

The Mystery of the Disappearing Girls

JUNE

TRUE ★ DETECTIVE MYSTERIES

A MACFADDEN
25
CENTS
PUBLICATION

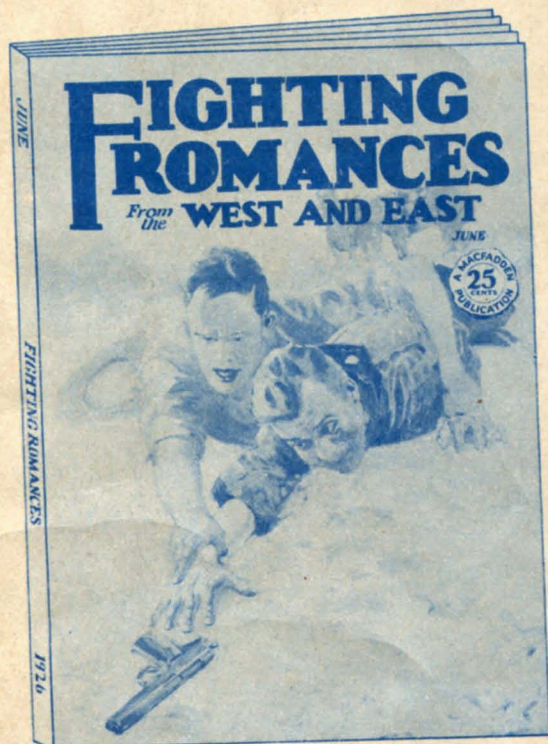


*The Capture of
Chicago's Queen of Dope*

*The Crime in the
Country Schoolhouse*

*The Voice That Came
Out of the Night*

Thrilling Tales of the West When the Six-Gun Was Law



THE thunder of hoofbeats across the mesa—short ugly words—a quick draw—a staccato flare of flame—the growth of the West was crowded with such episodes.

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A glance at the contents schedule of the June issue printed at the left will give you an idea of the great reading in store for you when you open the pages of Fighting Romances.

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Partial Contents of the June Issue of Fighting Romances

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When the Bar-Circle Turned to Liquid Gold
The Short-Skirted Outlaw
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Tenderfoot Terror
The Fighter Who Couldn't Quit
The Secret of Trapdoor Valley
Smiley Lane's Wall-Eyed Jinx
Hatred North of 48
The Masked Rider
The Siren of the South Seas

MACFADDEN PUBLICATIONS, Inc.
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Enclosed find \$1.00, for which please enter my name for five months' subscription to *Fighting Romances* beginning with the current issue. This is in connection with your special introductory offer.

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TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES

A MACFADDEN PUBLICATION

Vol. V

JUNE, 1926

No. 3

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These LaSalle-Trained Men Have Helped My Business Grow!

—Marshall A. Smith



Above—C. E. Veth
Traffic Manager
Below—L. A. Gould
Manager of Sales
for Michigan



Marshall A. Smith, Pres.

Columbus Plant
Smith Agricultural Chemical Company
Indianapolis, Ind. Columbus, O.

Why I. A. Gould Received Two "Raises" and C. E. Veth a Salary-increase of 150%

FROM the great plants of the Smith Agricultural Chemical Company, at Columbus and Indianapolis, thousands of tons of fertilizer, animal foods, and acids—six widely diversified products under the brand name Sacco—are shipped to all parts of the world.

To sell products of this character and to arrange for their economical transportation calls for ability of a high order. Half-knowledge, snap-judgment, guess-work, quickly spell defeat for the man and heavy losses for the company.

Marshall A. Smith, head of this great enterprise, knows the importance of training—recognizes what it means to have in his employ LaSalle-trained men.

One of his employees—I. A. Gould—had been a farmer in Central Michigan. At the age of 48 he began with this company as a salesman—enrolling at the same time for LaSalle training in Modern Salesmanship. Within three years he had topped the list in Michigan and had been given entire charge of sales in that state, with a crew of men under his direction. In July, 1925, he writes, "I have increased my sales this past season 50%, and my salary has been raised twice since last October."

Another of Mr. Smith's employees—C. E. Veth—saw the need for a properly equipped traffic department—this as a result of LaSalle training in Traffic Management. So successfully did he put it into operation that during the year 1924 errors

in freight bills totalling \$10,600 in overcharges were detected and corrected before payment was made. To LaSalle, in a large measure, he directly credits a salary increase of 150 per cent.

"We can only attribute the rapid success of these two men," writes Mr. Smith, "to their energy and initiative, together with the practical knowledge gained thru the pursuit of LaSalle training."

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"Ten Years' Promotion in One"

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(Signed) I. A. GOULD, Director of Sales for Michigan, Smith Agricultural Chemical Co.

A Salary-Increase of 150%

"When I took up your training, I held the position of Traffic Manager with the Smith Agricultural Chemical Company. As I progressed with the course I saw very clearly what a well-equipped traffic department could do for the company. My subsequent salary-increase of 150% is directly due to the successful working out of this undertaking—and that, in turn, is due to the hard work, study and application which I gave to your training in Traffic Management. Your course is one of the most complete in its line; and in technical information it far surpasses any other I have seen."

(Signed) C. E. VETH, Traffic Manager, Smith Agricultural Chemical Co.

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THE WORLD'S LARGEST BUSINESS TRAINING INSTITUTION

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- Modern Foremanship and Production Methods: Training for positions in Shop Management, such as that of Superintendent, General Foreman, Foreman, Sub-Foreman, etc.
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\$5,000.00 In Prizes

In Great Pictures Title Contest

Enter Now Right From This Page

Beginning with the May issue, PICTURES, formerly Movie Magazine, is inaugurating one of the most interesting and remunerative contests ever offered in connection with motion pictures. Simple, easy to understand, offering amusement and possible rich financial reward to every member of the family. You will enjoy it hugely.

The contest is as follows: Each month for six months we will publish three drawings in PICTURES Magazine, eighteen drawings in all, each representing a popular motion picture. Accompanying each set of three drawings will be a list of titles of popular motion pictures. Somewhere in each accompanying list are three titles, each of which is the only correct title for one of the three drawings appearing on the page. The point of the contest is to fit out each of the eighteen drawings with the title of the motion picture which it represents.

It is not necessary to see a copy of PICTURES Magazine for May in order to enter the contest. All necessary information, the first set of drawings (exactly as appearing in PICTURES for May), the accompanying list of motion picture titles, contest rules and prize schedule appear upon this page. You can enter at once, now, simply by selecting from the list of titles the one which in your estimation best fits each of the drawings. Then, by following out the simple rules as printed in the adjoining column you will be well on your way toward winning one of the handsome cash prizes.

The second set of drawings appears in PICTURES, formerly Movie Magazine, for June, on the newsstands May 1st. It is also available at the offices of publication, 1926 Broadway, New York, where it can be freely consulted.

Schedule of Prizes

1 First Prize,	\$1000.00	\$1000.00
1 Second "	500.00	500.00
2 Third Prizes, @	250.00	500.00
5 Fourth "	@ 100.00	500.00
10 Fifth "	@ 50.00	500.00
40 Sixth "	@ 25.00	1000.00
100 Seventh "	@ 10.00	1000.00
Total Prizes.....		\$5000.00

Contest Rules

1. This contest is open to everyone except employees of Macfadden Publications, Inc., and members of their immediate families.

2. It costs nothing to enter. You do not even have to buy a copy of PICTURES or use the answer coupon provided therein. You can trace the drawings from any copies of PICTURES wherever obtained, and affix the titles on a coupon of your own manufacture. Titles must be written in ink or typed. Answers submitted in pencil will not be considered. Copies of PICTURES containing the puzzles may be freely consulted for this purpose at the office of PICTURES, 1926 Broadway, N. Y. City.

3. Eighteen drawings, each to be fitted with its proper title from those among a list of motion picture titles, will comprise the contest series. Three drawings will appear in each issue of PICTURES, the last three in the October, 1926, issue. In selecting the titles do not guess. Have a good reason for your selection in every case. Each drawing will represent one title only in the published list.

4. It is not necessary to formally notify us that you are competing. All that is necessary is that you submit the complete list of eighteen drawings with the titles that you select from the list and an original letter on the subject "The best motion picture I ever saw, and why." The letter must not contain more than 200 words. Winners will be determined by the ratings given them by the judges for the greatest percentage of correctly selected titles and the best letter. The letter which gives the clearest, most logical reason or reasons for your selection of the picture you designate as best will be adjudged the best. One hundred per cent selections of titles will in all cases rank above those not 100 per cent, regardless of the accompanying letter.

5. The judges of this contest will be the editors of PICTURES Magazine. All contestants agree to abide by their decisions. In the case of a tie, each tying contestant will receive the full amount of the prize tied for.

6. DO NOT SEND IN EACH MONTH'S ANSWERS SEPARATELY. Hold them until you have the complete series of eighteen drawings titled. Arrange the sets in numerical order, pin or clip them together, attach your letter on "The best motion picture I ever saw, and why" and forward by first class mail to Pictures Title Contest Editor, 1926 Broadway, New York City. All answers must be received at that address on or before midnight October 15th, 1926.

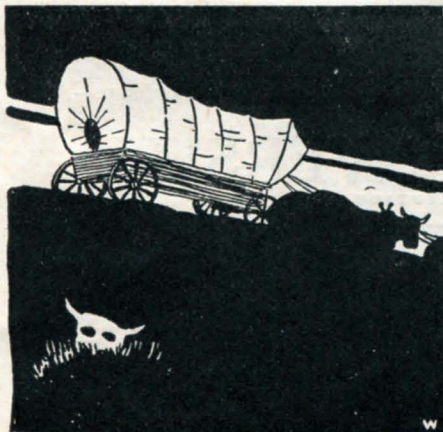
7. Each contestant may submit as many sets of title selections as he sees fit, but only one letter may accompany his entry or entries and in no case is a contestant eligible to win more than one prize. As many members of a family as care to may compete and as many prizes as are won by different members of a family will be paid.

Titles for the Three Drawings Below Are in This List of Movie Titles

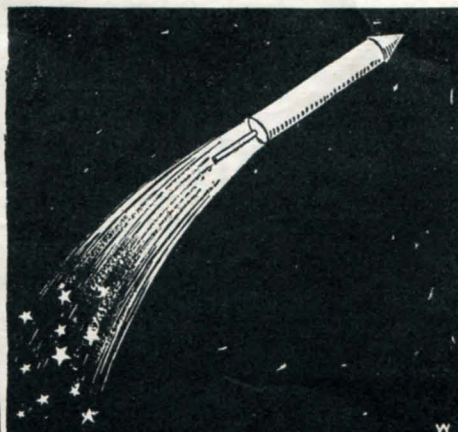
That Royle Girl	The Wanderer
Hands Up	Mannequin
Lord Jim	Irish Luck
Cobra	Stage Struck
The Pony Express	The Teaser
Where Was I?	Sporting Life
The Goose Woman	His People
Stella Maris	My Old Dutch
Rolling Home	The Homemaker
Romola	Pretty Ladies
Sun Up	The Mystic
The Midshipman	Don't
Old Clothes	Bright Lights
His Secretary	Masked Bride
The Circle	The Only Thing
The Covered Wagon	Soul Mates
Great Love	The Skyrocket
Lights of Old Broadway	
Time, the Comedian	
Sally, Irene and Mary	
Do Clothes Make the Pirate?	
The White Monkey	
Never the Twain Shall Meet	
The Pace That Thrills, Little Annie Rooney, Bluebeard's Seven Wives, California Straight Ahead, What Happened to Jones, Skinner's Dress Suit, The Beautiful Cheat, The Seven Keys to Baldpate.	

-----CUT ON THIS LINE-----CUT ON THIS LINE-----

Pictures Title Contest—Set Number One



The title of this picture is:



The title of this picture is:



The title of this picture is:

Name.....Address.....City.....State.....

MAKE BIG MONEY IN ELECTRICITY!



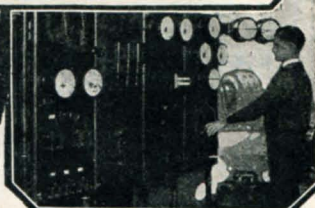
800% Pay Increase "I now make 8 times what I earned when I enrolled. I used to get \$50 a month—now it's \$400." Carroll Moeschler, Chaska, Minn.



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\$125 a Week "Depend on me as a booster," says A. Schreck, Phoenix, Ariz. "I make over \$500 a month. Your advertisement started me to success."



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- 4** Electric Power Outfit—Famous "Cooke" Motor and other apparatus. Not a toy—but a real, honest-to-goodness workable machine.
- 5** Transformer Outfit—Complete parts for building and winding this widely used equipment.

The Cooke Trained man is the Big Pay Man

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Address.....
Occupation.....



The Bust

"How it may be Developed"

By Dr. C. S. Carr

THERE IS A WAY! THIS beautiful woman learned the secret. Her story is interesting. It will solve your problem, no matter what your age or the cause of your flat figure.

"It is almost two years since I first used the National. I am happy to say that the results are permanent, for my development is just the same and my figure is even better than ever. I do appreciate so much what the National has done for me. I have proven that any woman can have a beautiful bust if she will only use the National. Friends envy my perfect figure."

How Dorothy Stahl brought her figure back until it is even more perfectly developed than ever, is what every undeveloped girl or woman will want to know.

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This is the method recommended by Dr. C. S. Carr, originally published in The Physical Culture Magazine. Dr. Carr states: "Indeed, it will bring about a development of the busts quite astonishing."

If not delighted with results in 30 days, your money is cheerfully refunded. There is no other method as safe, effective, harmless and sure.

Send your name and address today, enclosing 4c stamps, if you wish this information sent under sealed postage. We will send surprising photographic proof showing as much as five inches enlargement by this method, all sent under plain wrapper.

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THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

HOWARD BROWNE

He began his career as a detective with the Pinkerton National Detective Agency and continued with them for a period of about five years. While with them he was assigned to several murder and embezzlement cases which took him all over the United States, into the Yukon country, and several of the South American countries.

Because of the exposé he made of numerous fraudulent personal-injury accidents, he was employed by the Erie Railroad as Special Agent.

In order to become more proficient as an investigator he studied law, graduated, and practiced about three years, principally in criminal law. Since which time his capability as an investigator has increased to an enormous degree. Actually he has been a detective about fifteen years. Don't fail to read "Why It Can Never Be Told," beginning on page 44.

PHILLIP O'RYAN

This energetic young detective "made" the homicide squad of the New York Police Department at the comparatively early age of thirty. He is from up-state, and takes pride in the fact that he was born in Skeeterboro, Oneida County, the same township that fathered the late Mayor Gaynor. He confesses the name is no libel, but claims that the peskiness of the mosquitoes tends to make the natives active and ambitious. Shortly after getting his shield in 1917, O'Ryan broke up single-handed a gun fight in the negro colony in Harlem, and showed unusual shrewdness in tracing the killer of a man left dying on the scene. Smart work in connection with two Brooklyn murders, 1920 and 1924, led to his being taken out of uniform and attached to Headquarters.

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PREMIER SALONS DE BEAUTE, 503 Fifth Ave., New York, Dept. A-6

Why Have Headaches?
A headache is a distress signal from some part of the body which is not functioning properly. There are a half-dozen or more kinds of headache. In his book, "Headaches—How Cured," Bernarr Macfadden explains what each pain signifies and tells how to eradicate them. To those who suffer from headaches this book is worth its weight in gold. Price \$3.00 postpaid, or send us your order and we will mail C. O. D. When the postman delivers the book at your door pay him \$3.00 plus postage, and if at the end of 5 days you are not satisfied, return the book and we will return the price to you.
Macfadden Publications, Inc. Dept. TD-6, Macfadden Bldg. 1926 B'dway, N.Y. C.

Constipation
Nourish your NERVES for THOROUGH daily eliminations. MUSCLE meals, when they induce activity, also conquer bowel troubles. Proportion your nerve and your muscle meals to your changing work. RESULTS:—(1) better work, (2) control of bowels, (3) REMOVAL OF DISEASE, because every disease arises fundamentally from undue retention of waste complicated by local conditions. Remove the cause. WATERLESS meals are INTENSELY nerve nourishing or strengthening, or solvent, or eliminative, according as SELECTED. Tumors, blood clots, deposits in joints, catarrhal secretions, gall stones, skin blemishes, etc., are dissolved or disintegrated.
Educational Booklet 10c. BRINKLER SCHOOL OF EATING, Dept. 71, 131 West 72nd St., New York.

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THE NURSE WHO PLAYED DETECTIVE
You'll Find it on Page 19

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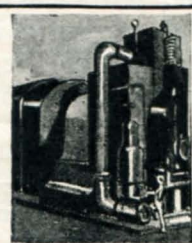
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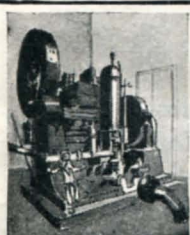
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The earth upon which you ride came out of a mysterious past upon a mysterious errand into a more mysterious future.

Mystery surrounds it, permeates it, overshadows it.

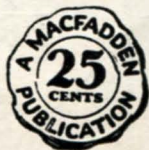
The dark canons of city streets are rife with ghostly mystery. Stealthy footsteps in the dead of night—burning eyes peering out of darkness—cold, icy hands that wither what they clutch—ghostly tortured sobs piercing solid walls—and always, the silent lynx-eyed servants of the law watching, waiting, watching and preparing to spring their traps.

