief's heavy drawl broke into her feverish word. "Sure—anyone could have done just what you said, little lady. But all I want to know is how you happened to know about the things bein' there."

"Well, I—" For a moment Irene struggled to say something more, then all at once she sank back upon the sofa and her eyes closed wearily. "Oh—what's the use?" Her tightly clenched fingers relaxed suddenly in a gesture of utter hopelessness. "I might as well tell you the truth."

"Oh, the Chief was matter-of-fact, "you might as well."

"I had those sheets and things in my room," Irene opened her eyes and spoke with a sort of desperate calm, "because I thought—very foolishly indeed—that it would be rather a good joke on my sister Patsy to dress up as a ghost and startle her a bit. You see, she insisted that this house was haunted—and kept telling us about a ghost who prowled about the halls at night. I didn't believe her, of course, but I thought it would be a good trick to see what she'd do if I really barged in on her, dressed up in sheets. The whole thing was a silly idea, but goodness knows I meant it innocently enough. None of us had any thought of course of the dreadful things which were actually taking place last night."

"Oh," the Chief's bushy eyebrows rose suddenly, "so you didn't think up this little joke alone, oh?"

"Why—" Irene looked startled, "why—yes, I did."
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"So—?" The eyebrows remained elevated. "Well, now that's a funny thing."

Irene opened her mouth and closed it again without speaking.

"Yeah," the Chief nodded slowly, "a funny thing all right."

This time Irene did manage an answer. "I'm sorry," she said stiffly, "but I don't see anything very funny. I simply had this idea for a joke—more or less on the spur of the moment—and I said nothing to anyone about it."

"Well," the Chief added amiably enough, "there ain't anything so funny about that part of it. The funny part is how you managed to get the sheets without disturbin' Mr. Lecky."

"I—simply don't know what you mean," Irene's protest carried not the slightest conviction.

"I mean," said the Chief, "that them two sheets came off of Mr. Lecky's bed. A while back folks told me that the young man was a sound sleeper—but I don't know as anyone could sleep so deep that he wouldn't wake up when somebody came in and pulled his bed to pieces. Even supposin' that a proper young lady like you, Miss, he bowed slightly in Irene's direction, "would bust into a man's room in the middle of the night."

For a long moment Irene stared straight into the Chief's impassive face. Then she turned on Jake Lecky with a look of utter scorn.

"Oh—" she said bitterly, "you you fool."

XV

WELL, the Chief's drawling voice was addressed equally to the two people before him, "which of you is gonna talk?"

Still they stared at each other, Irene's features set in angry scorn, Jake blinking back at her with his habitual expression of drowsy surprise.

"I think," Irene spoke from between clenched teeth, "that he can talk now. I've done my best—but I might have known better than to try to help him."

"Yeah," the Chief nodded, "I coulda told you that much."

"And so," said Jake, "could I. In fact, he yawned, "I did tell you. Did you listen to me?"

"Well, she's listenin' now, and so am I—so start talkin'."

"I suppose," Jake eyed him with sleepy indifference, "you mean about the sheets?"

"I do."

"It's a funny thing," said Jake, "but I don't know how they happened to be under Irene's bed, either."

"Never mind about that. How did they get offa your bed? That's what I want to know."

"Oh—" Jake paused to reflect a moment. "Well, I took them off a matter of fact—""Yeah, I didn't think they got up and walked away alone. The Chief wagged his head impatiently. "But I want to know what you was doin' with 'em. Playin' shelves?"

"No," said Jake, "I was pretending to be a ghost."

"What for?"

"Playin' for a joke." Jake looked a trifle sheepish. "What Miss Belmont told you about our wanting to scare her sister was true—except that I was the one who was to do the scaring."

"That was it—the two of you that cooked up this cute little idea?"

"Yes, but Miss Belmont didn't have anything to do with actually carrying it out."

"No? Then what was she so anxious to take all the blame for a minute ago?"

"Well, you see," Jake frowned, "the trick didn't turn out quite as we expected it would."

"Why not?"

"Because," said Jake solemnly, "I had no more than stepped out of my room into the hall when I—I met the real ghost."

"Say—" the Chief bent forward indigantly, "what are you makin' me?"

"I know it sounds crazy," Jake nodded wearily, "but I swear it's the truth. I was about half way down the hall toward Mrs. Elliott's room, when I heard a queer noise—sort of a droning sound—somewhere behind me. I undid the sheets so I could look to see what it was, and sure enough, there was something while coming along the floor—right toward me."

I was watching Jake suspiciously as he gave this account, but for all my natural scepticism concerning the actual existence of the mysterious dragging "white thing." I could detect nothing in his manner to suggest that he was inventing it. For once in his life, Jake Lecky appeared to be completely in earnest.

"Chief looked up at me in the same way he turned, torn between a constitutional doubt of ghost stories, and a conviction that his witness was telling the truth.

"Well—" he was writing furiously at the mustache, "what did you do then?"

"Why—" Jake seemed surprised by the question, "what would I do? I got back to my room as fast as I damn well could and got into bed. That's the last I heard of it."

"And left the sheets behind you, eh?"

"I guess I must have," Jake admitted. "You see," he looked rather apologetic, "it is in kind of a hurry."

"Yeah," the Chief observed drily, "I see that all right. But what I don't see is why you didn't call somebody and try to find out what was draggin' itself around the halls in the dead of nights.

"I did intend to," said Jake, "but at first I was too scared—and by the time I'd calmed down some I—" again he looked apologetic, "I—sort of feel asleep."

"Oh—" said the Chief, "so you sort of fell asleep? Well, now, I call that real sensible, Mr. Lecky. One minute you was too scared to call for help—and the next minute you sort of fell asleep."

"I think," said Jake, "that I'm a little funny that way."

"I think," said the Chief, "you're damn funny. But judging by the sake of argument—I'll let this go for now. And I'll ask Miss Belmont here," he shifted to Irene, "to take it up where you left off."

Irene did not look up. And this time, the Chief added, "I'd be obliged if you'd tell me the truth."

"I told the truth the first time," in spite of the angry flush which mounted to Irene's cheeks, she spoke quietly, "except for the fact that it was Jake and not I who dressed up to play ghost—and for the second fact that it was I who rescued the sheets from the hall where he dropped them and hid them under my bed. My reasons for lying in those two instances must be obvious."

"I reckon you mean," the Chief tugged thoughtfully at his mustache, "that you figured it would be better for you to take the blame than Mr. Lecky here. Is that it?"

"Yes," said Irene, "that was it. Frankly I thought about being funny the first time, but then it was too late off. To sleep was too absurd for anyone to believe—anyone, that is, who didn't know Jake. Actually, of course, what he says is true. Jake always goes to sleep—no matter what happens."

The Chief declined to commit himself on this point.

"Keep talkin'," he said. "You woke up and heard a noise in the hall—what then?"

LOOKED out, Irene went on quietly, "just as I said then, and I saw the ghost was standing by the fire."

At first, of course, I thought it was Jake—playing ghost as we had planned—and I followed along to see the fun. That's why," Irene turned to me, "I didn't call you, Sue, when I left the room. Well, I don't know any more than a few feet down the hall before I stumbled over the sheets—on the floor where Jake had dropped them, and right away I knew what had happened—or at least I thought I knew. That thing creeping along on the floor was not Jake at all—by that time my eyes were accustomed enough to the darkness so that I could see that it couldn't be a person—it was much too much and it moved in the weirdest way—" Irene shuddered slightly. "But I still believed that it was only a part of Jake's trick—"

"Just how," the Chief put in curiously, "did you figure that?"

"Well—" Irene hesitated, "it sounds terribly silly now, but at the time I thought it must be Evelyn's dog. I knew the dog had been sleeping in the hall—and it simply flashed over me in a moment that Jake had decided to make a ghost out of him by tying him up in a pillow-case."

"Well, I like that—" Evelyn sat up indignantly. "Isaac Newton tied up in a pillow-case?"

"What's really all the fuss about my story," Irene ignored the interruption, "except that I went on following the white thing until it disappeared into Minna's room. After I got in there and heard those awful choking sounds—I was desperately frightened. For this time, before he could speak the man's hand smothered me—as I told you earlier—and that's as much as I know."