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The Phantom of the Fifteenth Floor
The Coming of Roger Crane
In the Shadow of Voodoo
He Fell in Love with a Ghost
Superman or Clever Trickster—
Which?
The Girl Who Lived with the Dead
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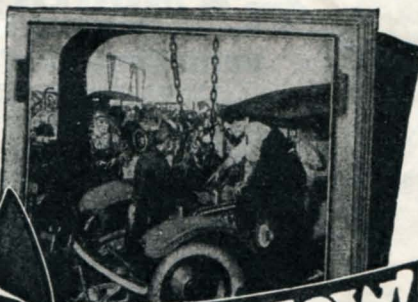
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Sweet and Low 4070	Then I'll Be Happy	A Boy's Best Friend Is His Mother	The Thunderer March 4030	Uncle Josh & Aunt Nan Put up Kitchen Stove 4082	
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If I Had a Girl Like You	After All 1315	MARCHES (Band)	Hy and Si and the Line Fence	Irish Jigs & Reels, No. 2 (Band)	
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Who (from "Sunny") 2232	Brown Eyes (Why Are You Blue)	Jolly Coppersmith March	Button Buster, the Laughing Record 4003	Medley of Southern Airs 4025	
Two Sides To Every Story	Midnight Moon 1304	Invincible Eagle March 4047	Henry Jones (Monologues)	Swanee River	
Wouldn't I Do 2242	If I Had a Girl Like You	Sixty-Ninth Regiment March	Cohen's New Auto 4081	Serenade (Violin Solos) 4034	
Then I'll Be Happy	Rosebuds Bloom 1307	National Emblem March 4041			
If She's Waiting 2228	Nothing to Do but Be Blue				
Sometime	Easy to Please 8015				
Pasadena Garden 2204	Sweetheart, Waltz				
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As you have read and thrilled to the powerful true serial stories that appear in TRUE STORY Magazine did it ever occur to you what wonderful motion pictures many of them would make?

From the very first we realized it, wanted to film them, planned to film them.

But it is no small matter to organize and successfully operate a motion picture studio capable of turning out motion pictures of highest quality.

Not until we had acquired proper equipment, stars particularly well fitted to act dramas from life, directors capable of giving True Story Pictures the ultimate artistic touch necessary to make them live before your eyes upon the screen, camera men of infinite skill, did we feel at liberty to go ahead.

Our preparations were completed about a year ago. Since then a series of True Story Pictures of a quality and vividness of which we or any other producer might well be proud have been filmed. We believe that you would like to see them and that you will be glad to know that the opportunity will soon be forthcoming.

For months we have been arranging with distributors to make True Story Pictures available to motion picture houses upon a nation wide basis. In all probability they will appear in a local motion picture house at a comparatively early date.

In the meantime there is something you can do to make doubly sure that you will be given the opportunity to see them. It is natural that any exhibitor will contract for a picture much more readily and with added confidence if he is certain that a large number of people in his district are anxious to see it. In order that such assurance may be given we are inserting in the coupon at the foot of this page the simple statement that the signer would like very much to see True Story Pictures.

We ask everyone wishing to see True Story Pictures to sign and mail it to us. The coupons will be carefully sorted according to districts and when the distributor's representative talks with your nearby theatre managers the coupons will be displayed as evidence that many local people are familiar with True Story Pictures and willing to patronize the theatre in which they appear. We have already received thousands of similar coupons and found them to be very effective. Will you not sign the below coupon and send it to us today, being careful to write the name of your favorite theatre upon the designated line?



Scenes from
'FALSE PRIDE'



Powerful True Story Pictures Now Available

False Pride

When we published "False Pride" in TRUE ROMANCES last winter an epic was added to American literature. When Owen Moore and Faire Binney directed by Hugh Dierker filmed it they produced a human drama that will thrill millions. You will glory in it!

Wives At Auction

in which Edna Murphy under the splendid direction of Elmer Clifton makes live before your eyes the glorious story of love that triumphed which held millions spellbound in the March, April, May and June issues of TRUE STORY Magazine.

Broken Homes

Few who read Broken Homes in TRUE STORY for January and February will ever forget its poignant lure. Alice Lake and Gaston Glass as John Meritt and Arlene Goodwin under the direction of Hugh Dierker have created a masterpiece of realism.

The Wrongdoers

Lionel Barrymore directed by Hugh Dierker have combined their talents to make "The Wrongdoers" which ran in the September and October issues of TRUE STORY a screen drama of a quality and charm such as you seldom have an opportunity to see.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

When you see these pictures remember that we wish to make Macfadden Productions examples of photoplay perfection. To do this we ask your co-operation. We want the viewpoint of our patrons whose helpful suggestions already have aided in making TRUE STORY and its sister publications the Successes they are. Criticisms will be welcomed. If your suggestion proves available for improving future productions, Mr. Macfadden has arranged to have mailed to you, with his compliments, a copy of his great book, "Keeping Fit." Address suggestions to Suggestion Editor, Macfadden Productions, 1926 Broadway, New York City.

TRUE STORY PICTURES,
1926 Broadway, New York

I am one of the many millions of readers of Macfadden True Story magazines.

I want to see "The Wrongdoers," starring Lionel Barrymore; "Wives At Auction," starring Edna Murphy; "Broken Homes," starring Gaston Glass and Alice Lake, and "False Pride," starring Owen Moore.

Name

Address

Please write the name of your local theatre on the above line

Don't Fail To See True Story Pictures

"-he came swiftly toward her!"

SHE was a terrible temptation to him—as she would have been to any man. And Zara suddenly realized that the door was shut and locked—and that she was alone with him in the room.

She stood perfectly still and watched him warily—wondering what mad thing he would attempt to do.

He came swiftly toward her; clasped her in his arms and passionately kissed her mouth.

"Zara!" he murmured hoarsely. "Do you think I am stone? I tell you I love you—madly."

"Animal!" she hissed, and struck him across the face.

* * * * *

And this is just one of the many startling situations in Elinor Glyn's thrilling, breath-taking novel—"The Reason Why"—which you can now secure with *nine other great novels* by this daring writer—at a price little more than you would ordinarily pay for one book alone.



"She drew back panting, and deadly white."

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by ELINOR GLYN

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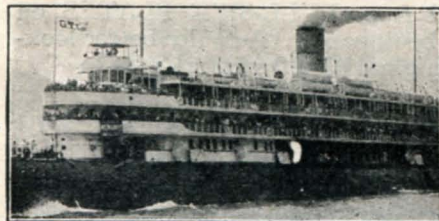
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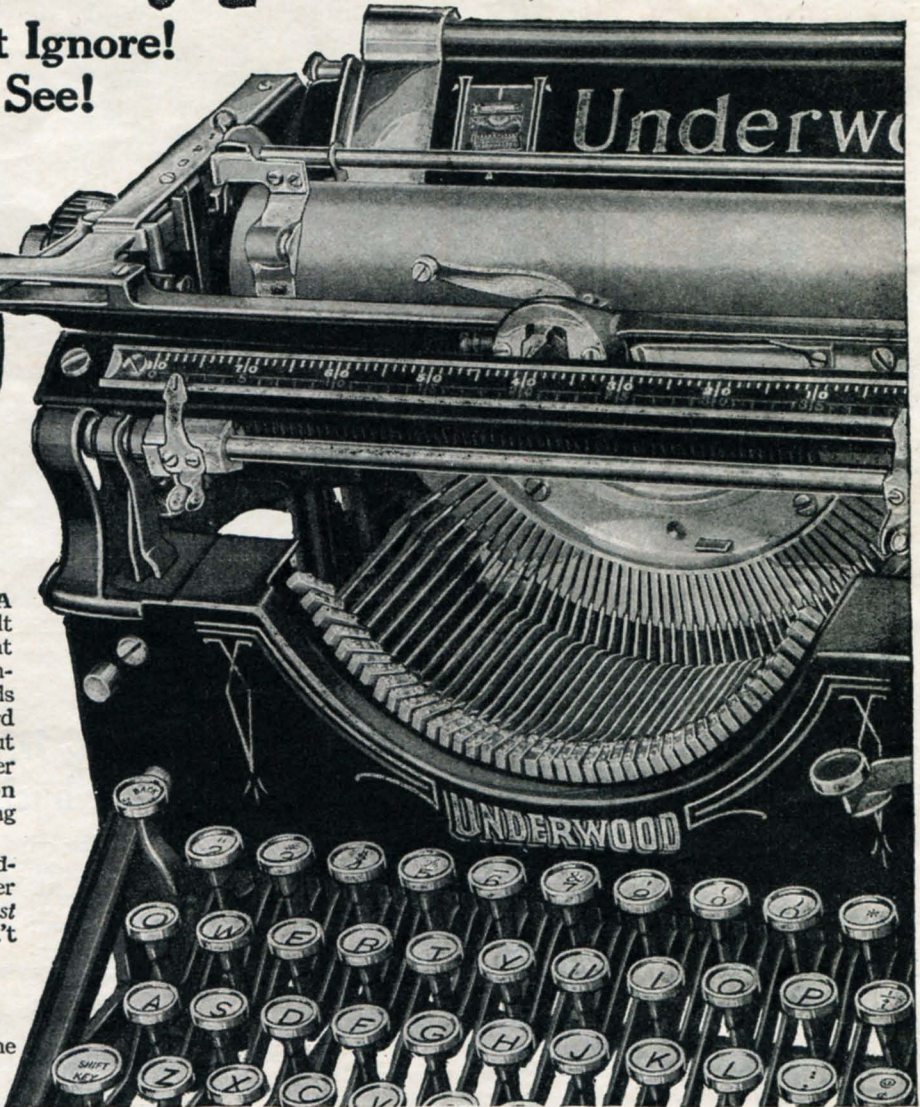
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NOT so long ago the majority of women were afflicted with a self-consciousness which prevented a frank discussion of personal subjects. Now this state of affairs has been replaced by a more fearless attitude. The motto of the younger married woman of today seems to be "Knowledge itself cannot harm me."

The barriers of ignorance have been broken down. To be up-to-date in the subject of feminine hygiene, for instance, is no longer a mark of worldliness. It is a mark of common sense.

In fact, the health of the race is so much a part of this question that it is not surprising to find doctors and nurses up in arms against the use of poisonous antiseptics so prevalent for this purpose in the past.

Perfect frankness desirable

The use of these poisons goes beyond the mere personal danger. It has become a family concern, almost a public menace. Every responsible married citizen, whether man or woman, owes it to his or her family welfare to investigate personally this matter of poisonous antiseptics. Between husband and wife perfect frankness and confidence should be established, be-

How many wives discuss these intimate matters with their husbands?

cause there are many facts bearing on this subject which a man can more easily check up. Any husband or brother who saw service in Europe will tell you about the Great War antiseptic which superseded the poisonous carbolic acid and bichloride of mercury in the hospitals of the Allied Armies. Now this same antiseptic under the name of *Zonite* is superseding these poisons in the practice of feminine hygiene in American homes.

New discovery banishes poisoning risk

As every doctor knows, most compounds of cresol and phenol (carbolic acid) contain soapy ingredients to reduce the caustic, burning effect, but nevertheless they remain corrosive in their action. Their use by women frequently results in areas of scar-tissue and eventual

hardening of delicate membranes.

Compare with this the benign action of *Zonite*. This new antiseptic and germicide is immensely powerful and yet absolutely *non-poisonous*. It is far stronger than any dilution of carbolic acid that can be applied to the body. The woman who uses *Zonite* for feminine hygiene is running no risk of permanent injury. She can be assured of hygienic cleanliness, surgical clean-

liness, without fear of the deadly "skull-and-crossbones."

Fatal as *Zonite* is to germ-life, it is so harmless to human beings that leading dentists from coast to coast are recommending its use as a mouth antiseptic. What other powerful germicide can be held in the mouth? *Zonite* is actually safe in the hands of a child.

**Full directions in package
Special booklet on request**

Zonite has spread rapidly. Already it can be bought in nearly every drug store in the country. Full directions for its many uses come in every package.

However, the Women's Division has issued a special booklet for the use and convenience of women. The information it contains about modern feminine hygiene is concise and authentic. It is a booklet every mother will want to give her daughter—a booklet every wife should have. It comes in dainty "social correspondence" envelope. Send for it. Read it. Pass it along to others.

Zonite a medicine chest in itself

For prevention against colds, coughs, grippe and influenza.

For a daily mouthwash to guard against pyorrhea and other gum infections.

Remember that *Zonite*, though a very powerful antiseptic, is *non-poisonous* and *absolutely safe* to use.

Use *Zonite Ointment* for sunburn, insect bites, poison ivy, burns, scratches and other surface infections. Also, as a powerful deodorant in vanishing cream form.



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USE THE COUPON BELOW

Women's Division, Zonite Products Co., Postum Building, 250 Park Ave., New York, N. Y.

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Feminine Hygiene
 Use of Antiseptics in the Home

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In Canada: 165 Dufferin St., Toronto X-14

Root Out the Evil At Its Source

By George William Wilder

SHOW no mercy. Crime is only prevented when criminals receive merciless punishment." . . . "Place a loaded revolver in every home and you strike terror to the hearts of criminals so that they fear to attempt their nefarious business." . . . And so on and so on. So speak theorists and reformers on the subject of prevention of crime.

What is more logical, what more natural, than to listen to the opinion of an admitted criminal, one who has had intelligence enough to quit his criminal career?

Mr. Netley Lucas is an Englishman, who practiced confidence work, burglary, worked as a gambler's schill and other unlawful activities, both in his own country and America. After years at the game, and after plenty of experience behind prison bars, he has made up his mind to turn to the right and play the game clean. He has written a book around his experiences, containing also shrewd and far-reaching observations. He has called his book "Crooks: Confessions."

Mr. Lucas says in effect, citing his own experience, that more crime is bred in reform schools than anywhere else. Mr. Lucas was brought to task while hardly more than a child, when he committed a petty theft. He was sent to a reform school for three years. During that time his contact with older, more seasoned law-breakers, gave him a knowledge of thievery, crookedness, and criminal practices equivalent to a college man's training for a lawful, honorable place in the world of everyday man.

Every living man has buried somewhere in his heart, ideals, ambitions, a sense of power, pride, and desire to achieve great things. A man is a criminal because these latent desires become twisted, because he is a creature of repression, because his viewpoint is warped.

The solution in the majority of criminal cases is simple: Treat the young offender as a human being instead of clapping him into a school for crime. Take him aside and intelligently try to find out what he wants of life, what sort of stuff is in him. Teach him a trade. Educate him academically, if that is his bent. Carry him on into a profession. Show him that he can earn a living, that he can be trained to make plenty of money, that he can achieve great things, within the law more easily and with far less worry than he can outside the law. Here is the heart of criminal reform, the kernel of the problem of crime prevention.

The entire question of crime is based on the human element. Start that human element clean. Train the body. Develop the mind. Teach the benefits of clean living, of honorable living—and crime is reduced an enormous extent, the State is saved millions of dollars, and the nation is benefitted, because the mean average of its citizenship is improved.

This is as inevitable as that the sunlight of dawn must follow the night.

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when you use a *scientifically blended* shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder to match your skin

By MADAME JEANNETTE

Famous cosmetician, retained by The Pompeian Laboratories as a consultant to give authentic advice regarding the care of the skin and the proper use of beauty preparations.



You can give your skin a lovely uniform tone by using a selected shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder—the shade that exactly matches your skin!

A SOFT, delicate texture—a lovely satiny face—yet not a sign of powder. What is the secret of her alluring complexion? Does she use powder? She *does*, but a shade that matches so perfectly the tone of her skin that she secures the good effects of powder without seeming to use it.

All smart women strive for a natural complexion, but all do not achieve it. Not all women have found a powder that really matches their skin—a powder that re-

veals their natural coloring. Complexions are not composed of single colors, but a blend of different colors. Pompeian Beauty Powder is scientifically blended from different colors. Whatever the tone of your complexion, some one shade of this powder matches it perfectly. Select this shade from the directions that follow in the Shade Chart.

Pompeian Beauty Powder has gained its remarkable popularity because of its purity, its exceptional consistency, its delicate odor, its quality of adhering well—and its perfection of shades.

SHADE CHART for selecting your shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder

Medium Skin: The average American skin tone is medium, neither decidedly light nor

Tear off, sign, and send

Madame Jeannette, THE POMPEIAN LABORATORIES
2516 Payne Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Madame: I enclose 2 dimes (20c) for 1926 Panel, 1/2 of 60c box of Bloom, Beauty Booklet and samples.

Name
Street
Address

City State

Shade of powder wanted

This coupon void after Nov. 5, 1926

definitely olive. This skin should use the *Naturelle* shade.

Olive Skin: Women with this type of skin are apt to have dark hair and eyes characteristic of the beautiful Spanish women. This skin should use the *Rachel* shade to match its rich tones.

Pink Skin: This is the youthful, rose-tinted skin (not the florid skin) and should use the *Flesh* shade.

White Skin: This skin is unusual, but if you have it you are the only type that should use *White* powder in the daytime.



This charming type of American beauty, with gray eyes and brown hair, should use Pompeian Beauty Powder in the *Naturelle* shade to emphasize the lovely tone of her skin.

In the evening under artificial light it may be better to use powder of lighter shade than the one recommended here. In case of doubt, write a description of your skin, hair and eyes to me for special advice.

If you have experienced the difficulty of having powder look "chalky and unnatural," buy a box of Pompeian Beauty Powder today, in the shade suggested. At all toilet counters 60c. (Slightly higher in Canada.) Purity and satisfaction guaranteed.

I also suggest Pompeian Day Cream to protect your skin against the weather, and Pompeian Bloom for a touch of color.

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Powder, Madame Jeannette's beauty booklet, and the famous 1926 Pompeian Panel entitled, "Moments That Will Treasured Be, in the Mint of Memory." This panel was executed by a famous artist and is reproduced in full color. Art store value 75c to \$1.00.