"Whoa—" as Irene finished her rapid recital, the Chief cut in quickly, "not so fast there—not so fast. You ain't
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told all you know while you're still forgettin' them sheets. Last I heard about 'em you tripped over 'em in the hall. And if you followed after this druggin' dog or whatever it was, how did the sheets get back into your room under the bed?

"Oh—" said Irene, and paused for a moment. "I forgot to say that I picked them up when I found them and stepped back into my room to——to hide them under the bed."

"You did that before you followed the druggin' thing?"

"Yes, before she lifted her chin defiantly and said, "I did.""

"And just what was the idea of doin' that?"

O H—! Irene made a gesture of weary impotence.

"You know what it's all matter—what idea was? I tell you, it was all part of the joke that Jake and I had planned. Can't you see how idiotic it is to attach so much importance to a silly prank? I swear I had no idea at the time. For I did all this that anything really serious was happening—and now you're insisting that every foolish move I made had some sinister connection with—the murder. She paused a moment, looked me straight in the eye, and then spoke with a quiet finality.

"I knew, of course," she said, "that this would happen. I knew that if you found out about our joke you'd try to work it into the murder somehow. That's why I lied in the first place, and why I tried to keep Jake out of it. Surely, her level glance was aimed straight at the Chief, 'surely you must see that my whole motive in doing the things I did was to keep you from jumping at some horrible conclusion about Jake and me just because we were guilty of planning a practical joke. Once and for all you tell me that there is nothing to this thing, and I'll sign anything that happened, and this time I'm telling the truth.""

A long time the Chief simply stared at Irene in silence. When at last he spoke, his tone was as quiet as hers had been.

"I'm sorry, little lady," he shook his head sadly, "but it just won't do."

"What won't do?" Irene bristled.

"Your story," said the Chief, and shook his head again. "You're not the kind of person who would make a mistake like that."

"You'll kind of say what you mean?"

"For all the innocence of Irene's voice there was an edge of nervousness—"I've told you the exact truth about what I did last night, and if you still don't believe me then it's simply because you're too utterly stupid."

"That's just the trouble, little lady," the Chief interrupted her protest, "just the trouble exactly. I ain't quite so stupid as you seem to think that people come to the point?" Irene ground her teeth.

"And will you please for heaven's sake not call me a little lady again unless you want me to scream."

"Chief, only enough. "Sure," he said amiably. "I'll come to the point all right. And I wouldn't want to make you scream. All I'm tryin' to say is that I'm under the impression that you didn't have anything to do with the murder."

"I think you're wrong," he said. He paused to enjoy the effect of suspense. "And one of the other things," he went on slowly, "was a marriage certificate. Even a hick cop like me knows what that is—and in this case it happens to be the reason why this Miss Page got killed, poor little lady—and it happens to be the same reason why I know you're still lyin' to me. This with a final nod of truth.

"I—why, I simply have no idea what you mean."

Irene's blank astonishment was reflected in all our faces.

"No?" said the Chief. "Well, then, I'll tell you. I mean that the name you call Miss Page was a Miss at all. Right up in her bureau drawer," (he pronounced it draw­er) "was this little paper"—the Chief drew a folded slip from his pocket and flung it dramatically—"that shows Miss Page got married in New York City last December—to a guy named Jacob Lecky, Now do you see what I mean?"

The Chief got out the charts and glared at our gaping faces. Before anyone could speak he hurried on. "Considerin' that," he said, "and rememberin' that these two young folks here is pretty durn stuck together, I think Irene and Jake with a good mind which clearly indicated his opinion of some immoral situation—I guess it ain't hard to figure out why the little lady was done in last night. You dressed up in a dress suit, Mr. Lecky, and I reckon Miss Irene helped you think up the idea like she just said—but you wasn't plannin' to play no joke on nobody. You was plannin' to sneak into Miss Page's room and scare her to death—and that's just what you done!"

Under the stress of emotion the Chief's grammar became increasingly uncertain. "Yes sir," he glared into Jake's foolishly dismayed face, "that's just what you done. You must's known about that weak mindlessness and you made good and sure you'd scare Miss Page by fixin' up them spirit photos or whatever they was—and then you doiled up in sheets and scared the poor girl to death."

And then he added, in his speech in a bellowing forte, "you went and tried to frame young Dr. Page for the murder by fixin' a photo of him—he thought the murderer and then cookin' up this story about feelin' him with the poison and the Lord only knows what more devilishness. And then you've got the consarned nerve to call me dumb because I don't know your riddles about practical jokes!"

Neither Irene nor Jake had made a move during the long tirade, and now, in the awful silence that followed the last word, we all agreed that Jake had stumbled upon some horrible, some still more amazing discovery which had prompted his theory, we all began to speak at once. Each one of us had some particular question to ask—or some objection with which to refute the idea of Jake Lecky as a deliberate murderer.

Irene's question came first. "Her voice was tragic, "is it—true? About you and Madeleine?"

"Sure it's true." The Chief waved the marriage certificate before his eyes. "And don't you start actin' like you don't know about it."

"You shut up," said Irene succinctly, and turned back to Jake. "Please answer me," her tone was desperate, "and say it isn't true that Madeleine was you that she saw figures."

"Yes," said Jake. "I was. But I wasn't—oh God," he heaved a great sigh, "what's the use of trying to explain it?"

Irene drew back to stare at him with growing fury. "Then you were out in the jungle just yet," she said, "or you weren't. Now which was it?"

"Well, I wasn't—Jake began, "but I—"

"Say—" the Chief cut in again, "you ain't tryin' to deny this?" He brandished the precious bit of paper.

"Oh God," Jake groaned, "what a single-track mind!"

Then, as the Chief continued to glare, he shook his head dismally. "I'm not denyin' anything—say, 'but I tell you there's an explanation for all this'—"

"Then for heaven's sake—explain," Irene commanded.

"Look here, Irene," Ted interrupted reasonably, "this is no time for a scene with Jake. He faced the Chief. "I'd like to ask you, sir, how you account for the murder of Minna in this—this theory of yours? Doesn't that pretty well rule out your idea of pinning the blame on Jake? Even if he was secretly married to Miss Page— why should a perfectly strange woman be involved?"

"I didn't work out that angle yet, " the Chief met the objection blandly, "but it'll all fit in some way—when Mr. Lecky here decides to talk."

"I should like to know what you mean," said Mrs. Lynn with great dignity, "just what you mean by your reference to the spirit photographs? If you were implying that I was a party to, any 'faking' of the pictures, I can assure you—"

"I don't know who was a party to what," the Chief cut short her explanation with rude emphasis, "but they wasn't faked, when she does it."

"Indeed?" Mrs. Lynn's eyebrows rose. "And may I ask just where you acquired this expert knowledge of spiritualistic matters?"

"They're 'naturalistics,' the Chief snorted. "I reckon I know how plain ordinary lantern slides is worked. My wife makes 'em for the church fairs, only she don't pretend to be no fortune-teller about it—"

Before Mrs. Lynn could marshal her outraged feelings

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into a fitting answer, Smith Plummer put in his contribution to the discussion.

"What I fail to see," his owl eyes blinked earnestly at the woman before you account for the fact that Miss Irene says she found the sheets in the hall. If the purpose of the—er—ghost disguise was to frighten Miss Page—the draperies be left outside Miss Page’s locked room?"

"Miss Irene," the Chief disposed of this point sourly, "has lied a couple of times already—so there ain’t any reason why I see to think she ain’t lying again."

"I tell you," Irene blazed out angrily, "those sheets were part of the joke. And marriage certificate or no marriage certificate, the joke was to be on Patay—and not Madeleine."

Patsy bestowed one freezing glance upon Irene, and then addressed the Chief.

"I don’t see," she said plaintively, "that all this silly argument is getting us anywhere."

"Perhaps," Ted rose, "we might all profit, Chief, by hearing more about your theory of the lantern slides. If you think those spirit pictures we saw last night were really faked—then I’d say they ought to provide a pretty good clue."

"Well," said the Chief, "they ain’t signed, if that’s what you mean. But come along, we might as well take a look. As the rest were to follow the Chief and Ted, I stood for a moment undecided. Much as I wanted to inspect the slides and spirit photographs, still I was somewhat reluctant to forego my scheduled conference with Evelyn and Ike. Eventually I decided to obey Ike’s summons to the kitchen, and make the best of my business as brief as possible. All I actually expected to accomplish anyway, was to get Ike’s corroboration of Evelyn’s surprising evidence concerning Madeleine as a potential kidnapper.

But during our vague conversation about another cup of coffee, I left the others as they trooped upstairs, and made my way—I hoped quite unobserved—to our rendezvous in the kitchen.

Evelyn and Ike were already there when I arrived. "You see," Evelyn beamed, "I didn’t forget about our talk, and I just knew Ike would fix it up all right."

"Well, I did," Ike assured her a bit uncertainly. Ike, absorbed as usual in the endless scrutiny of his fingernails, made no move whatever—and I was suddenly at a loss as to how to begin the conversation. I cleared my throat. "Evelyn told me that there was some plot about kidnapping her, and that you believed Miss Page was involved in it."

"Check," said Ike, not very helpfully.

"She also said that you were—a detective."

"Oh, he is, Sue—and simply marvelous," Evelyn broke in with her usual enthusiasm.

"Well, I cleared my throat again, you—are a detective then?"

Ike considered for a long moment. "I’ve got eyes," he said at last, "if that’s what you mean."

"I’ve given you an admiring statement of what I meant, but I struggled on. "What I want most to know," I said, "is whether you are really convinced that Madeleine Page is in on it."

"Because if you are sure—and have some sort of proof for it—then I think by all means the Chief ought to be told."

For the first time Ike favored me with a direct look.

"Why?" he asked.

"Because," I said, "it’s practically sure to have some bearing on what happened to Miss Page last night.""

"Oh," said Ike.

"Well—in it?" I insisted.

"Might," said Ike, "but I don’t know that there’s any use in getting into what happened to Miss Page."

"Well, if you don’t," I snapped, "the Chief certainly does—and unless somebody puts him on the right track he’s liable to cook up some theory of his own and pin the murder on the wrong person. Right now, for instance, he’s got a pretty good case against Jake Lecky and my sister Irene. If you’re not interested in helping to clear them, I am.""

"Oh, I wouldn’t mind giving the Lecky guy a hand myself," Ike admitted generously, "but that sister of yours."

He paused, "she talks a lot of sense, and I have no intention," I said with dignity, "of discussing my sister’s character with you. She may have told the Chief many things, the questions I may have her, for a good reason. But in either case she ought to be cleared of suspicion in the matter of Madeleine’s death. And you can clear her by telling the Chief about this kidnapping plot."

"Sure," said Ike, "I can clear her all right. But I thought you were more interested in keeping Dr. Page out of it."

"Dr. Page has nothing to do with this. Evelyn said you told her that he didn’t leave his room until I woke everyone up by calling for help."

"Yup," said Ike, "that’s right."

"Well, then—couldn’t you clear Dr. Page, too, if you told the Chief that?"

"Yep," said Ike, "I probably could."

"Well, for heaven’s sake, why don’t you, then?"

"Because," said Ike, "I’ve got orders."

"Orders for what?"

"To mind my own business. And murders that don’t concern Miss Tucker aren’t part of the business."

"Listen, Ike," with no small difficulty I managed to keep my patience, "I think you’re wrong about this. In the first place, Miss Tucker is under suspicion just as much as the rest of us are until last night’s mystery is cleared up. And in the second place, Dr. Page is under rather more than a general suspicion—"

"Now look," I went on earnestly, "just look at the situation. Miss Tucker is here in this house as a guest. On the night of her arrival her maid is murdered, and another guest, the sister of her fiancé, dies mysteriously. If the mystery is cleared up quickly and quietly, we can probably hush up the whole thing. If not—then it will be sensational case. I don’t think—Evelyn Tucker’s name will be the chief angle of publicity. Now if you’re a detective, and can help settle the case—I can’t see how you can fail to consider that as part of your business—"

Evelyn Tucker’s name will be the chief angle of publicity. Now if you’re a detective, and can help settle the case—I can’t see how you can fail to consider that as part of your business—"

"Evelyn," in desperation I appealed to the girl, "don’t you think I’m right about this? Don’t you think that your father would consider it part of Ike’s business to keep both you and Jonny out of any possible complication and scandal?"

"Well—" Evelyn’s forehead was puckered in a frown. "I—don’t quite know, Sue. Of course no one wants to see Jonny cleared, but—"

"Her glance wavered doubtfully from my face to Ike’s expression of rock-bound indifference. "I think Ike is probably right. Sue, no matter what he says. You see, I promised Father I’d do exactly as Ike said."

"Very well, then," I turned away from the hesitating girl impatiently. "It’s up to you, Ike. Now will you, or will you not, tell the Chief what you know?"

"I won’t tell all I know," he said, "but I will get Dr. Page out of the mess—if that’s what’s on your mind."

"Oh, Ike," Evelyn beamed, "that’s simply sweet of you. And I’m sure Father wouldn’t object."

My own reaction was scarcely one of such simple pleasure. Why Ike should have qualified his intentions so curiously, I was by no means sure. nor was I as thoroughly convinced of his miraculous powers as Evelyn appeared to be. Certainly nothing that he had done so far led me to expect with any degree of confidence that he had only to think in order to clear Jonny of all suspicion. But at any rate, I thought, it was better to have Ike with us than against us. Master mind or no master mind—he had at least promised to help Jonny, and I left the kitchen with the feeling that my puzzling half hour with Mr. Tucker’s henchman had not been wholly in vain.

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WHEN we reached the upstairs hall, the sound of voices in great confusion indicated that the Chief and his assorted suspects were gathered in Mrs. Lynn’s room. Therefore, I joined the group, and turned for one last word with Ike.

"How," I inquired, "do you intend to work this? Do you want me to tell the Chief that you have some important information about Madeleine, or will you tackle him yourself?"

"Leave it to me," said Ike, "and don’t get worried if I seem to whip information all at once. The old duck has got to be handled just right if we’re really going to put this thing over."

"Well—what are you going to do then?"

"Just drop a couple of red-hot clues," said Ike, "and let old Sherlock think he’s figuring out the mystery for himself."

"Very well," I turned away with a shrug, "do whatever

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you see fit. And you can count on me not to interfere."

"And me too," Evelyn chimed in warmly. As we started
into Mrs. Lynn's room the girl took my arm. "You
mustn't mind, Sue," she whispered confidentially, "if Ike seems
sort of—mysterious. He's always that way, but he
promised to help Jonny—and he simply never falls down
on a promise."

"I believe I said without any particular conviction, that
he won't pick this time to break his perfect record."

"Oh, he won't," Evelyn squeezed my arm, "you just
watch and see."

The Chief looked up as we entered the room.

"Where have you been?" he demanded sourly.

"Just getting another cup of coffee." That was the
Chief's eyeful for a thoughtful moment. Then,
evidently deciding that our absence was of no importance
anyway, he returned to the business in hand.

He, it seemed, about to demonstrate the mechanics
of the spirit camera, a proceeding which, judging from
Mrs. Lynn's flushed face and blazing eyes, would probably
reveal some rather shoddy tricks of the medium's trade.

"I see," said the Chief, "the consarned gadget ain't
nothin' more than a regular stereopticon machine—the
thing your gran'dad used to keep in the back parlor
to entertain the youn'folks when we had no electricity.

The only difference here is that you look down into the thing—and
the slides go in at the bottom, just above this light
jigger." W

E all pressed forward to watch the Chief's demon-
stration of the curiously constructed device; all of us,
except Mrs. Lynn, who maintained haughtily, sitting
in a chair near the window. I observed that Jonny, standing
opposite me, was watching the procedure intently.

"The slides," the Chief continued, "go in this box under
the light and get pushed, one after another, into focus over the
light. The whole thing works by a couple switches here—
one to work the light bulb and one to push the slides.

I'll show you. He pressed a small button and a dim light
glowed beneath the empty lens into which we peered. "And
this—" A sort of lever was moved, and we found our-
selves staring at a photographic image of a young woman
in a daylight, with the simple mechanism so obviously
explained, the whole business of the scene looked absurdly
childish—and yet I remembered how impressive those
images had seemed the night before.

"There—" the Chief straightened to face us proudly.

"That's all there is to the dern thing."

"All there is to the mechanism—yes," Ted nodded. "But
what about the—pictures themselves? After all, that's
the only part that has any special significance."