The Nurse Who *Played* DETECTIVE

By
GLADYS KNIGHT

ABOUT seven o'clock one night I was called to the telephone, and asked to take a case at 3409-A Urbania Street. So I packed my grip, got into my uniform, and went out without any misgivings as to what I was going into.

This address wasn't familiar to me, but the man on the phone had given me clear directions how to get there.

When I got out of the street-car, I began to wish I hadn't come. The house stood in a deserted, dark-looking street, wide as an avenue. There was only a corner street-light, and most of the houses were dark. Number 3409-A was a brick two-story-and-attic affair, set directly on the sidewalk, with a yard on either side black with trees.

There was a light behind the transom of Number 3409-A. The glass panel of the door itself was hidden by a lowered shade. And when I rang the bell the door opened as if someone had been behind it waiting for me. This man was apparently a servant; a middle-aged thin man, who looked as if he had a lot of strength behind a wiry exterior.

It was a dark old place, one showing evidences of wealth. Dark walls, dark carpets, dark furniture, and on the walls the blackest old oil-paintings I ever saw. All about as cheerful as a mausoleum. "No wonder somebody's sick in here," I thought. "If I lived here I'd be down with melancholia in a week."

A man was waiting at the head of the stairs as I came up, the same man who had spoken to me over the phone; I recognized his voice at once, as well as his manner of speech. He was civil enough—a tall man about thirty-five. He said his niece was very ill—had had a serious accident. He had been told that I was a good nurse, and one who could mind her own business and hold her tongue.

"Ah," I thought here, "I must hold my tongue, must I?"

He went on to

She was offered double her regular price per day to nurse a girl suffering from a gun-shot wound. Before two days had gone by she found herself involved in a crime bigger than murder

"Mr. Paul's orders is that no one is to go out"



of extreme nervousness, accidentally shot herself.

"The plot thickens," I thought, though without changing expression.

explain that his niece was very nervous—in fact, he insinuated that she was partially unbalanced—and had, in a moment

OF course, he went on, they desired to keep the whole affair quiet. The doctor said the wound was not dangerous, and that, with proper care,

the girl would recover. He, the doctor, was the soul of discretion, and they expected me to be the same—for fifteen dollars a day as long as I was needed, and a lump sum upon dismissal.

He led me down the hall to a room about the middle of the building. It was a big room, and more attractive than the rest of the house that I had seen, although it wasn't very well lighted, only a bulb just over against the bed.

The doctor was standing by the bed, and in the big bed, under a yellow eider-down quilt, lay the girl.

She was hardly more than a child, and she didn't look like a mental case at all. Normally

missing by a lucky chance the vital organs, and drilling a hole clear through three or four inches of her body. A rib had been shattered and a good deal of blood lost, but, unless infection set in, the doctor said, she would recover.

"She's left-handed, then," I observed carelessly, and saw the uncle shoot me a quick glance.

"Yes," he said. "How did you know?"

NOW, a probationer, even, would know that a right-handed person would have to dislocate her arm to shoot a slanting hole through the right side of her body. It suddenly came upon me that the man hadn't told me his name or the girl's.

Another thing set me to puzzling. I had never seen this doctor before. I knew all the prominent physicians in the city by sight at least, but this man stirred no recollection within me. I could see that he knew his business. Dr.

Brown, the uncle called him. He might have called him Smith or Jones, I thought.

After Dr. Brown had given me instructions, he left, the uncle following him. An old woman came in,



If harm came to Jane her uncle would not leave that room alive

she would have been a round, pink-and-white little beauty. Now her face was drained of color and pinched.

I learned that the shot had hit her directly below a lung,

pulling one end of a davenport while a servant, the same one who had opened the door for me, pushed at the other. She brought sheets and made it up into a bed for me. After they went out, I began to look around and take my bearings.

The girl slept restlessly, moaning every now and then, and moving from side to side. The doctor had given her a narcotic, but she was one of those curious cases you come across every now and then who are not susceptible to drugs.

The room was apparently the girl's regular bedroom. In a closet was a collection of expensive dresses, shoes and hats. The toilet articles on the dressing-table were of ivory. In looking at these, my eye was caught by a photograph in a silver frame that stood among them. A nice pleasant-faced boy, with a big generous

mouth and good eyes. Just a great big earnest kid; nothing sinister or shady about him. Brother? No, there was no resemblance. Sweetheart, I decided. Well, I was glad for one human touch in all this mysterious business.

Next morning when I went to the window to raise the shade, I found myself looking out on a perfect sea of green. The trees grew so high on this side that you could see nothing beyond. As I turned back into the room I saw the girl open her eyes and stare at me with a kind of frightened, pitiful gaze.

"Hello!" I said. "Feeling pretty good this morning?"

I saw now that her eyes were brown and pretty, and as I looked at them I said to myself, "That girl's no more crazy than I am."

She was dopey all day, being kept under big doses of morphine. She didn't have much to say; only once she asked me "if Bevis knew," and I found out she meant the boy on her dressing-table; he was her sweetheart all right.

"UNCLE PAUL" came in to see her several times, and I could have sworn she had no feelings of a relative toward him.

Evidently
he meant
to torture
her into
signing
that will



The old woman brought me my meals, and the doctor came in twice, but nothing happened all day of special interest, except that Mr. Paul called me from the room and informed me that while I was on the case I was expected not to leave the house.

"But I may be on here for some time," I objected. "Do you mean I am to remain shut up here for weeks?"

"At twenty dollars a day?" he asked, with a slight smile.

"My value is going up," I thought; but I said aloud, "Oh, all right."

I had a lot of time to think and a lot of time to notice, and when the doctor dressed the wound that evening I knew for

certain the girl had never shot herself. I had seen too many self-inflicted wounds to be deceived. The doctor was a regular old granite-face. He never spoke an unnecessary word.

Next day the girl was better. She talked a little, and worried about Bevis. I said I'd phone him for her.

"But we have no telephone," the girl said.

NOW, that was funny, I thought. No telephone in a house like this!

"Honey," I said, "tell me how you happened to do it. Were you handling a gun when it went off?"

"Oh, no—I—I don't exactly remember——" she stammered. I looked her straight in the eye. "Did you shoot yourself?" I asked her.

She grew pale, and then violently red. "Oh, yes!" she said. "Yes, I shot myself."

"You're a liar," I thought. Then I had an idea. I handed her a glass of water. She took it with her right hand.

"Are you left-handed?" I asked innocently.

She almost dropped the glass. "Why, yes," she said. "I am."

"Then why did you take the glass with your right hand?"

"I do, sometimes."

But later, when I thought she had forgotten, I got her to write a note to Bevis. As I expected, she used her right hand.

"Honey, you can't fool me," I said. "You're no left-hander, and you never fired that shot. Look here, don't be afraid of me. I'm on your side, no matter what has happened. Anything you want to tell me will stick right along here with me."

She looked frightened, but kept insisting that it was nothing; that she had shot herself. On asking her why she did it, she hesitated, stammered, and said she "didn't know."

I felt a talk with Bevis would help out a lot, but I was tied to the house and couldn't leave. And her letter to him I was sure would never reach him. As a matter of fact, it didn't.

In about a week she was so much better that the doctor

stopped coming. I asked her if he were the family doctor, and she said no, she had never seen him before. Putting two and two together, I came to the conclusion that he was an out-of-town doctor called in for the occasion, and his mouth stopped by a large fee.

It was a day or so later that I got the truth out of her. I had grown fond of the girl, simple, unsophisticated little thing that she was, and she of me. She began to trust me a little.

"You're doing so well, Jane," I had learned her name by now, "I'll be going away in a few days, I guess."

An expression of fear spread over her face at this. "Oh, don't go yet! Don't leave me!" she begged.

The idea of being left alone I could see was distressing to her. "But you'll have your uncle," I said. "You're fond of him, aren't you?"

THEN it all came out. When she began to cry like a child, I put my arms around her and said that the only way anyone could harm her would be over my dead body. She told me, whispering and in broken sentences as if afraid of her own words, just how it had happened.

"It's my money, you know. There's a lot of it—I don't know how much, but I'm rich. And I've always lived with

reaching Bevis or anyone outside. Then one night when he had been arguing and I wouldn't give in he got furious and pulled a pistol out of a table drawer and pointed it at me and said if I didn't sign the paper he had drawn up there, he'd shoot me. I don't think he really meant to shoot, but I was so frightened and startled I reached out and grabbed it and it went off."

SHE lay back on her pillows, white and strained-looking. "Don't you talk any more to-day, honey. You're worn out," I said.

It did her good to confide in me, because after that she went to sleep and slept soundly for the first time since I had been on the case. It must have been a weight off her mind, but what a one she had shifted over to me!

She hadn't told me before, she said later, because she thought I was in her uncle's pay, just like the rest of them.

That the shot had been accidental I was certain. If he wanted the girl's money he would not kill her until she had signed the will. But that "until" brought me up with a jerk.

Was it his intention to frighten her into signing and then to murder her? Why be so insistent on a girl of eighteen or nineteen making a will when she was in perfect health? In

"I AWOKE dazed and heavy-headed. For a while I lay trying to collect my wits. Then I suddenly perceived that I was lying on a mattress in a dim, cobwebby space. Too well I knew what had happened. I had been drugged, apparently with my supper, and while I slept Jane had been removed. Where was she? Would I reach her in time to save her life?"

Uncle Paul since Mamma and Daddy died ten years ago. I never liked him very much, and I don't believe he cared for me, but he never was mean. I didn't see much of him, anyhow. I was at boarding-school until last year, and I haven't many friends in this city. Then I met Bevis, but Uncle Paul never seemed to like to have him here much, or for me to go out with him. We're engaged, you know—" with an appealing look toward the picture.

"I'm glad of that, honey. He's a fine boy."

"He is a reporter on a paper—he's only twenty-two, you know. I have lots of money, and I thought we could be married right away, but Bevis said no, we'd wait until he could take care of me. Uncle Paul said he was right, and for us to wait; and, anyhow, Uncle Paul said I was too young."

I was liking Uncle Paul less and less every minute.

"Uncle Paul began to talk to me about making my will. He said I was not to tell anybody about this, for people would talk. I said, I would make a will if he wanted, though it seemed foolish. I wanted to leave Bevis most of my money.

"THEN Uncle Paul said I was an ungrateful girl, and that after he had raised me and had had all that trouble, I should think of him. That surprised me, because he never had done much for me. Then he came right out and said I had to make a will in his favor, and make it quick.

"He said I'd stay right here in the house until I did. He had the phone taken out, and Crew"—Crew was the villainous-looking man servant—"mailed all my letters. I am sure he kept them to give Uncle Paul. Anyhow, I had no way of

the course of nature she would probably outlive him.

"He threatened to kill me if I told anybody. He said that before he got the doctor or you. I was so frightened, and I agreed that it was to appear that I had shot myself, and that I was left-handed. He said if I didn't he would let me die."

I don't know whether he suspected that she had said something to me, or whether he thought it was best not to take any chances, but anyhow that night he called me out of the room, and began to question me as to Jane's progress toward recovery.

"She's doing well enough," I said cautiously.

"A very sad case," he said. "To anyone who did not know her well, her condition might pass unobserved. It is only at times that it is apparent. A strange symptom lately that has developed is her delusion as to money. She has an idea that she is very wealthy; whereas, as a matter of fact, she has nothing at all and has been entirely dependent on me since the death of her parents. Lately she has conceived the distressing idea that she is being pressed to make a will. Indeed, it was in a frenzy over this that she shot herself."

For a while I will confess I was puzzled. I got to wondering that night what was the real truth of the affair. Was it possible the girl really was laboring under a delusion, and was the affair really as the uncle had told it? After all, she was only a child, and I had seen girls of that age, kept close as she had been, develop queer ideas and fancies as to persecution; sometimes just for the purpose of attracting attention to themselves.

Anyhow, I resolved to make a test. So I told her to write a note to Bevis, just an innocent, friendly note, because I had

an idea, though I didn't tell her so, that it would end in Mr. Paul's hands, not Bevis's.

I threw my coat over my uniform, just as I would to run out to mail a letter, and I went down-stairs without seeing anyone. Just as I put my hand on the latch of the front door, the man Crew appeared out of nowhere, as it seemed.

"MR. PAUL'S orders is that no one is to go out," he said. The curious thing of it was, the economy in the use of names. I never heard Mr. Paul's family name.

"I'm only going out to mail a letter," I said.

"Give it to me; I'll mail it," he said.

Now I got angry. This high-handed business was too much for me. "I have

leave it? Not a pleasant thought, this. After a while I ventured to put my head out of the door. The hall was empty, and I went back up-stairs.

"Did you mail it?" asked Jane eagerly as I entered. I shook my head.

"I knew it," she said.



"I get an i
and an e.
What mes-
sage did she
leave?"

a right to go out and mail my letters as I please,"

I said. "I'm not a prisoner here, I suppose?"

"Mr. Paul's orders," repeated the man, like a parrot.

"Well, I'm going out to mail this letter," I said, "and I'd like to see anyone stop me."

AS I turned the knob and opened the door, a powerful hand seized me, flung me back as if I were a toy, and the letter was snatched from me. I found myself in the library, bruised, panting, furious. In the hall I heard the slam of the door, and the turn of a key.

I stood in the large gloomy room, my heart pounding in my throat through the silence about me. This was truly sinister. I was a prisoner. Indeed, I wondered, when I was summoned to the house, was it intended that I should ever

Here I was, in the heart of a big city, with probably a policeman in the next block, and people on all sides, and yet we were kept prisoners as truly as if we had been in a medieval castle, and it was a question whether it was meant for either of us to leave the house alive. The old woman and the man Crew were evidently in Mr. Paul's pay, and expected to profit from the girl's death, so there was no hope on their side.

"You might give in to him and sign it, honey," I said, after thinking it over.

"I doubt if a document signed under compulsion would hold in court."

"But—it sounds awful, I know, but it's what I think just the same—I believe he means to get rid of me in some way as soon as I have signed," she said.

That was true. I knew he could poison her in some way, and bribe that doctor to give a death certificate of natural causes, and nobody ever would suspect. "You see, I'm supposed to be worth around half a million," the girl went on.

Half a million! That was a stake worth playing for. He could afford to give the doctor a good slice, as well as Crew and the old woman, and still have enough left to keep him from starving. I figured it this way: when Jane began to talk about getting married, he knew it was time to strike if he expected to get anything. (Continued on pag 98)



Kitty Gilhooley—from a photograph posed the day before she and her husband were found guilty of violating the Harrison Anti-Narcotic Act

The Capture of DOPE

“Where is the Queen of Dope Big Boy in the traffic?” These in a dozen cities, and the

By ELIZABETH

IT is an insidious thing—dope.

Not only does it fiendishly eat into the very soul of the humans bound within its spell, but like a rat in the dark, it gnaws undetected into the heart of society and daily finds new victims. As rapidly as is plugged one rat-hole through which it scurries, so does its sharp teeth chew another passage.

For years Chicago admittedly was one of the greatest narcotic markets between the two Coasts. Fed from New York and San Francisco with huge stores of forbidden drugs, the great city of the Middle West was reputed over the nation as a center for dope. The city's two Chinatowns, the one in old Twenty-second Street, and the other in South Clark Street, reeked with the fumes of opium. In the shadows of the notorious white ways of the south side lurked peddling fiends, operating fearlessly.

Detectives employed by the United States to ferret out the curse seemed baffled. Arrests were made. “Dopers” were questioned; their “stuff” was withheld to make them talk. Raiders swooped down upon Chinatown. Opium-dens were destroyed. Small stores of drugs were seized.

Yet all efforts to discover the great source of supply for the scores of peddlers in the dark lanes of the city were futile. The addicts shrugged their narrow shoulders. They didn't know where they got the stuff. The thin, pasty-faced men and women, dragged down and down by the strange power of narcotics, only cried insanely and begged for a “shot” in answer to the searching inquisitions of their captors. The lips of the dope-fiends were sealed.

In the midst of this search there came from David H. Blair, Commissioner of Internal Revenue at Washington, D. C., a demand for immediate results on the check up.

“Find out why Chicago's big peddlers continue to operate without detection!” were the orders.

That was the stern demand from Washington. Chief Elmer L. Irey, of the Intelligence Unit, called in Pat Roche and Clarence L. Converse.

This was in early August 1925.

A few days later, Roche, with no suspicion of where the insidious dope trail might lead, brought into his office a

notorious crook; a narcotic fiend, whose reputation as a thief extended from Coast to Coast.

He was tall, thin, emaciated—the usual type. His eyes sparkled with the fire of narcotics; his brain worked keenly under the influence of his stimulant. He faced a long prison term.

He was questioned. Over and over he was asked:

“Who is the biggest seller of dope in Chicago?”

“I don't know; I don't know,” he repeated monotonously.

Until at length, realizing that by assisting the Government he could make his own criminal burden less weighty, he replied:

“I couldn't tell you for a certainty, but in New York, when there was talk about the Big Boy in Chicago, I heard the name Gilhooley mentioned.”

THAT answer set Roche and his men on the track of one of the greatest surprise exposés ever made in federal and criminal circles.

Roche, framing a skeleton plan of procedure, directed this addict to purchase, with money to be furnished him, a two-hundred-dollar quantity of morphine.

“Do you know where you can get it in Chicago?”

The addict reflected. “I know a guy I can try,” he replied. “I met him in a jug down East. He's a peddler. I'll see if I can reach him.”

So, it was arranged that the addict should telephone his underworld friend.

The peddler replied over the phone that he could “fix him up with the stuff.” “Meet me at two this afternoon at Clark and Madison Streets,” he told our man.