"Yeah—and I got that figured out too," the Chief
was getting excited. "There ain't nothin' but a bunch
of fancy signs drawn on a plain gelatin plate. Look
here—" From a small black case on the desk he produced
a slide. "Now with somethin' to scrath with—"
He fumbled in his vest pocket, extracted a penknife, and
drew a circle and a cross on the gelatin surface. Another
moment and the Chief had substituted this slide.

One circle and cross above the lens, and there, surely
enough, were the circle and the cross outlined against the clear white
background of the plate. "There y' are!" The Chief nodded
 triumphantly once more. "That's the way they spins work."

"Well—" Patsy drew back indignantly, "do you mean to
say that Mrs. Lynn made all those silly pictures just to
frighten us?""

"I certainly did nothing of the sort," Mrs. Lynn's voice
was cut in angrily. "I told you that last night that the images
was fake—and her brother were entirely beyond my
control—and I told you the truth. Someone tampered
with my things and substituted those two plates for the two I
had taken. Oh yes! To explain to our looks of
surprise, Mrs. Lynn raised her chin defiantly, "I might
as well admit that my own slides were drawn, just as the
Chief said. Oh yes! And you know how I told you I
might do to match with those last two pictures we saw. Someone
must have sneaked into my room last night when I had every-
thing ready—and for some diabolical reason slipped the two
others away."

"But, Mrs. Lynn," Patsy was wide-eyed, "whoever
could have done such a thing? Why, none of us ever saw
one of these camera things before—and how could anyone
have gotten the blank plates?"

"Or, for that matter," Ted put in, "how could this—
this person you suspect have gotten into your room to make
the substitution? Weren't you in here yourself from the
time we left the dinner table to the moment when you
called me to come and help you carry the things down-
stairs?"

"Well, I—yes—" Mrs. Lynn looked suddenly confused.
"This man—I was here before you, you know. But I
somehow—someone must have made to sneak in—"

"Whoa—" said the Chief. "Let's just get this straight
now." He faced Mrs. Lynn sternly. "See here, lady, I'm
givin' you a break. You know that, don't you?"

"It depends," said Mrs. Lynn coldly, "just what you
mean by a break. If you refer to your crude and unness-
cessary intrusion into my private life, then I mean
carefully you could be called over-considerate."

"I mean," said the Chief, "that I'm givin' you a break
in remarin' you out of the room that night. It's not
and his sister that you showed the folks last night. You
say someone sneaked into your room and left those plates
—and you don't know who it was nor why they did it.
Well—the Chief drew his hand back and was
Lynn with thoughtful severity, "it's a pretty lousy albii—
but I'll give you a chance to prove it if you'll come clean.
And I don't want no more stallin' like you give Mr.
Elliott a minute ago. Either you was in this room after
dinner or you wasn't. Now which was it?"

"It came to my room," Mrs. Lynn said, "directly after
dinner, as Mr. Elliott has just said. Up to that time no one
could have possibly have tampered with my things, since
the camera and slides were locked in a suitcase and I had the
key to it. And my gray-handled umbrella was also in the
suitcase—in much the way the Chief has explained to you—
and when they were finished I stepped out into the hall
downstairs. The door was locked from the inside, and
gentlemen to help me carry the apparatus. At the moment
when I reached the head of the stairs, the door of Miss
Page's room opened, and Miss Page stepped out and
beckoned me in. I stepped in—and when I turned to
herself—but of course I consented to go as she asked.
When I got to the door he drew his hand back and was
I knew that she had not been well during the dinner hour,
and I thought she might want me to fetch something for her.
I went down to her room and stood and asked her, but she
wanted. She said that her headache was worse and that
she had no aspirin, and asked me to fetch her some from
the mirror table in my room. I was a bit puzzled by the
request because she was fully dressed at the time, and
appeared quite well enough to make the trip down the
hall herself—but of course I consented to go as she asked.
When I got to the bedroom however, there was no aspirin to
be found, and after looking about a bit, I went back to my
room, intending to take her a headache remedy which I
had in my medicine chest in my bathroom. I was a bit puzzled
by the request because she was fully dressed at the time, and
appeared quite well enough to make the trip down the
hall herself—but of course I consented to go as she asked.
When I got to the door I was astonished to find it
locked—apparently from the inside. I knocked, of course,
and called out to ask who was there—but no one answered.

Some point of time when I was on the second floor
to downstairs to find out who was in my room, Miss
Page's door opened again, and she asked me what was the
matter down the hall. I answered her, and she explained
as I went about the mysterious locked door, and when I
finished speaking she smiled and said that the door was
locked. She had told me of history that had said that a good many of the old latches did stick, and
she offered to try to open it herself. We both went back
then, and Miss Page fumbled with a knob for a moment,
and the door opened easily." Mrs. Lynn paused to draw a
deep breath.

"The point," she said very quietly, "is that I believe
there was someone in my room, and that the door was
locked. I think Miss Page deliberately sent me to the
bathroom for aspirin in order to let someone get into
the locked room. The two latches for the doors on the
room I had prepared. You see, if there had been aspirin in
the medicine chest, then I would have returned with it to
Miss Page's. Oh yes! And you know how I told you I
might do to match with those last two pictures we saw. Someone
must have sneaked into my room last night when I had every-
thing ready—and for some diabolical reason slipped the two
others away."

"But, Mrs. Lynn," Patsy was wide-eyed, "whoever
could have done such a thing? Why, none of us ever saw
one of these camera things before—and how could anyone
have gotten the blank plates?"

"Or, for that matter," Ted put in, "how could this—
this person you suspect have gotten into your room to make
the substitution? Weren't you in here yourself from the

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prodigious frown—evidently half of amazement, and half of disbelief. "Well—" he tugged at the mustache, "I must say it ain't such a bad idea at that—but say—" his eyes narrowed suddenly, "have you got any letters? What could it be a letter from Miss Page?"

Mrs. Lynn's eyes dropped quickly before the question. There was a long pause before she spoke.

"Yes—" her tone was startlingly abrupt. "Yes, I have—an idea."

"Who—?" said Mrs. Lynn clearly, "that it was Dr. Page who entered my room and locked the door while he substituted those two slides for mine.

All of us turned in astonishment to stare at Jonny—began to whisper that he killed himself by frightening herself to death—well—" she shook her head, "can't do that even if you are the wonder-man that Evelyn believes you to be."

"Can't?" said Ike—and almost smiled. "Just watch me."

He turned abruptly away as the Chief appeared in the doorway of Madeline's room.

"Say—" the Chief regarded me with obvious disfavor. "You the idea of you speaking around here when all the ladies is supposed to be in their rooms gettin' their beauty sleep?"

"I was just going," I made my escape as rapidly as possible.

I found Irene sitting on the edge of her bed in our room. "Oh Sue—" she looked up as I entered, "where have you been? I've simply got to tell you that I'll bet the Chief would have believed my whole story about how I happened to faint in Minna's room—and Jake would have been supplied at all."

"Irene—" on a sudden impulse I rolled over and faced her, "how did you happen to be there—honestly?"

For a moment I thought she was going to answer me, then she turned away impatiently.

"Why should I tell you anything," she said, "when you'd only use it to help Jonny?"

"From now on," I said fervently, "I'm through trying to help anyone. If I promise you that—will you tell me?"

"Well—" she hesitated.

"Tell me," I said desperately, "I don't know anything about what really happened in Minna's room—for God's sake, why keep up this awful mystery?"

"All right," said Irene, "I will tell you. To begin with—"

XVIII

It was not until nearly an hour later that I got a chance to ask Ike what he meant by that wink. The Chief had gone off with Dr. Jenks to supervise the gruesome business of removing the two bodies, and the rest of the household had been given permission to go to their rooms for much-needed nap. Since the discovery of Mrs. Page's body, Ike had not talked to Mrs. Lynn, nor to any of us—but at someone apart from the group. I turned to follow his glance and saw that Ike was standing directly behind the chair from which Mrs. Lynn had taken her lighter—and as, a moment later, he caught my eye, I winked.

"Madeline's?"

"Yep."

"Well, but—why didn't Jonny say so then?"

"Because," said Ike, "he's a smart."

"I'm sorry to be stupid," I shook my head, "but I don't see yet what you're trying to do."

"No?" said Ike. "Well, you see, Miss Belmont, if I'm going to get Dr. Page out of this mess, I'd have to frame his innocence."

"Frame someone?"

"I'll do it!" said Ike, nodding. "And it looked to me like the best one to frame would be a dead one. So—that's what I'm doing. At least, that's my intention. Understand?"

A sudden and not very illuminating light dawned on me.

"You mean that, what you're trying to build up a case against Madeline?"

I KE watched me impassively.

"Why not?" he said.

"Why not?" I exclaimed, and then paused helplessly. It was like trying to argue with a madman. "Look here," I said at last, "I've simply got to work out the bit of fantastic in suspecting a person of their own murder. I'll admit that Madeline was a pretty weird girl—but when it comes to plotting that she killed herself by frightening herself to death—well—"

I shook my head, "can't do that even if you are the wonder-man that Evelyn believes you to be."

"Can't?" said Ike—and almost smiled. "Just watch me."

He turned abruptly away as the Chief appeared in the doorway of Madeline's room.

"Say—" the Chief regarded me with obvious disfavor. "You the idea of you speaking around here when all the ladies is supposed to be in their rooms gettin' their beauty sleep?"

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"Well—" she hesitated.

"Tell me," I said desperately, "I don't know anything about what really happened in Minna's room—for God's sake, why keep up this awful mystery?"

"All right," said Irene, "I will tell you. To begin with—I was in Jake's room when the trouble started."

I sat bolt upright.

"You were in Jake's room?"

"Yes," I said. "Irene's talk was lifted defiantly. "And you needn't be shocked, either. Besides—there wasn't any harm in it—we were only planning the joke, you know, only—"

"Well—" I lay back once more. "I'd rather say the joke was on Madeline. If she was really married to Jake, as the Chief claims."

"Oh Sue," Irene shrugged impatiently, "you don't believe that nonsense, do you?"

"I hardly think," I said, "that you can dismiss a marriage certificate as such nonsense."

"But you heard Jake say he could explain everything."

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"Why doesn't he, then?" I demanded reasonably.
"Simply because," Irene dismissed my logic airily, "he has reasons. But of course I can't expect you to understand.
"No," I agreed drily, "I'm afraid you can't. But get on with your story—and leave out the amatory details. You were in Jake's room—when what happened?"
"Well," said Irene, "it was all very queer, Sue.
"No doubt."
"We were—just talking—about the joke on Patsy, and planning how Jake would dress up and pretend to be the ghost—when all of a sudden someone knocked on Jake's door."
"What time was this, Irene?"
"Oh, not exactly, but it must have been about an hour after everyone had gotten to bed."
"About three o'clock, then."
"I suppose so," Irene seemed to consider the hour an irrelevant detail. "And of course when this person knocked at the door, I was—well, sort of startled.
"I can imagine that," I nodded.
"Neither of us had any idea who it could be, but of course I didn't want to be discovered in Jake's room by anyone who might—misunderstand.
"I can imagine that, too.
"So I—I hid in the closet while Jake went to the door."
I propped myself up on one elbow to watch Irene curiously. "Who was it?"
"Well," said Irene, "she took a long breath, 'It was Madeline.' "
"Madeline?"
"Irene nodded solemnly. "I don't know, Irene, if you were hiding?"
"Jake told me later—and anyway I could hear her voice plainly."
"What did she say?"
"She said, 'I think you might have waited one more night.' Of course Jake asked her what on earth she meant, and then she said, 'I'll be out of your way before tomorrow morning.' I heard Jake say, 'You're not well, Madeline. I'd better call Jonny', and she answered him with a sort of a laugh. 'No,' she said, 'you mustn't call Jonny—because he'll only try to keep me from doing what I'm going to do.' Then I heard him ask, 'What are you going to do?' and she laughed again—the queerest sort of a laugh, Sue. Irene's eyes were wide. 'It—made me shiver just to hear her,' but I only said, 'I'm going back to bed—that's what I'm going to do,' and Jake told me that he saw her turn and go into her room and lock the door."
"What then?"
"Well, when she had gone I came out from the closet, and of course I asked Jake what Madeline had meant by all that nonsense. He said he didn't think she meant anything much except that she must have heard me in his room—perhaps the murmur he and I used to make before I got up and went into the hall and I did see the awful white thing going along the floor toward Minna's room. For a moment I really thought that I told me the Chief, that Jake—or someone else, had tied up Evelyn's dog in a sheet—and I started to follow it. Just then, as the door of Minna's room was opened—Jake said the thing was."
"Irene—what was it?"
"It was something wrapped in a sheet, Sue, Irene spoke solemnly. It might have been a bundle of laundry—or maybe it was too heavy for that. The way it dragged along the floor, you know—"
"Well—what was it?"
"It was Minna," said Irene.
"Minna?"
"Yes."
"Was she—dead, Irene?"
"I think she must have been—but I didn't know it then."

"But good heavens, Irene—it doesn't make sense. A dead woman dragging herself along the hall done up in a sheet."
"That's just it, Sue—" Irene leaned forward and spoke in a quick whisper. "She wasn't dragging herself—that's why I've had to lie about all this. She—she was being dragged by someone."
Irene shuddered. "Sue, it was—"
"Who?"
"Jake," said Irene.
"But—why hadn't you seen him before? Why did you think the white bundle was moving itself?"
"Because," said Irene, "Jake was wearing black pajamas—and in the darkness of the hall the only thing I could see was the white thing on the floor. It wasn't until the door of Minna's room opened that I could see his figure silhouetted against a window beyond. I—recognized him easily enough, Sue, by the outline of his head—you know the way his hair stands up in that tousled way?"
I nodded hastily. "Go on," I said.

W E L L—I didn't know what to do when I realized Jake was there, Sue. I think I must have made some sound—probably I was going to scream or something—when Jake turned and saw me standing there. He came over to me and told me not to make any noise—and I asked him what in the world he was doing. He didn't answer that, and I said, 'I thought you weren't going to play any jokes on her all.' Jake grabbed my arm then—terribly tight, and he said, 'This joke is on me, Irene, and you'll have to help me get out of it.' I could see that he was desperarly serious—so I whispered back that I'd do whatever he told me to do. He went back to the—bunched up, and I saw him pull back the sheets and lift something out, then he handed the sheets to me and he said, 'Hide these, Irene, and for God's sake don't ask any question—or answer any."

"And you—obeyed?"
"Well—yes," she spoke a little defensively. "Wouldn't you have done the same for Jonny?"
"Oh—no doubt," I sighed. "But I'm not sure that makes it right—or even sensible."

"Maybe not, but I did it anyway. I took the sheets and came back to our room and stuffed them under my bed—it was the only place I could hide them without waking you—and then—I went back into the hall. You see, Sue, I figured I ought to see Jake out of the mess—whatever it was—if I possibly could—" she looked at me again, as if for approval.

"Of course," I nodded.

"And when I got out there no one was in sight. The door of Minna's room was still open—so I went down the hall and listened for a minute. I could hear someone moving inside the room—of course I thought it was Jake or I should never have gone in—" Irene paused again.

"Well?"
"Well," she said shortly, "it wasn't Jake."
"Who was it, then?"
"I don't know. Before I could speak—or see anything—someone grabbed me from behind the door—and gagged me, just as I told the Chief."
"Irene—" I faced her seriously. "Was it true about the ring—Jonny's ring?"
She nodded. "Yes—it was true. This time I've told you the whole truth, Sue—but when I came to, later, and they told me about Minna being murdered—I couldn't tell about Jake dragging Minna's body back to her room—until I'd talked to him. And so I made up the best story I could—and nearly all of it was true. You—don't blame me, Sue?"

"Never mind about that," I said. "What I want to know is what Jake said when you did talk to him.""
"He told me—that I told the Chief, that Jake—or someone else, had tied up Evelyn's dog in a sheet—and I started to follow it. Just then, as the door of Minna's room was opened—I said the thing was."

"Irene—what was it?"
"It was something wrapped in a sheet, Sue, Irene spoke solemnly. It might have been a bundle of laundry—or maybe it was too heavy for that. The way it dragged along the floor, you know—"
"Well—what was it?"
"It was Minna," said Irene.
"Minna?"
"Yes."

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Irene's tone had suddenly become pretty anxious. "I'm much too sleepy," I said, "to do anything about anything right now. And besides, I rolled over with a yawning and buried my face in the pillow. "I don't think there's anything to be done."