That afternoon, following Roche's directions, the addict met the peddler at the appointed place, in the crowded Chicago loop district. Roche, with another agent, in one car, and two other agents in another automobile, parked near the meeting-place. From their machines the agents saw the addict and the peddler in brief conversation; saw them cross through the crowded down-town sidewalk, to a taxicab, enter, and drive away.

In less than a minute both government cars—two cars so

Chicago's QUEEN

Peddlers?" "Who is the questions went the rounds answer was "Gilhooley"



Willie Gilhooley, whose underworld reputation extends from Coast to Coast

CLEVELAND

that there would be less chance of losing trace of the criminals' vehicle—were close on the trail.

Forty blocks over the southside boulevards and they came to one of the quiet, sedate, and respectable residential sections of the metropolis. Straight for this district of old brownstone homes of wealth and respect went the cab of the dopefiends, with the government agents close behind.

In the very heart of this neighborhood—a neighborhood where fine limousines, well-dressed men and women, and a calm and quiet peace are the usual thing—is a small hotel, known to cater to a high-class clientele. The taxi stopped in front of it. The peddler and the addict stepped out and dismissed their machine. The government agents steered their own cars around the corner. Roche stepped out and walked slowly to a point from which he might observe the pair.

The peddler, unsuspecting, left his customer to stand at the hotel corner and await his return. He entered a drugstore near by, and used a public telephone.

Then, walking rapidly he turned his steps to a rich-looking apartment building midway down the tree-arched block of Oakwood Boulevard. He walked into one of the several entrances of the building, pushed a door-bell, and vanished in a dim, deeply carpeted lobby.

Roche, in the street outside, had observed these movements carefully. Slowly then, he walked back to his automobile. As he passed the narcotic fiend waiting at the hotel corner he sharply gave him instructions. Entering his machine, the ace of the Government's staff directed one of his assistants to take up a position at a near-by elevated station.

NOT five minutes later the peddler came out of the apartment building, walked to the corner, handed our man a small packet, received in return his money, and walked away.

The addict, following his instructions, took the opposite direction to the "L" station. There, met by the government agent, he was placed in one of the official automobiles and the drug taken from him.

Roche, alone, returned to the boulevard building later. Plainly, somewhere within that structure was a storehouse

of narcotics. He inspected the names on the mail-boxes in the lobby. None were auspicious. He found the janitor, who could account for the occupation of all the occupants, except a family of Bennetts, a man and his wife. He had no idea of Bennett's occupation, he said.

ROCHE had noticed an expensive limousine standing outside the building. Curiously he noted the license number. He stopped at the corner hotel and phoned his office for a check-up in the state list of motor permits.

As he left the telephone booth, he encountered, in the hotel lobby, a hanger-on whom he knew. There was a few minutes' conversation and then, incidentally, the detective asked whether the name of Bennett was familiar in the neighborhood.

"Sure, he's a guy around here. What's he do? I don't know. A hard guy, I guess. I do know he sometimes gets mail in a shop near here for a fellow doing time in the penitentiary. He's out of town right now, I understand; sick."

Here was valuable information. It established to a degree the identity of Bennett. It was a fair certainty that Bennett had some connection with at least one convict.

Five minutes later Roche learned from his office that the license number he had taken from the limousine had been issued to one Kitty Gilhooley.

Thus far, things had progressed at a rapid rate. The dope trail was unfolding.

Roche believed that the Bennett couple, unaccounted for by the janitor, and the Gilhooleys, Chicago's reputed dope agents, were one and the same.

On this assumption he returned to the apartment house. He laid his plans sketchily as he proceeded, as every crime detector fixes his course, to meet circumstances as they arise. The next step was to watch the Bennett flat.

A sign on the apartment building solved the problem of how to do this. A landlord's notice offered for rent a furnished apartment. Roche, shielding his identity and reasons, asked to inspect the vacant apartment. He discovered it to be on the second floor across the wing from,

and on the floor below, the Bennett flat, with front windows affording an excellent view of the front windows of the Bennett apartment and the entrance to the building.

Roche rented the apartment immediately. He returned to his headquarters, called in two agents and ordered them to establish themselves in the flat as ordinary residents.

Then calling into play a telephone tapping outfit, he located the Bennett's phone wires on the outside of the building and ran a line into the Government's apartment. An agent was placed at the receiver to keep a constant ear on the telephone calls. Another was stationed inconspicuously behind the drops of the front windows to watch the door of the building.

FIVE minutes later the Bennett phone rang. A woman answered. This was the conversation:

Man's voice: "Kitty? This is S."

Woman's voice: "Hello."

Man: "Have you any tickets, same I used to get."

Woman: "How many do you want?"

Man: "Four."

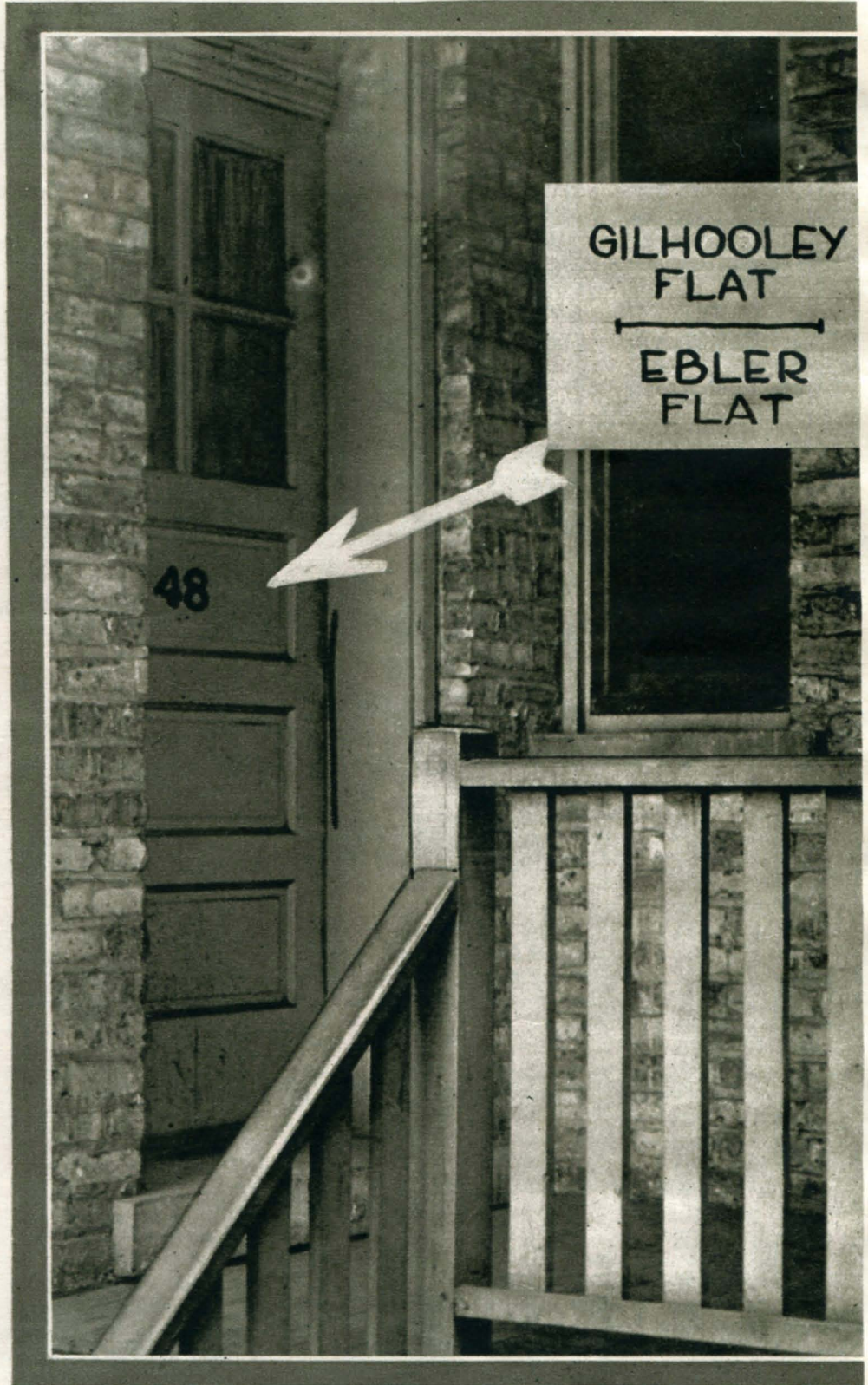
Woman: "I will have them between six and seven."

Shortly after 6 P. M. that day, a man called at the Bennett flat. The agent on watch saw a woman, evidently the "Kitty" of the phone conversation, leave the back door of her apartment, cross her back porch to the rear door of another apartment, unlock it, pass through the door, and return three or four minutes later, to the door she had originally left.

Immediately the caller hurried away.

A few minutes later there came another phone call, with a male voice speaking in. He asked for two blue tickets. The woman in the Bennett flat instructed him to appear at her apartment in one-half hour. He came as directed, remained for four or five minutes, and left, presumably with his ticket. ("Ticket" is the underworld jargon for a quantity of narcotics. The color prefixed indicates in this underworld code the kind of drugs sought.)

There came, too, during the course of watching, a call from Detroit, indicating that the Bennett influence and trade extended to that metropolis:



Apartment No. 51 is the apartment occupied by the Gilhooleys. No. 48 was used by the Gilhooleys in court, to combat the Government's search-

Male voice (calling in): "Hello; W talking. Billy there?"

Woman's voice: "No."

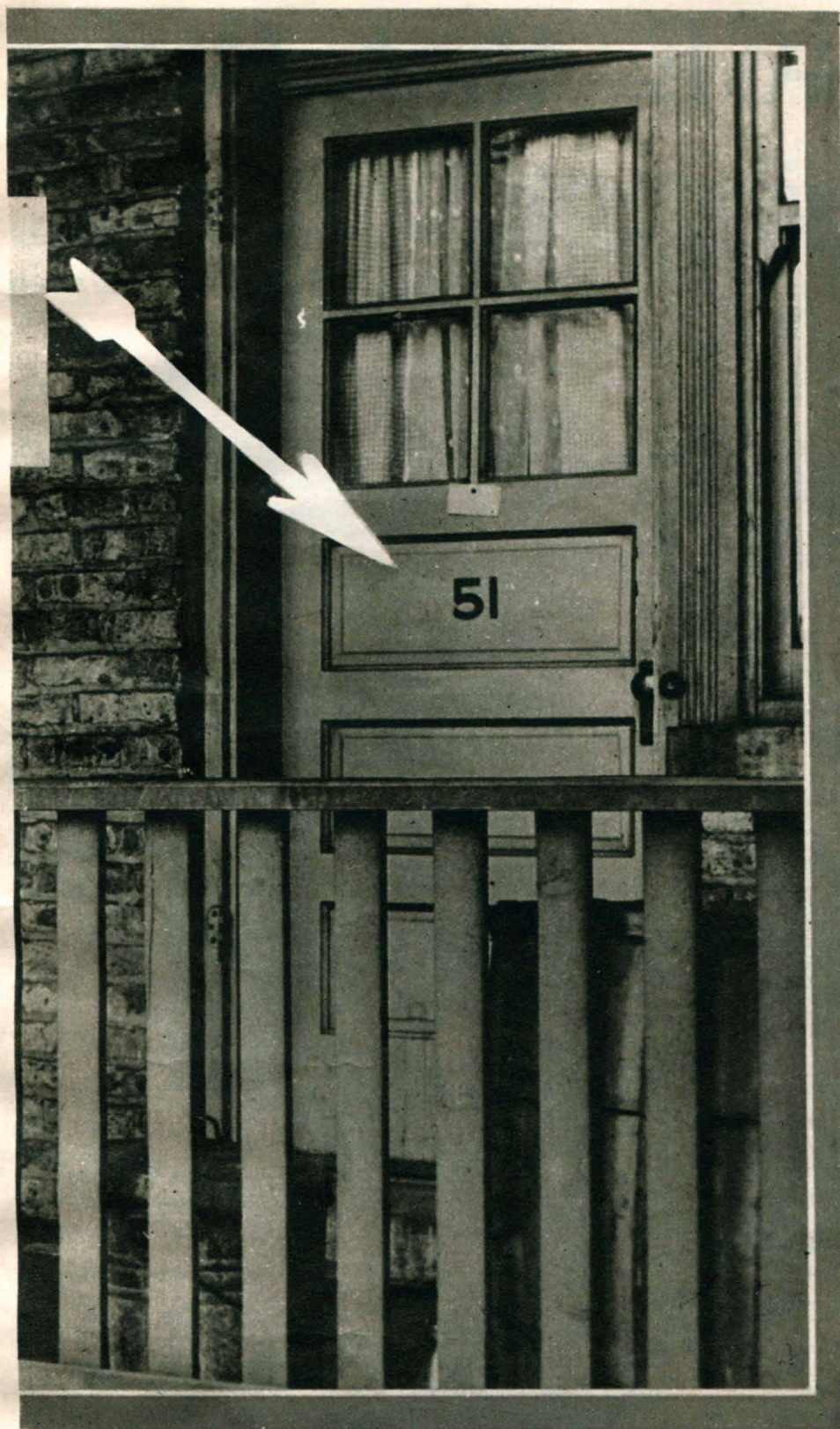
"Is everything all right?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'll send some money."

"No, don't. We haven't had any of that for two weeks and don't know when we will."

And so the watch continued. There was a steady stream of visitors at the Bennett door. The hidden government agents



occupied as a blind, by the unsuspecting Ebler and his wife. This picture warrant, permitting government agents to enter only Apartment No. 51

watched from their windows a line of underworld characters file brazenly up the quiet neighborhood boulevard, into the homey apartment building, up the three flights of stairs to the Bennett door, and out again. Each left with his purchase of drugs.

FOR three days and nights the agents watched and waited. Then early the fourth evening came a shock. The woman in the Bennett flat made a telephone call to a man

named Eddie. It was this call which told the agents that their efforts had been suspected. These were the woman's words:

"Kramer called to-day, Eddie, and said things were very, very hot. I may have to leave town. That's terrible after pulling that big deal yesterday. I may have to ask you to come down and take care of the flat."

"**W**HEN will you have to go?"

"Not before next week anyhow."

During the early hours of the following morning, came the next unlooked-for development. The Bennett phone rang.

"Kitty," a man's voice spoke. "You'd better close up shop. Things are getting bad. Better quit now and leave town. I'm worried."

The voice, according to the agent at the tapping receiver, resembled closely that of a trusted man, high up in the office of the Chicago Narcotic Division!

Kitty, her woman's intuition dulled and calloused by her long and unhampered practice, laughed at the warning. She wasn't going to be scared out so soon, she said; besides she couldn't quit yet, there were some business matters to be squared up.

In any event, it was very plain to Roche and his men that, with Kitty tipped off and the underworld suspicious, the time for the capture of Chicago's Dope Queen had come—although prematurely for the agents—for they had planned to draw into their net scores more of addicts and certain narcotic officers suspected of dealing directly with dope peddlers.

However, they figured that "half a loaf is better than no loaf at all." So on that following morning a search-warrant was obtained for the Bennett apartment.

Between that time and 6 P. M. that day the same addict, agreeing to act again for the Government, was given several marked bills. He was instructed to make an appointment with the

Bennett woman by telephone to purchase dope. This he did. He entered the Bennett flat, made his buy with the marked money, left the apartment, and surrendered to the agents in the government flat below. He was again placed in custody as a material witness.

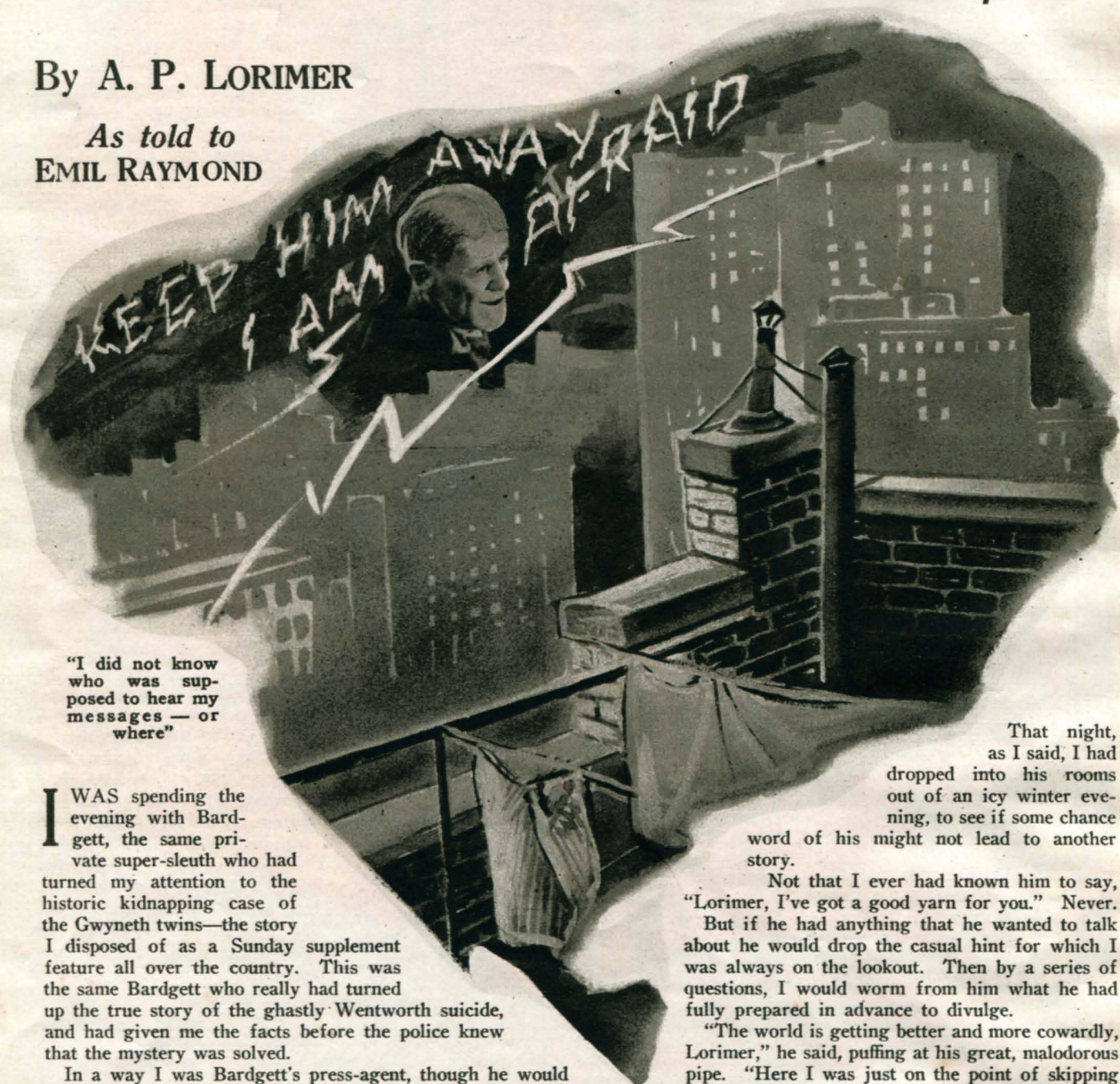
All through that memorable day in Kitty's life, and the history of Chicago's underworld, the woman in her exclusive apartment received a score of customers. Then, at 6 P. M., the government (*Continued on page 70*)

The VOICE that Came

No young girl should consent to work for an unknown office hours in the small hours of the morning. Agnes —with disastrous consequences

By A. P. LORIMER

*As told to
EMIL RAYMOND*



"I did not know who was supposed to hear my messages — or where"

I WAS spending the evening with Bardgett, the same private super-sleuth who had turned my attention to the historic kidnapping case of the Gwyneth twins—the story I disposed of as a Sunday supplement feature all over the country. This was the same Bardgett who really had turned up the true story of the ghastly Wentworth suicide, and had given me the facts before the police knew that the mystery was solved.

In a way I was Bardgett's press-agent, though he would have flown at the throat of anyone who suggested it. He was modest and like all really modest men, extremely vain about it. Publicly he always would let someone else take the glory. But in private he let no chance slip to emphasize the fact that the real credit belonged to him.

A trifling weakness, indeed, and I mention it only to show that we understood each other thoroughly although tacitly. He knew that I never wrote a story without playing up his part in it to the highest degree. I knew that this was expected of me in return for my sharing the master detective's secrets.

That night, as I said, I had dropped into his rooms out of an icy winter evening, to see if some chance

word of his might not lead to another story.

Not that I ever had known him to say, "Lorimer, I've got a good yarn for you." Never.

But if he had anything that he wanted to talk about he would drop the casual hint for which I was always on the lookout. Then by a series of questions, I would worm from him what he had fully prepared in advance to divulge.

"The world is getting better and more cowardly, Lorimer," he said, puffing at his great, malodorous pipe. "Here I was just on the point of skipping off to Canada to look into the Morton murder when that rat Bevins confessed!"

Bardgett was always resentful of a criminal who, by making a confession, robbed him of the satisfaction of ferreting out a case. So I commiserated with him on the unfairness of Bevins' tactics.

"BUT why say the world is getting better and more cowardly?" I queried, struck by the peculiar association of adjectives.

"They go together," returned Bardgett. "A good man is

Out of the NIGHT

*man who keeps
Dunham did*

always a coward. As the world gets better it gets weaker."

"Nonsense."

"Read your history, my boy. The great things have all been done by the marauders, the bandits, the criminals of the world."

"Really? I hadn't noticed it."

"Of course not. You never do. You're a good rewrite man, Lorimer, if that's what you call your kind of work. You can crib a story and make it fairly readable, but don't fool yourself. You're just a purveyor of ideas, not a creator."

Bardgett was off again on his favorite theme—him-

self. I knew better than to precipitate a discussion.

"Granted without a struggle," I said, overlooking his unfair and totally untrue remark.

He was about to dilate upon his views, which I hadn't the slightest intention of rebutting, when there was a ring at the door-bell.

Bardgett was annoyed. "I expect no one," he commented. "Possibly a client," I suggested.

He pushed the button, held open the door and a girlish



"At twelve o'clock I'd begin reading one of the Psalms, and continue for five minutes; then——"

figure appeared, panting after mounting the two flights of stairs. When she saw two men in the room, she drew back.

"Mr. Bardgett?" she asked. "I'm so sorry you're busy! I know I should have telephoned. But really, I only made up my mind to come as I passed your door." She stood hesitating just inside the door.

"MR. LORIMER is an occasional assistant of mine. You need have no hesitancy in speaking before him," declared Bardgett.

The young woman looked dubious, and I rose at once.

"I'll run around the block," I began, but Bardgett motioned me to my seat.

"Don't go; stay and save me the trouble of telling you about it. And now, young lady, please be seated."

She gave him a smile of appreciation.

"Thank you, Mr. Bardgett. Miss Moulton told me about you. She worked where I did, and she was a witness in the Cummings divorce case. She often told me what a fool you made of Mr. Cummings."

"Ah, yes; Cummings was an ass all the way through. You'll enjoy hearing about that some time, Lorimer."

THE girl hesitated, then hastened to begin her explanation. "When this happened to me, I thought maybe it would interest you," she began. "But I really didn't want to come; it seems so foolish to worry about it. When I started out to-night I looked up your address in the phone book, and I was surprised you didn't have a regular office. I couldn't make up my mind to make a real sure enough appointment, like you would with a dentist, you know, and

stage, but after I'd been the better part of a month visiting managers' offices and never getting past the boy at the door, I gave it up as a bad job. And from what I've learned about the stage since, I'm not sorry I didn't get my chance.

THERE was nothing I really could do, so Ernie thought I'd make good as a model. Not the artist kind, you know; cloaks and suits. And he was right, Mr. Bardgett. I got a job right away, and I was working there right up to a month ago, at Zindler and Scheinemann's. They make a fine line, and it was nice and refined. Some of the places, they tell me, are different.

"Things slowed up, and about a month ago Mr. Zindler told me he'd have to lay me off. I'd saved a little money, of course, but I didn't want to loaf, and Ernie thought I ought to find something to do, too. But there was absolutely nothing in any of the ready-to-wear lines, and simply thousands of girls were looking for work.

"So I began reading the advertisements and answering them. I couldn't do secretarial work, or even typing. There

AGNES DUNHAM'S job was to broadcast through the air, after midnight, a strange series of Bible readings and mysterious messages. She was told it was being done as a great radio experiment. In time she suspected her employer of crime. Then followed—

have to keep it. So I just walked down this way clear from Morningside, and the closer I came the faster I walked."

She was quite at ease now, fur coat thrown back, and one leg dangling over the other as she sat in Bardgett's guest chair.

"Oh, I know you're going to help me, Mr. Bardgett," continued the girl hopefully. "Ernie, that's Mr. Clark, you know—I've been going with him ever since I came to New York—he thinks I'm silly to do anything about it. We quarreled to-night about it. But you know the feeling a girl gets about things; I can't help worrying a little about it. It's so peculiar. That's just the word for it, Mr. Bardgett, peculiar."

"Perhaps you'd better begin at the beginning, so we'll have all the facts. You haven't even mentioned your name."

The girl studied the pattern in the carpet. She was good enough looking, about nineteen or twenty, and dressed neatly and effectively. Her hair was bobbed, her ankles trim, and she had a soft pretty mouth and chin. Her voice was high-pitched and childlike, and gave the impression of youth and innocence. I couldn't help wondering what situation such a girl might find herself in that would demand the attention of the great criminologist.

BARDGETT and I sat patiently, and finally the girl looked up.

"I hope this won't get into the papers, Mr. Bardgett," she said, a note of distress in her voice. "It doesn't seem even important enough to talk about. I know that whatever you do gets into the papers. And I couldn't stand it; really, I couldn't!"

"You'll have to take that risk, my dear young lady, if anything's wrong," answered Bardgett. "My cases frequently are written up by enterprising young men."

She hesitated a moment; then shrugged and began her story.

"My name is Agnes Dunham," she said. "I left home a year ago and came to New York. I thought I'd go on the

wasn't really much that I could do, but I answered the ads just the same. Finally I came across one that looked like there might be something in it. It read something like this: 'Wanted, a bright refined girl for educational work; no experience necessary; excellent pay. Apply in person.' It gave a Seventh Avenue address.

"Now that looked good, Mr. Bardgett. I'm bright, in a way, and even if I say it myself, I'm refined. Everybody speaks of it. I guess it's my training. And what the ad said about educational work appealed to me, because I've never had an opportunity to get a real education. And so long as no experience was necessary I couldn't see why I shouldn't fit in.

"It was early in the morning when I saw the ad—"

"What paper? Do you remember?" interrupted Bardgett.

"I don't believe I remember," replied Miss Dunham. "I always read several papers so as not to miss any high-class ads."

Bardgett made a note, and the girl went on.

"The office was on the top floor of a big loft building, and when I got there the hall was simply jammed with girls, and the man hadn't come in. We waited there about fifteen minutes, and then a fussy little man with glasses got off the elevator and opened the door of the office.

"I don't know how we all got in. It was a tiny place, with only a chair and a little table, and a stand with a radio on it. The man fiddled a bit with the dials and then turned to us.

"My name is Thatcher, William F. Thatcher," he said, "and this is the Art Radio School. I suppose you all answered my ad. Well, girls, I'm going to pick one of you for the job. The one who passes my test gets it. I shall try your voices and your manner as you speak before this microphone. I have a little code here which I shall ask you to repeat in your natural speaking voice. Don't try to declaim, or shout, or make a speech; just talk in your natural tones."

"It seemed too good to be true, and I was glad I never

smoked cigarettes, for they say it makes the voice hoarse. The man called us up one at a time. It took a long time. He said the work was very scientific, and that's why he had to be so careful about it. So he made the girls repeat the test a good many times."

"Just what was this test, Miss Dunham?" asked Bardgett. "It was a verse from the Bible."

"A verse from the Bible?" Bardgett was surprised. "Do you remember just what part of the Bible?"

"It was a different part for every girl. He just had them read from any page that was open."

"Very good; go on." I noticed a lapse of interest on Bardgett's part in the girl's story.

"Well, it came my turn at last, and I walked up to the little thing that you talk into, and read out of the Bible just as if I was in church. I tried to talk naturally, as Mr. Thatcher

cloak and suits; but somehow, Mr. Thatcher made me feel—well, uncomfortable.

"So when he came close to talk to me after the others had all left, I felt a little scared. He had a smile that wasn't really a smile at all, but was more like a grimace. He asked me to go through another test, a longer one. When I finished, he said:

"I think you'll do, Miss. That's the best effect I've heard to-day. I really think you'll do."

"Of course I was glad to hear that, but his next questions struck me as being strange.

"Do you live with your parents?" he asked.

"I told him no, and then he said, 'Have you any relatives here, or any close friends?'

"I DIDN'T see why I should tell about my personal affairs, and I just answered that I was alone. He seemed to be satisfied with that.

Miss Dunham was visibly moved when she came into Bardgett's rooms



had told us. He made me read it all over again, and he nodded a couple of times as if he was satisfied. When I had finished, he asked me to wait a few minutes if I had time.

HE went on with the list, but he didn't really pay any attention to the rest of the girls. He stopped them before they had said more than a few words. He took the names and addresses of a few of them, and finally they all left.

"Mr. Thatcher was a peculiar man. He was short and thin, and nervous in his talk and actions. He seemed to fidget around the girls, and I know it made some of them nervous, too. I've had to pose for as many as a dozen buyers at a time, and you get used to all kinds of men in the

That's why I asked you about parents or relatives, in case they might object.'

"I told him there was nobody to consider but myself.

"Then if you don't object to occasional night work, you might as well tell me your name, and we'll get down to business."

"He took my name and address and we talked it over. He said he'd have to be out of town a good deal, and his instructions would be mailed to me. 'And the important thing,' he said, 'is for you to follow the instructions to the letter. For instance if I say to send at three o'clock in the morning, you've got to be here sending out the message at three o'clock. And if I give you a certain test to say, you must say those words and nothing else. It's important to have these things done right.' (Continued on page 110)

The Mystery of the *Disappearing* GIRLS

By JOEL SNYDER, Late of the
Cincinnati Police

"What did you
do with Lena
Mellish?"

"Yes."

"Would you mind giving me a list of the articles she took?"

"Certainly. There was a brooch Mr. Ackerman gave me when we married. And a solitaire ring, the one he gave me the Christmas before he died. And the Ackerman string of pearls—"


THERE followed a list of jewelry worth a handsome fortune. One hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars would be a mild estimate. I couldn't help wondering what possessed a woman of the mental alertness of Mrs. Ackerman, that she should have trusted such a quantity of gems to a maid.

"What's the name of the girl, please?"

"Mellish—Lena Mellish. I cannot believe—"

"How long has she been with you, Mrs. Ackerman?"

"Four years. And



TWO hours after the crime was suspected I was out at the Grandin Road house, in Walnut Hills. Seated in a small, overfurnished reception-room, I was questioning Mrs. Ackerman, the owner of the jewelry, to get a line on the situation before I could take up active work on the case.

"When did the maid leave here?" I asked.

"About ten o'clock this morning. She only had to go down to Bramley's, near Fourth and Vine. She could have left the jewelry and got a receipt and come back here by half past twelve, allowing plenty of time."

As Mrs. Ackerman spoke I watched her closely.

"She took the jewelry down to Bramley's to have it cleaned?"

a more trustworthy girl has never been in my employ."

"You never can tell what they'll do," I said, and I spoke the truth. I had seen

Lena Mellish and half a dozen other girls vanished from the city as if the earth swallowed them up. Where did they go? What sinister influence was behind their disappearance?

several cases of the trusted bank clerk making a break with the bank's funds in the eighteen years I had been on the detective force. Motives for crime are queer and varied.

"Now what makes you think the girl got away with the gems?"

Mrs. Ackerman stiffened. She seemed indignant that her suspicions should be questioned. Indeed, if it weren't for the fact of her unquestioned social position, and the layout of her home, I'd have suspected the woman herself of having the prime part in the theft.

"Why," she said, a bit ruffled, "two o'clock came, then three and the girl didn't get back. It's five now and she's not back. I telephoned Bramley's as soon as I began to get anxious, and they told me she hadn't been near the place. Besides, there's that man, that cobbler——"

I sat up, all attention. "Who is he?"

"Why, the man that's been hanging around Lena these six months past, making love to her. She gave me notice only a week ago that at the end of next month she was leaving—to be married. And to that person." There was enough scorn in the last two words to wither a general on dress parade.

Here was a lead that would have to be run down, and no time lost. My mind jumped ahead, and I saw this cobbler as a man of criminal intent, perhaps a con with a record, picking out the girl who worked in a wealthy household, playing up to her, whispering words of flattery into her ears, promises of marriage—all the time waiting his chance to get away with a fortune.

"Where does this man live, Mrs. Ackerman?"

"I HAVEN'T the slightest idea. I've seen him below stairs several times, but I never took particular notice of him, except to wish he'd come less frequently. He's a little man, stoop-shouldered. I couldn't help remarking to myself what an odd thing it was. But that's all I know of him."

I paused to digest what had just been said. Then: "May I see the girl's room?" I asked.

"Certainly."

Mrs. Ackerman touched a bell in the wall behind her, and a girl in black dress and small white apron appeared.

"Show this gentleman to Lena's room, Marie. And stay with him so that he may have anything he wishes."

"Yes, Madam."

As I followed Marie up-stairs I thought that that last remark could be interpreted two ways: As it sounded, and also, "Stay with him so that he may not get away with anything." I smiled to myself at the idea of my being there to recover stolen goods, and even thinking of trying to lift something myself. Mrs. Ackerman ran true to her type—suspicious of everybody not her "equal" socially.

You may wonder why I didn't ask to see the missing maid's references. I'll tell why. This Lena had been working in the household for more than four years. During that time she had had ample time to get away with something, if she had been so inclined. Yet this was the first time she had caused her honesty to be suspected. No, this cobbler was the answer to the girl's crookedness, and I meant to run him down in short order.

The maid Marie seemed friendly. She was young, not more than nineteen. On the way up three flights of stairs she paused to remark, "What a pity! Whoever would've

thought it of Lena, sir!" I made no comment then. I wanted to make my observations first.

Marie opened a door on the fourth floor, rear, and stood aside to let me enter a small, cheaply furnished room. It was spotlessly clean and neat. Whatever could be said of Lena, she was clean and orderly to a marked degree. White bedspread without a crease in it, white scarf on the maple bureau, white lace at the back of a small rocking-chair—all attested to this.

The only article of furniture in the room besides the bed, the bureau, and the chair, was a large, tin-and-wood trunk. This I made for at once, having scanned the top of the bureau to see if a photograph was displayed there. A girl about to marry a man she was in love with, would be more than apt to have his picture out in plain sight where it could be seen every minute she was in the room; but this was not the case. All the bureau held was a hair-brush, comb, and other articles that belonged there.

THE trunk was unlocked. I raised the lid and there in the tray a varied assortment of belongings met my eye. Handkerchiefs, a scarf, a heavy coat folded, and so on. I was looking for letters or a photograph, and I found neither.