"Honestly, Sue?" Irene sounded relieved.

"Honestly."

"I don't want to make any rash promises—but I have a pretty good hunch that we're going to find that everything's been settled by a damned smart detective."

"Smart detective?" I could hear the amusement in Irene's voice. "Are you by any chance referring to that old fossil of a Sheriff?"

"Maybe—" I smiled into the pillow. "You wait and see."

And in the meantime—good-night!"

XIX

"YES, sir," from a mouth rather too full of caviar sandwich, the chief spoke thickly. "Yes, sir—I got it all figured out."

"Well, then," from his place at Patty's side Ted spoke, "did you call us here to tell us?"

Another nod from the chief. "I aim to," he said, "when everybody gets here."

The screen door opened and Irene, looking cool and fresh in a pale blue frock, stepped out into the porch and looked at our group with surprise, "it's a regular party."

For an unaccustomed moment no one answered her, then Jake scammed up the swing and got all the rescue by offering the plate of sandwiches.

"It's a sort of a combination," he said. "Patty's supplied enough food for a banquet—and Ted's working up our courage with drinks. But the real purpose of the party is to hear the Chief unravel our mystery."

"Oh—" Irene's hand, outstretched toward a sandwich, paused in midair. "Does that mean it's all settled then?" I saw her look quickly from Jake to the chief and then to me.

Again no answer immediately. "Well—" I took an uncertain bite from her sandwich and walked over to the swing where she could sit next to Jake. "I must say, you all seem very calm about it. She surveyed us critically. "It might almost be yesterday afternoon—except—" her glance rested on the Chief once more, and she fell silent."

"Yeah—" the Chief followed her glance across the broad sunlit lawn, and back to our sociable group. "I see what you mean, all right. Here, lemme have another of them sandwiches, will you?"

Smith Plimpton edged up to pass the plate.

"You know," the chief took an appreciatively large muttonful, "I've never believed it, but they fish eggs is real good."

While, a moment later, the door swung open again and Jonny appeared, the chief's expression did not alter. Jonny was immaculately groomed, as always, in white linen, and saw the drawn lines of wear on my face, too. I might have been just another casual guest at our afternoon tea. I noted with relief that his manner, as he accepted a drink and a sandwich and took his place on one of the wicker chairs, was controlled and quiet.

"Well—" the Chief rose from his corner, brushed a few remaining crumbs from his loose-fitting coat, smoothed his mustache fondly, and took the center of the group. "I reckon I might as well begin."

"I told Mr. Elliot here a minute ago," said the chief, "that I'd got this whole thing figured out—and I'm gonna tell you folks just what happened last night. I don't know as you'd call it exactly a simple case—but I got the thing pretty well in hand, owin' to a natural ability for analysis. That is—I can see when two and two make four."

Everyone sat up a little straighter as the chief paused. His cryptic introduction had not in the least given any expert on romance and that sort of stuff, but I guess I can figure out how a woman gets jealous. That's what I figure was wrong with this party, begin' your pardon, Mrs. Elliott."

"Now, it ain't natural," the chief continued without any visible embarrassment, "for a man's sister to get jealous when he makes up his mind to get married. But then, he stroked the mustache and went on, "it ain't natural to murder folks, neither. Anyways, I can see that Miss Page didn't like her brother gettin' engaged to Miss Tucker here. And the reason I know that is because I got some letters here that show pretty how she felt."

Once more we all straightened with fresh tension as the Chief drew several folded papers from an inner pocket.

"Right here I got enough to prove that Miss Page was doin' all she could to scare off Miss Tucker from marryin' Dr. Page."

I could barely suppress an exclamation of relief as I saw the Chief ponderously unfold his evidence. So Madeline had really been plotting against Evely.

"She wasn't only tryin' to put a stop to the thing," the Chief went on, "but she went at it underhanded and tried to scare off Miss Tucker by threatenin' to kidnap her."

"Just a moment, Chief," Jonny spoke without looking up. "I can scarcely allow you to make these statements about my sister without some sort of proof."

"Proof," the Chief snorted. "I got proof enough. Just have a look at these letters here that I found hid away in Miss's room—"

"Quite so," Jonny barely glanced at the papers which were thrust beneath his nose before he waved them away wearily. "I have no doubt that the letters threaten Miss Tucker in the way you describe, Jonny, but I have no authority you claim that my sister was the author of them."

"On?” said the Chief. "Well—I'm comin' to that. The fact is that Miss Page wrote one letter too many—" and from another pocket he extracted a new bit of evidence. "And this," he unrolled the paper with a dramatic flourish, "is it."

There was a silence while the Chief fumbled for a pair of ancient spectacles and adjusted them upon his nose.

"With your permission, Miss Tucker," he read, "I'll read this letter. When Jonny gave no sign of an answer, the Chief began."

"Miss Tucker:"

"I have given you, in the past month, fair warning that you must end your engagement to Jonathan Page. You have not only defied my command, but you have also set an investigator to discover my identity. I am aware that since yesterday afternoon, when I left New York, you have known that it was I who warned you, and that although you do not know—and perhaps never will know—the reason which lies behind my efforts to prevent your marriage to Dr. Page, you are nevertheless determined in putting a stop to these efforts."

Do not think that I am deceived concerning your real motive in coming to this house. I know that it was your intention to have me find two guns—then tell me as the author of the warning letters which you have received. Whether it was your plan to do this by means of a public arrest—or by some method of private vengeance in his face, I do not know. But in either case your plan will fail.

For you will never live to read this last letter. You have been warned—and you have chosen to defy me. In so doing you leave me no choice. I shall kill you—at the price of my own life—for the happiness of Jonathan Page means more to me than either your life, or mine—and I leave this letter in your dead hand in order to absolve all other persons from any blame in connection with your death and my own."

The Chief stopped reading, removed his spectacles, and handed them solemnly to the chief. "He said," he added about every one of the proof anybody'd need what happened in this house."

"But—Chief—" out of the silence which gripped us all, Ted finally spoke. "Is that letter—signed?"

"No," said the Chief, "but it might as well be. It matches these other warnings like peans from the same pod. Even the paper and the pen they were written with is the same."

"That—" said the chief, "I don't know—and I reckon nobody of us ever will know. But it's easy enough that murders is generally done without any good reason. The fact is that Miss Page went to your room, Miss Tucker, not knowin’, of course, that you'd changed places with..."
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Minna, and that she went there in the dark and stabbed the wrong person.

“But—what killed Madeline, then?” Patsy ventured the question which had been forming in my own mind.

“That,” said the Chief, “is an interesting point. I don’t mind saying,” he tugged thoughtfully at his mustache, “I don’t quite get it at first. Now, the Doctor here,” indicating Jonny, “told us that Miss Page died of the effect of shock on her weak heart. And Dr. Jenkins says there ain’t any doubt but that’s what happened. Well, for a while there I was all thinkin’ that the shock must’ve made somebody scared Miss Page—scared her so bad that she died of it. But after I got to lookin’ at this last letter and the note—it began to think different. You know—she used to say,” he fumbled for the letter and adjusted the spectacles once more. “She says: ‘I shall kill you—at the price of my own life.’ And she spoke the truth.”

“Yes—” said Patsy, “but what killed her?”

“Don’t you see it?” the Chief peered over his glasses at her. “Why, it’s just what the doctors said. Shock killed her.”

Then, as evident light began to dawn on his listeners, he went on. “When we were figurin’ on who might’ve frightened Miss Page to death, we knew it must be somebody who had the information about her weak heart—and accordin’ to you folks nobody knew about that except her brother, Dr. Page. But we were forgettin’ one thing—Miss Page knew about it herself. She knew she couldn’t stand murderin’ somebody—she was fair as a lily, outside of a month that murderin’ somebody was goin’ to be too much for her. Accordin’ to Dr. Jenkins, the fright that killed Miss Page could have come from inside a month.”

“And it was the man—outside of a month—that’s what happened. When she worked herself up to the point of murderin’ the woman she thought was Miss Tucker—Miss Page just as good as committed suicide. She shocked herself to death.”

There was a long silence when the Chief finished his amazing recital.

“Well, the Chief himself broke the lengthy pause. “I guess that just closes the business. Of course, there are a few little things to be cleared up—"

“One of them,” Smith Plummer went on with a suddenness that made us all jump, “is about the letter.”

“What letter?” the Chief turned to stare at him.

Why, the—one that Miss Page wrote last. The confession, you might call it.”

“Well—what about the confession?”

“Why—n-nothing.” Smith Plummer’s sudden courage seemed to fall before the Chief’s searching question.

“Only that it said that we would find the letter in the—of the victim’s hand.”

“Yes—and where’s that I did find it.”

“I—Smith Plummer, I remember seeing an—of an—letter—""

“Well, now,” the Chief looked a trifle non-plussed. “That’s a real interesting point, Mr. Plummer.” He paused for a moment, thought about it, and then he addressed Jonny. “Any help about you, Doctor? You helped move the remains—didn’t you?”

“No, I did,” Jonny answered quietly.

“And—do you recall seein’ anything in the dead woman’s hand?”

THERE was a pause. Jonny stared down at his empty glass. Then, for the first time since the Chief had begun his revelations, Jonny looked up—looked straight into the Chief’s narrowed eyes—and said:

“Yes, as a matter of fact, I do remember seeing—something clasped in Minna’s hand. I don’t examine it, of course, since I knew that everything must be left undiscovered until the prisoner arrived.”

The Chief took a long breath, threw back his shoulders, and surveyed us triumphantly.

“Well—” he said, “that’s more like it. As a matter of fact,” he looked slightly apologetic, “I didn’t notice that there was anything in Minna’s hand myself—until we came to move the body. You see,” he exhibited the much-cared-for mustache, “this was a long time ago—tight that it didn’t show much. But when we started to lift the remains—I saw that her hand was folded tight on somethin’—and when I opened it to have a look—there was the letter, sure enough.”

In the moment which followed I saw Smith Plummer start forward in his chair—open his mouth—and then close it again. And then I saw that small hand acros Evelyn Tucker’s face as she leaned back and closed her eyes. And I saw the glance that passed between Irene and Jake Lecky. But no one spoke.

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'em—and that one was Minna's. Now do you get it?"

"But the lighter—" Mrs. Lynn objected. "The lighter with the initial P that was found in my room. How do you figure that, Chief?"

"It was nothin' but a plant," said the Chief firmly. "I seen that right from the start. In the first place, it didn't belong to Mr. Barger. You say it was his sister's. And there's two ways of accountin' for how it got into your room. Either Minna planted it there—hopin' to make either Miss Page or the Doctor get the blame for changin' the whales, or—Miss Page droppin' it there herself when she went into your room and found out that somebody'd been foolin' with the spirit photos."

"But either way," said Mrs. Lynn shook her head, "it really don't make sense."

"No," the Chief sighed, "I know it don't. But as far as I can see there ain't much sense in any of this case. Anyways, I've done the murderin'. I guess the jury'll be glad enough to leave it go at that."

With a final nod, the Chief strode over to the pretty bad straw and we've imagined a lot of things that aren't quite—accurate. It seems to me that the best thing we can do now is to accept the Chief's story and go on and see where it goes until the time of the inquest. If the Coroner's jury decides that the case is—closed—Johnny's voice shook ever so slightly, then he rallied, "We think we ought also to go on. Does the Chief insist on his story?"

"Yes," I answered, "it plucked up courage, will you tell me—the truth, then?"

"Don't you know the truth?"

"I've never been sure, Ike."

"There's not so much to know," Ike shook his head. "She was a pretty bad egg."

"You mean—Madeline?"

"Yes."

"Ike—"

"I summoned all my strength. "Ike—did Johnnie kill her?"

"Ike took one long breath. "No," he said.

"I closed my eyes.

"Thank God for that."

When I opened my eyes again Ike was looking straight at me.

"I'm sorry," he said. His expressionless voice was curiously softened. "I guess I really should have told you sooner."

"That's all right," I answered. "I'll make a gesture of reassurance. "I should have known, really, that Johnnie couldn't have done a thing like that. But—it was all so strange—I couldn't help being afraid.""

"Sure," Ike nodded, then looked away again. After a moment I ventured one more question.

"Ike who was it?"

"Very deliberately, Ike reached over my shoulder and plucked a leaf from the big rubber plant which sheltered me. He twirled the leaf between his fingers, and I saw that his hand was not quite steady.

"Ike—"

"I bent forward, "do you know?"

He nodded.

"Who was it?"

"For an answer Ike merely spread his hands and looked down at them in silence. I followed his glance, and as I watched I saw the lean brown fingers tighten and curl. "I'm drunk," said Ike at last, "or I couldn't tell you this. But I guess, at that, you've got a right to know."

Suddenly he faced me. "I killed her."

"For one long, incredible minute I stared straight into his eyes, then slowly my gaze traveled downward, and I saw that the leaf was crushed between Ike's clenched fingers."

"You killed Madeline Page?"

Ike did not speak.

"You're not just saying that—to protect Johnnie?"

Ike made a sudden sound. Something between a snort and a laugh.

"I'll go you one better than that," he said. "I killed a woman to protect him."

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My mind raced back over the events of that far-off summer night in vain effort to understand the cryptic words. But I could not see the meaning.

I don't understand," I shook my head. "Why should you have to protect Jonny? Why?"

"Because," said Ike, "if I hadn't done it—Dr. Page was going to kill her himself."

"That's just it," said Ike. "He was devoted to her—and I knew he'd do it, too, even though it would have cost him his career and his marriage and everything that mattered to him. I knew he'd do it—though with it no matter what it cost him—because he thought she ought to, and that's the kind of a guy he is."

"But Ike—" I spread my hands helplessly, "what you're saying just doesn't make any sense."

"No," said Ike slowly, "I suppose it doesn't." He drew a deep breath. "But you know, sister—you know that he always insisted on being near her—"

I nodded.

Well—there was a reason for that, and the same reason made him do what he had to murder her.

"What reason, Ike? Do you know that too?"

Ike countered with a sudden question. "How much," he asked, "do you know about that family?"

"Why—not very much. Jonny's mother was dead before I knew them at all. Jon and Madeline used to live with their—father—and now he's dead too."

"They told you, then, that Madeline was only a half sister to the doctor?"

"No—" I drew back in amazement.

"Have they told you the prettiest detail, I guess. You see, Dr. Page's own mother was dead—but his father's first wife, the woman who was Madeline's mother, lived until her son and her daughter were young."

"But where?"

"In an asylum," said Ike.

"Oh!"

"And that," Ike went on, "was why Dr. Page never allowed Madeline to be away from him—and why he had her secret marriage to Jake Lecky annulled—and why he finally came to believe that he must kill her himself."

Slowly the full meaning of Ike's words dawned on me: "Then you are saying that Madeline Page was—inane?"

"Not actually," said Ike, "until the last few days of her life—but she was never absolutely normal, and Dr. Page had known for years that some day she would go—just like her mother did. When he found out about the things she was doing, making up stories, Doctor knew that it was the beginning of the end..."

"Jonny knew about Madeline's plot to kidnap Evelyn?"

"Yes.

"But how?"

"I told him," said Ike calmly, "that evening when we got to your sister's house."

"But why didn't you do something then? Why couldn't you have prevented her from killing Minna?"

"We did our best," Ike sighed. "And don't think we didn't try. But our first job was to protect Evelyn—and that's how Minna lost her life."

"I'm afraid I still don't understand," I shook my head. "And yet—"

"I found out," Ike said, "that his sister had been threatening Evelyn—and that something would have to be done about it right away. He agreed of course, but he asked me to give him one more night. After that, he promised, everything would be all right. 'All you have to do,' he said, 'is to make sure that Evelyn will be safe—just for tonight.' I asked him to let me take care of Madeline—but he said, 'No, that's my job. I've always known I'd have to do it—and I'll do it—tonight.'"

"And you believe," as Ike stopped speaking, I leaned forward breathlessly, "you believe that Jonny meant he was going to—kill Madeline?"

"I know that's what he meant," Ike spoke with quiet conviction.

"Did Jonny actually tell you?"

He looked at me for a long time in silence.

"Yes," he said at last, "he told me. He said it was his job—and I believed him. You see, Miss Belmont, he thought he'd done what it had been like—then. Madeline's mother was in the asylum. He knew Madeline was headed for the same thing—and he believed that his way was the better way."

"Did you agree with him, Ike? Did you think it right—
to murder a woman?"