I lifted off the tray, to expose the bottom cavity of the trunk. The same varied assortment was there, and the same absence of what I sought.

Quickly I replaced the tray and closed the trunk, then turned to the bureau. There were three layers of drawers, the top layer divided into two small drawers. The one on the left opened, to reveal more handkerchiefs and gloves, all neatly piled; nothing else. The drawer on the right was locked. Here, then, were the valuable possessions the maid had, which she kept under lock against prying eyes.

No keys were in sight, but I lost no time searching for them. I took from my pocket a ring of keys, one of them a skeleton which I kept for just such emergencies. And while the maid Marie watched, her eyes wide, I inserted the key and turned the tumbler of the lock.

In that drawer were letters, bundles of them, most of them written in the same scrawly, masculine handwriting, as a hasty glance soon showed. It was the writing of a man unaccustomed to the use of a pen. I didn't take the time to read any of them through; I saw enough to satisfy me that they were from the cobbler. Three salutations of *Dearest, Darling Lena*, and *My Little Wife-to-Be*, told me that. I took time only to find the address they bore—a number down on Walnut Street, near Fourth.

I opened my eyes in surprise at this. Walnut is only one street east of Vine. And Vine, near Fourth, is the location of the jeweler Lena was to take the jewels to. How easy!

The letters were signed *Gus*.

In the drawer I found another valuable thing: A photograph of a girl and man on a post-card such as are made at amusement parks. I studied this carefully, for a chance to fix descriptions of that pair firmly in my mind.

THE girl was large; nice-looking in a heavy way. The face was pleasant enough, and at the time the photo was taken it registered a happy smile. The face of the man interested me.

Marie was a bet I couldn't afford to overlook, much as I needed time. The opinion of the head of a household

with regard to servants is one thing, but the opinion of other help is quite another. With the idea of getting Marie to reflect the opinion the servants had of Lena, I gave her a lead designed to make her talk.

"Lena's the finest girl we've had here. I never seen a girl with less airs. Why, they come and they go here, but Lena stayed right on. I'm minded of the time Lena went out last winter, in a raging storm, sir, to take a meal to a family down by the river. That's her. And to think that now—it's—it's——"

DOWN-STAIRS I told Mrs. Ackerman that I would do all I could. With that I left the place, and made all possible speed for the Walnut Street address.

Men in the Department on duty at Headquarters had an expense account, which we use on special occasions at our own discretion. I took a taxicab down-town, telling the driver to make all speed for the Walnut Street address.

After more than enough time to get there, the taxi pulled up before a house between Fourth and Fifth, on Walnut. Quickly I paid the driver, and looked up for a hasty sight

off my feet for a moment. Instead of finding a criminal guilty of complicity in a jewel theft, I had come upon a mild-tempered man pitifully upset over a girl's welfare, a girl I had to remember he was within a month of marrying.

"When did you see her last?" I asked him.

"Last night," he answered, readily. "And I was expecting to take her out to-night—unless she's——"

"So far as I know she's in good health," I told him, then debated in my mind for a second how much more I should let him know. I saw no reason now to hold anything back. Indeed, I felt so tangled by the complication of this man and his attitude that I welcomed the chance to enlist his active aid. "She's in good health," I went on, "but she has disappeared. She set out this morning with her mistress' jewels, to have them cleaned, and she and the jewels haven't been heard of since."

There must have been accusation in my tone of voice, for quick as a flash he said: "Lena didn't steal them. Not Lena. My Lena couldn't take so much as a pin she didn't know was hers. She's—oh, she's been harmed! Somebody has killed her for those jewels! Oh!"

"I BELIEVED that a gang of men were at work; that they were behind these numerous and systematic disappearances. The girls who vanished, all had jewels worth a fortune on them at the time they disappeared. I couldn't see why kidnapers, if there was nothing else to the disappearances, would wait only till they had girls with jewelry—and I couldn't see why jewel thieves, if jewel thieves were responsible, should cause the disappearance of the girls. In fact, I still felt I was entirely in the dark on this case. But that ad we intended for bait——"

of the house. It was an apartment house five stories high, with two stores on the ground floor.

I started for the entranceway, when my attention was attracted by a noise of hammering on my left. Looking up, I saw a shoemaker at work at his last, in the store just behind the window. I started, took a second look, then brought the photograph from my pocket for comparison. I couldn't be mistaken. The shoemaker at work was the man in the picture with Lena.

What could this mean? If my deductions had been correct, then this Gus was a criminal of a deeper dye than I had supposed. Imagine his staying on to brazen out the theft! But I didn't waste many moments in idle speculation. I went inside the store and stood at the counter within three feet of the man.

"Are you Gus Tiller?" I asked

The mild eyes looked up from the last.

"Yes. What do you want?" The voice was mild in tone, but steady.

"What did you do with Lena Mellish?" I punctuated the question with an emphasis he couldn't mistake.

The reaction was one I didn't expect.

THE man's face clouded into a look of deep concern. His brows contracted, he rose half-way out of his chair.

"Isn't she at her house—Mrs. Ackerman's house, where she works? Don't tell me she's hurt——"

The man's concern was undoubtedly sincere. I couldn't be fooled. He wasn't acting.

I changed my front in short order. I admit I was swept

I showed him my shield. "Steady, now. We're doing all we can," I said. "Upsetting yourself like this isn't going to help a bit. I'm going back to Headquarters now, and start a search from there."

I admit this case had me going. My mind was in a fuddle on my way to Headquarters. And it didn't clear until I was in the office of my Chief, seated at his desk making my report.

HE waited till I had finished, then boomed, in his heavy bass voice: "Another one! That's the fourth missing-girl case to come in since day before yesterday. And all of them disappeared with jewelry worth real money. The Tinker girl, over in Clifton—the Underhill maid, and—but never mind that. Something big's behind these disappearances, and we've got to find out damned quick. These girls don't blow away, like dust. All right, Snyder. You stick to the end you're on. Get out now, and show me something quick."

I left him in a kind of daze. He's usually an even-tempered man, inclined to be friendly and considerate of his men. By talking over every angle of a case with him, we've often been able to get a lead that meant the difference between an arrest and an unsolved case. For him to be worked up like that, and to dismiss me summarily the way he did, showed me he was hard-pressed.

I now checked up on the day's reports of the morgue, hospitals, and "Found" girls, such as had come in up to that time (six o'clock), and made sure there was no Lena Mellish among them. Then I went out into the fresh air.

I came along Ninth Street, walking east. Where was I to turn next? All I had to do was to comb the city from Price Hill to the end of Eastern Avenue, from the Zoo to the River, and find a heavy-featured servant girl who had made away with a fortune.

BUT had she? There was a lot to be said for the girl's honesty, and in favor of the theory of foul play.

The River—that gave me a straw lead. I turned the corner at Butler Street, thinking to go down to the L. & N.

"Well, well, well! The old sleuth seems to be hot on the trail! Nothing short of murder, I'll bet!"

I turned when I heard the tone of banter, evidently addressed to me. I was so absorbed in what I was thinking that I had passed by a friend whom I should have recognized.

"Ruth!" I said. "I might have known it'd be you, kidding the old man like that. Where're you headed for, anyway?"

"Back to the mill. The Old Man sent me out on a sob-sister yarn that went blooey."

It was Ruth Tempest (or so her pen-name read), a reporter for one of Cincinnati's daily papers. She was

I could see Ruth wanted to give me a message, but her companion was too close to me

Bridge. Near there I knew were several hang-outs where stools and ex-cons are always to be found. Maybe one of them might know something.

As I walked down Butler Street, could I have known it, I was within a stone's throw of Lena. But detectives in actual, everyday life, unlike detectives in the fiction stories, have to plug for results. They can't rub a wishing-lamp and have their cases solved for them.

I walked on down, determined to shake something out of the first stool I met. The Chief had led me to believe that a ring of some sort was at work in the city. It wasn't natural for four or five girls, all of them known to carry a quantity of jewelry, to vanish into thin air. If this thing were organized, then nobody'd be in a better position to know about it than the several stool-pigeons who mingled with the criminal element of the city, and are not above telling what they know.



well known at Headquarters, and well liked, for she was a spunky thing, and often ready with a lead she uncovered through her work,

that gave us valuable assistance.

"I'm on my way to find a girl that made off with a mess of jewelry," I told her, intending to let that be enough of a comeback before I passed along (Continued on page 66)

I Was Hired to Clear

From a cell in the Tombs where he was being held sounded the call for detectives to establish his took up the case he brought to light the most

MY strangest adventure in detection began one morning when Mr. I. P. Simmons, the most astute criminal lawyer of my acquaintance, phoned me at my office.

"Belcher," he said, "this is Simmons. As you've probably read, I'm handling the defense of young Walter Worster, known along Broadway as 'Buddy.' He's been indicted by the grand jury for the murder of his father's wife, Mrs. Theodore Worster. The evidence against him is damning, but Worster has convinced me of his innocence. He insists that the cleverest private detective obtainable be secured to work in his behalf, so I am calling you—" I flushed under his high praise. "Be at the Tombs by three o'clock," he continued, "because I've arranged an interview. You're to see Worster alone, to get your own impression of him. O. K.?"

"I'll be there. Thanks, Mr. Simmons," I replied, and he hung up.

I consulted my watch. The time was 1.45. I settled deep into my chair and closed my eyes for a mental review of the details of the murder as published by the papers. I had followed the case closely and with interest. It was an involved affair, bordering on the sordid. Herewith are brief histories of the principals:

"Daddy" Worster, as Theodore Worster, the father, was known to a legion of chorus girls, was nearing seventy, and was worth several millions. Finally he succumbed to the charms of a blue-eyed, yellow-haired girl of the stage, named Carmel Hawtrey, who rushed him into a marriage and became Mrs. Theodore Worster, of Park Avenue.

Many years before this marriage, "Daddy" Worster had adopted a youngster of doubtful parentage, who became known as Buddy Worster. Buddy's name originally had been Walter Trivers, according to the records of the foundling institution from which Worster had taken him; but became Walter Worster upon adoption. He was to be sole heir to the vast Worster estate.

After quitting college Buddy promptly began to "burn up" Broadway with reckless abandon. The elderly Mr. Worster disapproved heartily of his son's "orgies of wickedness," as he dubbed his conduct, and a coldness sprang up between the two. With this coldness the fingers that signed checks stiffened. Then, to the further dismay of Buddy, the aforementioned Miss Carmel Hawtrey hurled herself into the fray against him. She became his very youthful step-mother.

Several weeks after the marriage, "Daddy" Worster contracted typhoid fever and died. His will left all his worldly goods to his young wife. The will contained a proviso, however, that Buddy was to receive what was left of the estate if he should outlive her.

THE young widow lost no time in trying to dissipate the Worster millions and was succeeding nobly until early one morning, at three o'clock to be exact. Hearing a shot, a policeman entered the library of her Park Avenue mansion to find her lying dead on the floor, shot through the heart. Buddy stood over her, his collar torn, and hair disheveled. The door of the library safe was open, the contents strewn the floor.

Buddy had given an incoherent recital of how he had been alarmed by a noise in the library. Rushing downstairs from his room he had come upon Mrs. Worster arguing with a masked robber, so he said. He had closed with the intruder. The robber suddenly broke from his hold and, drawing a gun, fired at him. The bullet missed him, killing the lovely Carmel. The robber had then escaped through an open window to the stones of the courtyard below.

To some extent Buddy's story was verified by headquarters detectives. A pistol was found beneath the window with one chamber discharged, but the grip carried Buddy's finger-prints on it. Later young Worster modified his account. He declared that the robber had had the pistol in hand when he, Buddy, had first sprung upon him. Once, he said, he had actually gained possession of the firearm during the struggle, but it had been wrested from him again. He declared this was the reason that his finger-prints were on the gun. Buddy claimed that the robber had worn gloves, hence the absence of his finger-prints.

Buddy's finger-prints also had been found on the safe's dial and door, but no others. When asked to explain how the robber had opened the safe by means of the combination, he was quite ready with his answer. Mrs. Worster had probably opened it to put away her jewels, he said, and wearing gloves as she did, no finger-prints had been left. It was true that Mrs. Worster wore gloves when her body was found. She had just returned from one of her wild parties.

HIS finger-prints on the dial were easy to account for, Buddy explained. Earlier in the evening he had opened the safe to get out some papers, and had been careful to close it again. He then pointed out to the detectives the significant fact that Mrs. Worster's pearl necklace and diamond rings were missing, claiming that the robber had stolen them. A thorough search of the house failed to reveal the jewels. Upon later investigation it was learned from those attending the party that Carmel had worn them when leaving for home.

The butler, a taciturn Japanese, backed up Buddy's story by swearing he had heard the struggle in the library, but had been afraid to interfere. He had carefully cleaned the front of the safe the afternoon of the murder, he further testified. That would account for the fact that only Buddy's finger-prints had been found, and none of Mrs. Worster's.

However, before the grand jury, the Japanese contradicted himself several times and flaws were found in Buddy's testimony. Buddy was indicted and was waiting trial for murder in the first degree.

Of course, the papers presented only the high spots of what actually occurred, but from a keen observer's standpoint I fully concurred with the grand jury in its indictment. However, I had been on cases where it looked black for the defendant, and had seen him fully exonerated, so I tried to keep an open mind.

On my way to the Tombs I kept turning over in my mind the fact that Mr. Simmons, the lawyer, was convinced of Buddy Worster's innocence. I had great faith in his opinion. He was hard-headed, skeptical, and had dealt

a MURDERER

By
WILLIS BELCHER

*for murder, young Buddy Worster
innocence. When Detective Belcher
startling revelations of his career*

*As related
by
ARTHUR GUY EMPEY*

The elderly Mr. Worster disapproved heartily
of his son's "orgies of wickedness"



with criminals for years. Then, too, I argued, if the accused was guilty, why should he demand a private detective, who would delve deeper into the matter, and perhaps unearth further convicting evidence which the prosecution might overlook.

Another idea came to me. Was Worster guilty, and did he intend to bribe me to commit perjury for him? I grew hot under the collar at the thought.

Buddy Worster was ushered into the room in the Tombs where I sat waiting for him. I was agreeably surprised at his appearance. I had expected to see a dissipated weak-

ling, typical of rich men's sons after a few years of roistering in the cafés and night clubs of Broadway. Before me stood an upright, well-

built young man. He was good-looking, too, with frank, gray eyes. He shook hands with me and his grip was like iron.

"I'm sorry to see you here, Mr. Worster," I said, awkwardly. "It must be very trying for you."

"It is," he replied, sitting down beside me. "Still I am not really afraid. Mr. Belcher, I am an innocent man. I'm in a hell of a mess and you must get me out of it."

I liked him instinctively, but I tried to test him out.

"Supposing I find you guilty?" I asked.

"I'll make you a sporting proposition," he said. "Name your price now. If I'm guilty, Mr. Simmons will pay you triple what you ask. If I am innocent, your services are mine for nothing."

I couldn't help admiring his nerve there in the shadow of the chair.

"Why don't you come right out with it?" he asked searchingly. "You suspect that I called you here to offer you a bribe, don't you? That I want you to manufacture evidence in my favor? Isn't that it?"

I nodded, embarrassed. He laughed shortly.

"No, Mr. Belcher," he said. "Nothing like that. The truth is my only hope."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Mr. Worster," I replied. "Now, let's go into the case, if you are agreeable."

"Thanks, Mr. Belcher," he answered simply. "I'm about to tell you something that only Mr. Simmons and I know. It's your work to verify this, so there'll be no doubt of its truth when it is submitted to the District Attorney."

He got up and began slowly pacing the room, without nervousness, head tilted back as if he endeavored to concentrate his thoughts. I watched him in silence, studying his face. And the longer I watched the more favorably he impressed me. Finally he stopped and looked me straight in the eye.

"Mr. Belcher," he said, "I'm ashamed of the part I played in the hideous drama, now that I have had the opportunity to look back on it. Kindly remember, please, that I was in love, headstrong, blinded, and acted under unnatural and

"Was Mrs. Worster aware of your presence?"

"Yes, it was her idea, my being there. She wanted me because—well, after dad's death she told me she still loved me, and always had. And, Mr. Belcher, though I am ashamed to admit it, my love for her had grown stronger, in spite of her duplicity and greed. I just couldn't help it.

HER husband was a dope-fiend. I planned to get rid of him. I hired detectives to uncover his past. They unearthed enough on him to send him to jail for years. I met him one night by appointment in an East Side hotel and confronted him with the facts, threatening if he didn't leave Carmel alone to have him sent up. He agreed to call it quits. We lived in peace for several weeks, until the night of the tragedy.

"Carmel had given what was to be a farewell party to her Broadway friends, after which she and I were going to Europe. Her husband got wind of it, and, under the influence of cocaine I suppose, followed her home, entering the library by jimmying the window. Doubtless he demanded more money. She must have refused, because when I came upon them they were engaged in heated argument. Probably he had taken her jewels from her, finding

"WELL mosey over to my slab-joint. You scratch what you want me to say, and the Jap here'll hold the paper. To-morrow you come with the dough to the same place, give it to the Jap, and I'll sign. He'll keep the paper for three days while I make my gallagher, then turn it over to you when he gets the office from one o' my pals that I'm clear."

So was Buddy cleared of the murder charge, but then——

trying conditions. Carmel—my father's wife—was no stranger to me when she married dad. Of course, this was unknown to him. Carmel was a fast worker." His tone was bitter.

SHE engineered a quick trip to Connecticut with dad and when they returned, they were man and wife," he went on. "It nearly broke my heart, because I loved Carmel, and I thought she loved me. She loved power more, I guess. When I reproached her for her betrayal of our love, her whole manner changed and she openly sneered at me, secure in her position as mistress of the house."

"Why didn't you expose her?"

"Because it would have killed dad, and I was very fond of him. At the most there remained but a few years of life to him, and I didn't wish to spoil his new-found happiness. And he was happy with Carmel. She was clever enough to convince him that she adored him. The knowledge of my fondness for dad lent her nerve to defy me. Then a bolt fell from the sky. I learned that Carmel had committed bigamy by wedding dad.

"Her husband, a crook and confidence man, who had deserted her two years before she met me, turned up and began blackmailing her. I hadn't known she was married. Carmel gave him several big sums to keep him quiet. Then dad died of typhoid, and left her the estate. She immediately grew defiant and ceased paying hush-money to her husband."

"Had you ever met him?"

"No, but once I was hidden in the same room with them when Carmel turned over a payment to him."

no money in the safe. You know the rest." Worster sat down, shrugging his shoulders helplessly. "That's all," he announced, in broken tones.

"What are your ideas for me?" I asked. All my sympathy was with the man.

"My freedom depends upon your finding Carmel's husband and forcing him to confess. A confirmed drug addict——" He hesitated, as if afraid to speak the thought in his mind.

"Please don't hold anything back," I said.

"Thank you, I won't." He leaned toward me, an eager light in his eyes. "It's rather off the trail, this forcing a confession, and perhaps it won't appeal to you. But before you refuse, consider my predicament and how helpless I am here in confinement. I have to depend on others. I——" His voice caught. "It's his life or mine. I am innocent. He is guilty. He must be made to confess——"

"And I'll make him, Buddy!" I said firmly, using his nickname.

"Thank you," he said, giving me his hand. "Mr. Simmons wasn't wrong when he said you'd come through for me."

Then he minutely described the husband of the dead Carmel. I wasn't overjoyed to hear that John Ross, as he was named, used a certain saloon on Avenue A for his headquarters. It was a notorious meeting-place of crooks and yeggs. If my identity should become known to its patrons they would snuff me out like a candle.

"If this John Ross is guilty, why didn't you have him arrested immediately, instead of allowing all this time to pass?" I asked.

"Ross is a clever criminal, Mr. Belcher, and even though

he was masked when committing the murder and was unaware that his identity was known to me, still he disappeared and laid low. But Mr. Simmons and I felt sure that sooner or later he would become careless and return to his accustomed haunts in quest of his cocaine. We preferred to lull him into a false security until we were prepared to act on our own. That time has arrived. John Ross is now in New York."

"How do you know this?" I demanded.

"IWANAMI, my Japanese valet, is clever. At one time he was valet to ——" (I can't mention the name in print, but my readers should recognize the man when I add that he is a notorious gambler whose name figured prominently in the World Series scandal.) "In that service,"

Buddy continued, "he formed quite a wide

"Mr. Buddy is right," he declared. "It is the best way to deal with John Ross. He is a dangerous man and quick to kill, but not well. It is the dope he takes. Some day soon he will collapse, without confessing, and Mr. Buddy will go to the chair for a murder he did not commit. You must hurry, Mr. Belcher. I would offer to buy the confession if I were you. Ross is greedy. Fifty thousand will tempt him, I am certain, if we allow him a few days' start out of the country. Mr. Buddy will pay one hundred thousand dollars if he must."

"If John Ross is not well, Iwanami, how was it he was able to get away from Mr. Worster in the library?"

"It was the strength of the drug, Mr. Belcher," answered the Oriental.

"WELL," I said, "I agree with you that no time is to be lost, so I'll tackle the job to-night. I'll pose as a mouth-piece from Mr. Simmons, the lawyer. I will tell Ross that he was recognized by a crook as he left the Park Avenue house, and that the crook later sold this information to Mr. Simmons. And you must bring us together, Iwanami. You know him; pretend to be friendly to him, and arrange a meeting."

"It is an excellent plan, Mr. Belcher," Iwanami declared.

Iwanami and I then got our heads together on the scheme. It neared eight o'clock when I rose to go. The Japanese, in addition to furnishing a comprehensive history of the case which removed all doubt of Buddy's guilt from my mind, supplied me with code signals which would pass me beyond the front bar of the saloon on Ave-

"Speak then! Tell what you know and be damned to you!"



acquaintance among the crooks of New York. He knows John Ross and learned only yesterday that Ross had returned. See Iwanami at my home as soon as possible. His help will be valuable."

Promising to do my best for him, I shook hands and left. My next step was to call on Mr. Simmons. He verified practically all Buddy Worster had told me and approved the course to be followed with Ross.

Leaving the criminal lawyer, I visited the magnificent Park Avenue house. I introduced myself to Iwanami, who appeared to be expecting me, and plunged right into my subject. He listened respectfully until I had finished, no sign of emotion showing on his Oriental countenance. When he spoke it was in fairly good English.

a screaming tie and a derby hat, I sauntered into the saloon and leaned carelessly upon the mahogany counter, tipping the husky Irish proprietor the high sign of the gang. Suspicion left his face and he bent over to me.

"Where from, cul?" he asked.

"Chi," rose my ready answer. "Pulling a gallagher (get-away). Crashed Joliet. Lookin' for a nifty cicero (one who stalls a person while the other robs him) to help me on a flash job. Any clever crockery-molls (women wearing much jewelry) in this slant-joint? 'Soup' Ferris said you could fix me up."

"Go back there an' lamp 'em," said the Irishman, jerking a thumb towards the rear room. "I ain't recommendin' none o' 'em."

(Continued on page 93)

Why I Killed My 22 WIVES

*Sensational murder explained for the first time—
how Watson's intuition saved him from capture—Watson's amazing ambitions*

An Actual Confession by
"BLUEBEARD" WATSON

As told by H. EDWIN MOOTZ

AT this time I was living in Los Angeles a great deal, courting several wealthy widows. I had my eyes set steadily on something ahead—a big clean-up in the next six months and then Australia. It allowed me to face the future without a quaver of regret. I laughed as I thought of outwitting the sleuths, the law. I felt the lightness of youth. I could move through the world with that self-bubbling freshness which turns every daybreak into a new adventure. Even the memory of it now makes my days more endurable.

From Chicago, half-way across the continent, came racing Nettie Tuesdale in response to one of my alluring advertisements. She was a bewitching little fairy with golden hair and eyes of azure blue. I had provided handsome apartments for her and began a rapid love-making. I held out the cup for her to drink the quenchless joy of love, but she hesitated.

Nettie had \$3,000 in cash, and I was anxious to consummate a speedy marriage and then a trip to Mexico. Contrary to my usual success, the lady was not favorably impressed. She told me she had a sweetheart, a young man who was just beginning to make good, and that she had promised to marry him. She said being the wife of a wealthy banker appealed to her, but she was not sure that she liked me.

"I always wanted to live," she said, "in beautiful California, where the roses bloom always, and see the golden fruits on the trees overcanopied by the blue sky and barricaded by these wondrous mountains."

Then she wanted to see my "bank" and the mansion in the orange grove that I had described to her in a letter. In the meantime she took my proposal under advisement.

The next day I took her for a ride, showing her Los Angeles. We visited my "bank," and then went to Pasadena, where she viewed our future home.

Daily I showered her with candy, flowers, and fruits. I pleaded my love in a thousand ways to this dainty bit of

femininity, but apparently in vain. My pride and vanity were touched and I determined to win Nettie. I never had failed.

About a week later she informed me that she had written her friend and broken with him, and with a smile dancing in her eyes she said: "I understand now that I love you, and I am sure—something tells me here"—and she pressed one hand against her heart—"by the way you speak and the way you act, that you love me." She raised her large blue eyes to mine with perfect frankness. "I am happy to love you, happy to live in this wonderful clime."

I threw myself on my knees, clasping her. I kissed her hands and vowed that I would make her happy, that her dreams of orange-blossoms would now come true.

Later I suggested that if she would trust me I would deposit her money in our bank.

"Why, certainly!" she replied. "I was going to tell you to take it. I have it here in my bag."

I had her sign a number of blank sheets of paper, and we agreed to be quietly married the last of the month at my home in Pasadena. That evening we arranged for a long outing for the following day. I told her I would have a big lunch prepared, and I would show her some of the beauties of California.

She was happy as a child, saying: "Let us start about sun-up or a little before. I am thrilling to see the wonders of the sunrise from the mountains." To which I readily assented.

The morn began in splendor. It came with the dews of dawn. It rose with the glory of morning to the summit and on to the mild, mellow ripening of a day.

Nettie was gowned in an old rose dress, and a bright pink sweater and cap to match.

We started out before the sun rose and began to make a gala day of it, visiting Venice, Ocean Park, and Santa Monica. From there we went to Sawtelle, reaching the hills late in the afternoon.

"BLUEBEARD" Watson
courted or married fifty-three women! He killed twenty-two of his wives! Some he sold in Mexico. He was swindler, burglar, white-slaver, murderer. From his prison cell in San Quentin the most astounding criminal of the century tells his story. Here is a human document without parallel!

It was a glorious evening. Silvery clouds floated slowly above, crowning the mountain peaks, sailing through the deep blue, moving from the Pacific Ocean to the heights of the distant white-capped Baldy, now and then showing a lurid red from the sinking sun which flashed like crimson across the spot of an abandoned well where we stopped to camp and view the beauties of a California sunset.

"OH, how beautiful! It was worth traveling all the long miles to see!" exclaimed Nettie, stretching her arms out to the west with an enthusiastic gesture. "Oh, you beautiful California, I'm glad I came, and, Charlie, so happy to have found you here in this fairy-land.

"Now we'll have a real camp and a big feed. I'm hungry as a bear."

Nettie at once began spreading the lunch, then cried: "Charlie, let us boil some coffee and imagine we are out camping for the night!"

I just had picked up a smooth, good-sized rock, when she turned and looked at me. The soft radiance of the pink and golden

"Oh, Charlie," and she moaned, "I'm afraid of you!"

"I saw a little snake," I answered, "and got the rock to crush it."

SHE sank down to the ground, crying: "Oh, how you frightened me!"

"Get up!" I said harshly as I pulled her to her feet.

The shades of dusk were falling, yet I had that feeling that eyes were on me. I was looking in all directions and gripping her hands.

"Don't, don't!" she pleaded. "You are crushing my hands—they hurt. Please, Charlie, take me home. You don't love me."

"Love you!" I echoed laughingly. "I never loved any woman. A woman to me is like a serpent hidden in the grass, coiled, ready to strike, and in my estimation less than the slimy things that spawn in the green, stagnant pools. They have no power to move my sympathies, and all of them seem—"

"Oh, oh!" she cried. "You inhuman fiend, you monster—"

I struck her a terrific blow. . . . Then my strong fingers . . . I placed the body in the rear of the car and covered her with burlap that I brought for use on this trip. I drove toward

"You remember the day you played with me in Hollywood? You called it a prank. Now I am playing a prank on you!"



sunset showed her face pale. A twisted coil of her golden hair hung loosely on her shoulders, then fell down like a shining serpent.

"My God!" she cried.

"What are you going to do?" She leaped to her feet and started to run.

I paused. An instinctive feeling warned me that someone was looking at me. I turned quickly and searched in all directions, but not a soul was in sight—and yet how true that premonition proved to be!

I made a few quick strides and caught her by the arm, saying: "What is the matter with you?"

the coast. I disrobed the body, wrapped it in burlap, and late that night I dropped her into the Pacific Ocean, weighted down, from the pier of the Japanese fishing village a few miles from Santa Monica.

THE following day I typed a note over her signature and sent an express-wagon for personal effects. Among her papers I found a number of them signed "Mrs. Nettie

Miller"; also letters addressed to her by that name, so I am inclined to believe that was her true name. I destroyed all her things and for once kept no mementoes, except a ring and her money.

IT was after my arrest that I learned that an old veteran of the Soldiers' Home at Sawtelle had, for years and years, seated himself on clear evenings at the north window in his room at the Home to watch the yellow glint on the hills turn to amber, orange, lavender, purple, and then to the blackness of night. On this December evening, as the rim of the resplendent sun sank from view, the old man saw a car and two figures near the abandoned well

"This," my wife declared as she finished her dessert and looked around her, "is one of the gay places of Frisco. Vivacity is in evidence all around us, and people enjoy themselves."

"Yes, my dear. Here is where the dames show their jewels and lovers to their enemies."

"Poor duped husbands!" she exclaimed compassionately. "I wonder they don't rebel."

I HEARD a ringing laugh that sounded familiar. Casting a sidelong glance at a table to the rear, I recognized one of my wives dining with one of my fiancées and a gentleman!

My back was to them so I continued chatting, when suddenly a lady two tables in front of me turned to watch a performer, and I beheld the face of a lady I was going to marry the coming week.

I thought seriously for a moment. Here were two wives and two fiancées in front and in the rear, and the thought flashed through my mind that there might be more. It required clever work to extricate myself from this perilous situation.



busying themselves making camp. The woman's movements were more plainly seen because of the flash of the bright pink sweater. As the light faded out, movements became less distinct, but he could see indications of a struggle.

THE old soldier reported the occurrence to the officers and a thorough search was made of the well, but the only evidence were the footprints of a struggle.

I had an amusing incident occur one night in San Francisco during this month of December. With a wife I was enjoying a sumptuous dinner at Tait's, where the tables were gay with animated beauty and one brilliant blaze of varied colored lights, music, and song, the sheen of silken hosiery and dainty-shod feet gliding over the polished floor, smiling scarlet lips, flashing white teeth, and eyes that gleamed.

Quickly I brought my penknife into use and stuck it into the end of my finger. Placing my finger on my nose, I said I had a nose bleed, requesting the wife at my table to pay the bill and follow me out. I covered my face with a handkerchief and, affecting a slight stoop, I left the room, awaiting my wife on the outside. When she appeared I held up the bloodstained handkerchief.

"I am sorry this had to happen," I said. "Let us go home."

This is but one of the many instances of like character that has frequently happened in cities where I had one or more wives and sweethearts. In one city I had married three close friends, and they did not know that they all had the same husband.

I received an answer to one of my ads, a very quaint and

interesting letter from a young lady, Miss Carlson, of Oakland. I met her a few days later. She was a pretty girl, but why I wasted time on her and took the chances I did, I do not know.

One night, in some mysterious way she came in possession of a few letters. Two days later I received word from her that gave me a great deal of concern, and I arranged to meet her that day.

I told her I would give her \$1,000 in cash for the return of all my letters. She had three I had written to her and four she had purloined from my coat.

I arranged a meeting-place and met her about nine or ten o'clock and asked if she had the letters.

She replied: "Yes, Mr. Lewis, I have, and I've found out that you tricked me and deceived me when you said you were wealthy and would marry me."

"Well," I answered, "what do you suspect me of?"

She laughed a little bitterly. "Why, you have a wife!"

"But that is ridiculous!" I exclaimed. "Come with me and we'll talk it over. I have the money

vacant lots, and the mystery of her death is now revealed for the first time.

About the third of January, 1920, I returned to Elizabeth Hess. [Editor's note: This is not the real name of this woman. Mercifully, she escaped death, and now lives in comparative ease and happiness. It is not the intention of the editor or publishers of TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES to bring distress upon anyone by reviving a past misfortune now lived down. Therefore the change in name.] Elizabeth was very much perturbed.

"THE Secret-Service game has a wonderful fascination for you," she remarked.

I tried to jolly her and to change the subject, but the gloom had settled on her face.

"You don't know what it is like," she went on, "to live day and night in fear, with no one to talk to—with an uncanny feeling of dark shadows moving about. Even the whisper of the breeze and the songs of the birds seem to bring evil tidings."

"Oh, dear, you must not talk like that!" I pleaded.

"It makes me so unhappy."

Suddenly she came out of the world of her unhappy imagination. "Really, dear," she declared, "I



I recognized one of my wives dining with one of my fiancées!

here to pay you for the letters," and then I drew a huge roll of bills from my pocket, saying: "Here it is!"

I had no definite trysting-place in view, but trusted to my usual luck. We had walked a long distance. I looked back over the city, grim and silent. Now it was near the hour of midnight, and we were alone. There reigned the silence of deep desolation.

The girl paused. Her breath came in sobbing pants.

"Why are you bringing me away out here? Why don't you do as you promised and let me go home?"

I laughed. Slowly she turned and looked at me, her cheeks the color of a white lily, her eyes filled with terror.

"Here are your letters. Let me go. Oh, God, help me!" . . .

Ten minutes later I was on my way back to my hotel. The body of the beautiful young Miss Carlson was found in the

will not mention it again. When do we move to our new home?"

"I am having a beautiful place prepared for you on Rosewood Avenue in Hollywood. It will be ready for us in about a month. In the meantime I want you to go down to Los Angeles and remain there until I arrive, which will be in about two weeks."

"Is the mysterious black bag keeping you here, Walter?"

"Dear, why do you persist in being so impertinent and making my black bag your business?"

"YOU must admit that many of your actions are mysterious and incomprehensible," she replied slowly, "things which I do not understand, and certainly require an explanation."

"What business is it of yours?" (Continued on page 104)

Why It Can NEVER

When a detective is hired to condone thievery, truth about a sensational robbery that rocked

ALL detectives are dolts, fatheads, nincompoops. All district attorneys are grafters. We've all heard that opinion expressed every time some big jewel robbery breaks out on the front pages of the newspapers. The circumstantial evidence seems so indisputable, all clues lead so directly to a certain person, that the law-abiding citizen, who would put up a terrific howl if his own liberty were jeopardized, fumes and frets because the suspect is not immediately clamped into jail.

They think they know it all, these wise gazaboos—but they never learn the half of it. Next time you read the news of such a case, just remember the story which I am going to tell you.