"I don't know," said Ike slowly. It was the first time I had heard him speak without conviction. "I don't know what I thought. But, you see, it wasn't my business to decide what was right or wrong. The point was that Dr. Page was absolutely afraid that it would happen. He had his sister's life peacefully, rather than have her live for years as her mother had. And he was ready to do it—obsolely and honestly even though he knew that the consequences would finish his career and his marriage. That was the way the proposition was put up to me that night. It didn't matter what I believed was right—it was a question of letting Dr. Page sacrifice everything, or of leaving the job myself. After all, Ike's thin lips twisted in a curious smile, "I had little enough to lose—compared to the Doctor's."

"And you're sure of the peace of the heroic in Ike's quiet speech, but suddenly I found my eyes full of tears.

"That was very brave of you, Ike," I said.

"Maybe. Ike sounded unimpressed. "Or maybe just crazy. I don't know. But they knock after a girl until the time she's just a kid, like I did Evelyn, and see her get one lousy break after another out of life—you don't just forget that one big chance get crabbled if you can help it. Anyway," his tone was suddenly brisk, "I did it."

"Ike, did Jonny know what you were doing?"

"Ike shook his head. "He may have suspected after it was done," he said, "but he certainly didn't know it at the time."

"You're sure of that, Ike?"

"Very sure. Otherwise he'd never have given her that hycrome.


"What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Ike, "that when Dr. Page thought he was giving his sister a dose of strychine to bring her round after she was found unconscious, he was really giving her a double shot of adrenalin. And that amount of adrenalin, as the Doctor knew, was absolutely sure to be fatal to a person with a heart like Madeline's."

"Oh—" I drew back sharply, "then you mean that the hypodermic that we saw at the hospital was actually what killed her?"

"I do," said Ike, "but remember—Dr. Page thought he was giving her strychine—which probably would have brought her around. But after Evelyn was killed—he had the dose—and her heart began to fail—that was really alarmed. What he thought then, I don't know. I don't suppose we'll ever know. But nothing could have saved her then."

"I still don't understand," I said, "how Jonny could have ever made such a mistake without knowing it."

"That," said Ike, "is where I came in. You see, I simply exchanged the two stimulants that were in Dr. Page's kit. The little glass ampoules aren't labeled, and it was a simple matter to put the one containing adrenalin into the box labeled strychine."

"But—I remember," I said, "the doctor—Dr. Jenks—must have realized that Madeline had been given the wrong stimulant. And you remember he testified at the inquest."

"I do. But the old codger was so taken in by the great Dr. Page that he never thought to doubt the treatment Madeline had been given. The reactions of adrenalin and adrenalin are very much alike. And he hadn't the slightest reason to suspect Dr. Page. So he simply testified, honestly enough, that Dr. Page had done everything possible to save his sister—but that the original shock had been too great for her weak heart. And that—Ike's tone was just as expressionless as ever, "was that."

"Are you sorry you did it, Ike?"

"What do you think I am?" he asked. "It was a rotten thing to have to do—but it was me or the Doctor—and if I had to choose again, I couldn't choose my mind."

"Even at the price of Minna's life?"

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
The Mad Murder Party

"Some things," said Ike, "cost a lot—and Minna’s life was the price of this wedding."

"But how—how utterly unnecessary," I protested suddenly. "You knew that Madeline was insane—you must have known it. Why was it taking place when you kept in Evelyn’s room that night? In heaven’s name, why couldn’t you have warned her at least to lock her door . . . ?"

"Oh," said Ike, "but Minna wasn’t killed in her room."

"She wasn’t?"

"No."

"But—the letter from Madeline—"

"Oh," said Ike calmly. "Smith Plummer was right when he said that there was nothing in Minna’s hand when he lifted her onto the bed. I slipped it in her fist right under the Chief’s eye—the big cluck."

"Where did you find the letter then?"

Ike tapped his forehead.

"Here," he said.

"You forged it?" I leaned forward in sheer amazement. "Why—it was exactly like those other letters from Madeline—the jury never had a single doubt but what she wrote it—"

"Well," Ike waved aside my excitement with a modest gesture, "you see, Miss Belmont, a long while ago I had some practice in that line."

"Then you planted the whole case against Madeline?"

"Sure, I did," despite his customary indifference, a note of pride crept into Ike’s voice. "I had to—or else, he shrugged.

"And Madeline didn’t really intend to kill Evelyn?"

"No," said Ike, "Madeline Page killed the wrong person when she stabbed Minna in the dark—but she didn’t think it was Evelyn."

"Then why?"

"She thought," said Ike, "that she was killing your sister—Miss Irene."

"Oh—oh, but why should Madeline want to kill Irene?"

"Because your sister and Jake Lecky were planning to get married. You see, Miss Belmont, Madeline Page never got over the fact that her brother had married to Lecky. Of course, knowing her history, Dr. Page had to do it—but I guess that was the spark that finally unbalanced Madeline’s mind. When she understood that she could never marry, Madeline Page took an insane resolution that no one else should marry, either. That’s why, of course, she tried so hard to break up the engagement of Dr. Page and Evelyn. And above all things she was determined that Jake Lecky and your sister should never marry. Do you see what I mean, Miss Belmont?"

"I—think," I nodded slowly, "that I’m beginning to see. But—and—how could Madeline have mistaken Minna for Irene?"

"Because," said Ike, "she found Minna in Jake Lecky’s room."

"Minna—in Jake Lecky’s room?"

Ike nodded.

"That’s where Minna was killed," he said.

"YOU see," Ike went on calmly, "I’d posted Minna in the linen closet just outside of Madeline’s room, where she could keep a watch on the door. Knowing that Madeline was precisely well off her trolley—and liable to get violent, Dr. Page and I agreed that Minna would have to stand guard that night. Minna, of course, was used to that sort of thing—she and I have had to guard Evelyn more than once—and she was directed to lock Madeline in her room in case the girl started any monkey business. Evidently there was some sort of trouble—although I’ve never known exactly what happened . . . .""

"I think I know," I put in hastily. "Madeline heard Irene in Jake’s room—and evidently that was what set her off. Irene told me that Madeline came to the door and said some rather queer things."

"Oh, so that was it," Ike nodded. "I might have known that sister of yours. She could be at the bottom of the trouble. Well, anyway, I guess Minna must have locked Madeline in after she went back to her room—but the girl was too smart to let that stop her. After her failure, Madeline crept into Lecky’s room through the window with the knife she had sniped from her brother’s surgical kit in her hand—and God knows what murder in her insane mind. Just listening to the things the man thought with Lecky—probably insisting that your sister was still hidden there—and when Minna stepped into the room, Miss Page turned on her, in that ungodly sharp knife, and sliced her throat. One blow was enough—it caught Minna just below the ear . . . ."

"And you believe," I asked faintly, "that Madeline thought she was killing Irene?"

"I do," Ike nodded, "because Jake Lecky told me what she said—just as she struck."

"Why?—did she actually breathe the question."

"She said, ‘If I can’t have Jake—you’ll never have him, either.’ And then—" Ike sighed heavily, "Madeline Page fainted dead away."

"What—did he do?"

"As a matter of fact," said Ike, "he got out of it pretty well. Somehow he managed to get Madeline back to her own room, through the window again, and locked her there. If your sister had only stayed in her own room then, nothing would have happened to her—but of course she had to come snooping down the hall again—and poor Minna tended to sleep through the excitement that broke out later when Madeline came halfway out of her faint and began to pound on the wall."

"And Irene—?"

"That was bad," Ike shook his head. "You see, she came out of her room just when Lecky was taking Minna’s body down the hall. It must have given Jake a mean turn, but he had the presence of mind to ask Irene to hide the sheets—and that gave him enough time to drag Minna into her room and lock her there. If your sister had only stayed in her own room then, nothing would have happened to her—but of course she had to come snooping down the hall again—and poor Minna tended to sleep through the excitement that broke out later when Madeline came halfway out of her faint and began to pound on the wall."

"And Irene—?"

The MYSTERY Magazine, November, 1934
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Salt and pepper
3 tbsp. butter
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Separate cauliflower into flowerets. Butter OVENSERVE round baking dish and arrange alternate layers of crackers, cauliflower, ham. Season, dot with butter and pour milk over all. Bake in a hot oven (425°F.) 25-30 minutes. Lift dish direct from oven to table.

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