It's true, every word of it. The names of people and places are changed, of course, but you will probably recognize the robbery.

I had been working night and day on a big blackmail case, and was just about to turn in and get a good long sleep in preparation for an appearance in court the next day, when my telephone bell rang.

"Gosh, I'll bet half my share that one of those blackbirds has gotten wise and flown the coop," I said, as I picked up the receiver. My partner, Arthur Rykert, was handling all the other cases we had on the tapis at that time, and I was giving my undivided attention to the notorious gang which had attempted to shake down our client.

However, as usual, intuition was wrong. Instead of hearing the gruff voice of one of our operatives, I was greeted by the sweet, clean-clipped voice of a woman.

"OH, Mr. Browne, I am so sorry to disturb you," she said. "And please don't blame your office manager. I insisted on his giving me your home telephone."

This was strictly against the rules, and I swore it would take more than kind words to save Al Hansen, the night man, from a thorough dressing down.

"Who is this?" I asked gruffly.

"Mrs. Borland; you know, the daughter of Anthony Arkright. I'm in dreadful trouble. Some one has stolen my engagement ring and I would rather have lost anything I possess than that. I remembered how well you handled the robbery at our home the night of my *début* and thought of you at once. We are staying at the St. John Hotel. Won't you come right over?"

"Surely, Mrs. Borland, I'll be over within half an hour. Sorry I spoke so sharply," I apologized, "but I was annoyed at Hansen for breaking one of our rules."

Old Tony Arkright, who had made millions in mining stocks, had given me my first start in private practice. I had handled many cases for him, and had known his daughter,



Be TOLD

By HOWARD BROWNE
Former Pinkerton Detective

*then follows trouble. Here is the
the country some weeks ago*

As narrated by
ISABEL STEPHEN

"I am sure I saw my ring on the
hand of a girl dancing in the
Ambassador"



Marian, from the time she was a tiny lass of ten. Although she was not beautiful, she was an attractive, wholesome, highly accomplished girl. She had married a bogus count during her second season and a divorce had followed after three years of misery. Her second husband was an American whom she had met in Paris while she was doing war work. They lived very quietly, though Marian had inherited an enormous fortune on the death of her father. Her mother, I had heard, was confined in a sanitarium.

These facts marshaled themselves to the fore, blotting out the blackmailing case for the time being from my consciousness. The theft of an engagement ring didn't sound like an interesting mystery, but I always concentrate on one thing at a time.

THROWING on my clothes, I went down the hall to the room occupied by my secretary, and instructed him to bunk in my bed for the night and answer all telephone calls which might come through. Should anything of importance come up, he was to call the St. John and relay the information.

It was only seven-thirty, but the poor kid had been up until three and four in the morning for the past three nights, with the headpiece of a detectaphone glued to his ears, taking down in shorthand the conversations of two of the blackmailers; and his eyes were leaden for want of sleep.

However, he assured me that the slightest tinkle of the telephone bell would awaken him, and he would sleep with one ear alert.

When I arrived at

the suite occupied by the Borlands, I found the place in great confusion. Two house detectives were there putting a pert little maid through a third degree. Mr. and Mrs. Borland were in dinner dress and had evidently been on the point of departure for some social function when the robbery was discovered.

"It isn't only the value of the ring, though it is worth thirty-five thousand dollars, that makes me simply sick over this," Mrs. Borland explained to me, "but it meant so much to me. Don't spare any expense in getting it back. Offer any amount of reward you see fit. These house detectives think Marie took it, and it does look that way, but I don't believe—"

One of the detectives approached and looked at me somewhat belligerently. His face was familiar in a tantalizing sort of way; somewhere in the past I had met this man, and the encounter hadn't been pleasant. This I felt subconsciously, but unfortunately I don't possess "camera eyes," and for the time being I couldn't place him.

"When did you first discover the loss of the ring?" I asked Borland.

"Just about an hour and a half ago. It was my wife's engagement ring and she always wore it. This afternoon about five-thirty, I noticed that one of the prongs was loose and suggested that she take it off in case she forgot before we went out this evening. About six o'clock, when Marie had gone to prepare my wife's bath, I took the ring and placed it in a small jewel-box in the bedroom bureau, intending to take it down-stairs and leave it with the vault clerk before going out to dinner.

"I returned to the drawing-room here, and we sat chatting when Marie came in to say the bath was prepared and that a masseuse was waiting downstairs. Mrs. Borland reminded me that we had an early dinner at seven-thirty as we were going on later to the theatre and I went to my bedroom and changed my clothes. About seven o'clock, I knocked at the door of my wife's room, and on opening it, I found her and Marie searching frantically for something.

"YET, why was Mrs. Borland's engagement ring stolen when there were other jewels there? Borland knew the attachment his wife had for the ring. No professional jewel thief would be likely to steal a conspicuous gem like the missing diamond when there were other pickings which would be much more easily disposed of. . . . If it was an outside job how did the thief know just when and where the jewel could be obtained? Who made those hand smudges on the transom frame?"

"Mrs. Borland, do you wish to prefer charges against the girl?" he asked. "The circumstantial evidence is strong enough to send her down to Headquarters if you say so."

"No, no, I wouldn't consider that for a moment," Mrs. Borland answered. "Mr. Browne will take charge of the case now. Thank you for your trouble. Please go and take the other man with you."

"I'm afraid the manager won't—" the detective began, when Mr. Borland, who had been listening without saying anything, came forward.

"Mrs. Borland asked you to leave," he directed in a cold, hard voice.

The detective regarded him for a moment uncertainly, opened his mouth as if to say something, thought better of it, and with a slight sneering twist of his lips, turned on his heels and called to his colleague.

"Oh, Marsh, I want to see you outside for a minute." Then, turning toward Mrs. Borland, he added, as a parting shot, "The manager will have to be kept informed about the progress of the case. We have to protect the other guests."

MRS. BORLAND gave him no reply, but for the minute she very strongly resembled her father, hard-fisted, steely-eyed, Tony Arkright. The man's face flushed, his voice faltered a bit, as he said to his assistant: "Come on, Marsh."

As soon as they had left the room, I requested the details. "You tell him, Jim," Mrs. Borland said, sinking into an easy chair, and, indicating another, she said in a tired voice, "Sit down, Mr. Browne, and you sit down too, Jim; your pacing up and down makes me nervous." Then, turning to the maid, she smiled. "Pick up all those things and put them back into their place, Marie. Maybe the ring got caught in some of the lingerie."

She told me she couldn't find her engagement ring. There were other jewels in the case, but only the solitaire, which is a gem of fifteen carats, was missing."

There was something stilted in the way Mr. Borland told his story. This might be due merely to repetition, but it is often the way in which a man tells his story, more than the story itself, that arouses or allays a detective's suspicions.

I HAD never met Mr. Borland before, and I wasn't impressed altogether favorably with him. He was a tall fellow, with black hair which was beginning to retreat behind a high forehead, and dark-brown eyes beneath which were lines of dissipation. His one bad feature was his mouth with its thin lips.

He was a distinguished figure in his dinner clothes, and it was easily seen that his charming wife adored him. Life hadn't been kind to Marian Arkright and worry and unhappiness had carved her features into sharp angles. She was then only thirty years of age, but there was a maturity and weariness in her eyes seldom seen in women of her age. I had seen the Count, her first husband, once—a repulsive-looking fellow—and the contrast between him and the distinguished-looking man who had succeeded him, was enough to sweep even a level-headed woman off her feet.

These thoughts swept through my mind as I listened to his low-pitched, pleasant voice.

The pause which followed was broken by Borland himself. "Oh, by the way, Marie was in the room and saw me put the ring in the jewel case," he said. I glanced quickly at Marie who at that moment was straightening a Spanish shawl on the grand piano. At his words, she shot him a sharp resentful glare. "The reason I mentioned that," he added, uncomfortably, his eyes having met and clashed with hers, "was that you might imagine I had laid the ring down

somewhere." He finished somewhat lamely, I thought.

"Now, Marie, I would like to have your version," I called to the girl. "Make it as short as possible, without omitting anything you think important. Come over here and sit down."

"I'd just as soon stand, thank you, sir," she answered, rather pertly. "I don't know much about it. I saw Mr. Borland place the ring in the case. I had just finished tidying up the bureau and went straight into the bathroom to draw Mrs. Borland's bath. I had to dissolve some herbs in the hot water and then strain it. This always takes some time. My back was to the door and I was bending over the bathtub when I heard someone close the door. I thought it was Mrs. Borland and didn't pay any attention. When I was finished, I knocked on the door, but didn't get any answer, so I opened it and went into the bedroom. It was empty."

"Perhaps Mr. Borland closed the door," I suggested, and

facing the drawing-room, which were at the extreme ends. Mr. Borland's room adjoined his wife's; next to this was the dining room which was separated from the drawing-room by large sliding doors. A small maid's room was tucked away alongside that of her mistress.

I CROSS-QUESTIONED both Mr. Borland and Marie at length without changing their stories. Both accepted the interrogations nervously but answered without any apparent resentment.

"Now if you don't mind, I would like to take your fingerprints to compare them with those on the bathroom door knob and the jewel case," I said after being convinced that further questioning would get me nowhere.

Marie gave a sharp cry. Her eyes opened, horror-stricken. Following her gaze, I saw that Mrs. Borland had fallen over in a dead faint.

Fortunately there were stimulants at hand, and we managed to revive her without calling up the hotel physician.

As her eyes fluttered into consciousness, I had a glimpse of unutterable despair. I was filled with remorse. In my

cross-examination of her husband, I had entirely forgotten her presence, and some of my questions had been quite suggestive.



"If you are innocent, why are you afraid of having your finger-prints taken?"

felt rather than saw the gentleman look sharply at me.

"No, sir," Marie admitted somewhat reluctantly. "What I mean is, I saw the master leave the room and go into the hall after he had placed the ring in the jewel case. I—I—didn't go right into the bathroom. I may as well tell you the truth. I laid out Madam's dinner gown and things first. I know it looks as if I took the ring—but I didn't; I swear I didn't, sir. I really forgot I did those things, I'm that upset. I could hear the master whistling in the drawing-room when I closed the door that opens into the living-room."

Here, let me explain the plan of the Borland suite, as it is quite important. The doors leading from the public corridor opened upon a small private hall. There were two doors; one opened facing Mrs. Borland's bedroom, and one

WAS it possible that she suspected her husband? He had a clear alibi—and yet? He had had his moments of floundering in finding answers which should have been given without embarrassment. When I had inquired where he had purchased the ring, he had been somewhat vague in recalling a private agent who was disposing of a Russian nobleman's jewels and who had been introduced to him by a friend. And when I asked whether the ring had been out of Mrs. Borland's possession at any (Continued on page 80)

The Clue in the COFFIN

By Detective
PHILLIP O'RYAN

As told to
ADOLPHE ROBERTS

BY far the strangest murder mystery I ever investigated was one that broke in Brooklyn, New York, four years ago. It was handed to me in a silver dish, so to speak; for although I was a member of the Homicide Squad at Headquarters, the chances would have been against my getting the assignment if I hadn't happened to be johnny-on-the-spot.

I'd gone off duty at Center Street at nine in the evening. My home was in Flatbush, but I wanted to see an old friend, Ben Conlon, the Lieutenant on the desk at the Poplar Street station. So I left the subway at Borough Hall and hoofed it over to Poplar Street. I found Conlon putting in a slow evening, and we talked about our private affairs for maybe half an hour. Then the telephone rang.

After the Lieutenant had made two or three replies, I was on to the fact that a murder was being reported to him. But murders were a common occurrence in my life, and I wasn't especially interested. He hung up the receiver, finished writing out his notes methodically, and then looked sideways at me.

"Phil," he said, "there's been a woman croaked at 306-A Columbia Heights. Name of Mulholland. The husband turns in the alarm. Want to take it on?"

"Don't know as I do, Ben," I hesitated. Home and bed seemed pretty good to me at that moment.

"If you'll go, it will save time sending to Headquarters for another man," he continued. "The case listens like one that might make a lot of talk. Murder in a private house—huh! I'd not pass it up, if I were you."

His hint of a sensational case decided me. I knew it wouldn't do me a bit of harm in the Department if my work should get into the newspapers in a legitimate way. The moment I nodded my consent, a harness bull named Boyle was detailed to accompany me for guard duty on the scene of the crime. A man from the office of the medical examiner would be sent, the Lieutenant stated.

On my way over to 306-A Columbia Heights, I reflected how seldom it was that any but commonplace murders

occurred in Brooklyn. The Borough jogs along in its own staid fashion, and the old downtown neighborhood known as "the Heights" is its quietest section. Yet, as I looked at the solemn brownstone houses, many of them occupied by the descendants of those who had built them a century ago, they seemed to me to furnish a proper setting for dark mysteries. I'm rather given to thoughts of that kind. They supply the romance in the often monotonous job of being a detective.

That evening, however, I had no sooner reached the Mulholland place than I got the feel of something a good deal more sinister than my fancies. The door was opened by a tall man about forty years old, whose eyes were shifty and whose thin lips curved down unpleasantly in a semi-circle like the mouth of a shark. There was a dim light in the hall, and only one electric bulb burning in the huge living-room beyond. The house had a musty smell, as if it hadn't been cleaned or aired for weeks.

"What's your name?" I asked sharply.

"Henry Mulholland. I telephoned the police. It's my wife who's been killed," he said.

According to Mulholland's story: "I ran into the room—"

"Where's the body?"

"Over there, beside the second window." He waved his arm clumsily in the direction of the living-room.

"What's the idea of this half darkness?" I demanded. "Give us some light."

He hastened to obey, muttering something about the thing having gotten on his nerves.

THEN made out the form of a woman over medium height. She was lying, stone dead, upon the floor between an arm chair and an open window. Her head was bandaged in a towel. One arm was flung straight out, and the wrist had been shattered by a bullet. The other arm was doubled up under her. Her face, seen in profile, was coarse-featured. Its color was a shocking green-tinged pallor.

"Did you bind up the head?" I asked.

When a public official waives an investigation and takes the circumstances of a death for granted, trouble is apt to follow. There was trouble a-plenty when the murder of old Mrs. Mulholland was reported to the police

"Yes, I—I thought I could save her," Mulholland answered. "She was gone, I guess, before I got to her."
"Well, how did it all happen? Give me the story straight and snappy," I said.

"ANNA—that's her name—was sitting alone here in the dark less than half an hour ago. Her eyes were bad, and she kept away from electric light whenever she could. Maybe she'd fallen asleep. I was in the basement, fixing a gas-pipe. Suddenly, I heard my wife cry out, and a scuffling started. Then I heard two revolver shots. I ran up-stairs. An unknown person had just shot my wife and was making a getaway through the window."

"Did you follow the man?"

"No, Officer. I went straight to my wife and tried to save her by tending her wounds. When I found I couldn't help her, I phoned to the station-house."

"Where does that window lead to?"

"To a lawn between this house and the next."

"How would the man make his getaway from the lawn?"

"He might squeeze through the iron bars of the fence on the Columbia Heights side, or he might slip down a pipe or something to Furman Street, in back there."

"Would you know the man, if you saw him again?"

"I'm afraid not. I didn't get a look at his face."

"Was the window open or closed when you last saw your wife alive, before you went to the basement?"

"It was closed."

At the moment, his statement seemed to me

to be on the level. It was entirely possible that, with the house dark, a burglar might have jimmied the window, though such crimes aren't usually attempted as early as nine-thirty in the evening. Burglars seldom shoot to kill unless they think they are themselves in danger. But the corpse lay before my eyes to prove he had been a desperate character. That was that.

I had started to make a search for clues when the door-bell rang. The Assistant Medical Examiner, Dr. Coates,

"—an unknown person had just shot my wife and was making a getaway through the window"

was admitted. He knew me at sight, and didn't trouble to hide from me his eagerness to get through the job in a hurry.

"Is that the woman?" he asked, pointing. "Shot dead, eh, O'Ryan?"

"Oh, there's not the least doubt about her being dead!" I answered.

Coates bent over the body. He did not remove the bandage from her head. He tested the hart, and immediately afterwards wrote out his certificate, giving the cause of death as a revolver bullet through the brain.

WHEN he had finished, Mulholland demanded in a doleful tone, "Can I have the undertaker come and fetch her away?"

"Yes," Dr. Coates answered, "as soon as this officer"—

indicating me—"is through with his examination." He was out of the house almost with his last word.

I went at my job carefully. With the aid of a pocket flashlight, I satisfied myself that a man had broken into the premises. His footprints coming toward the house were plain on the soft earth under the window. A streak of mud showed on the sill, where one shoe had trailed. There was dried mud, too, in several places on the carpet. Why were there no footprints leading away from the house? How had the unknown intruder escaped?

On the white woodwork of the window-frame, I found the prints of three rough fingers, and a little farther down some threads of blue serge had been caught in a splinter of the wood.

THE thug, apparently, had never had his hands on the dead woman. Her clothing was not torn, nor was it marked except with blood. The nature of the bullet wound in the wrist indicated that the revolver had been fired from a distance of several yards. I saw, in my mind's eye, the thug crawling through the window, making a demand for money and then jumping here and there to block the woman's attempts at flight. This would explain the sound of scuffling Mulholland said he had heard. The shooting had come at the end of a battle of words.

It turned out that my mental picture of the crime was

"Queer in what way?" I asked.

"Well, that poor Anna who was murdered was half-witted. You knew it, of course?"

I HAD had no reason to guess such a thing, but it struck me as damn funny that the husband had not seen fit to mention it. It went far to explain why the woman had started a fatal scrap with the burglar.

"Was she too crazy to know what she was doing?" I demanded.

"Oh, she wasn't as bad as that! She was always in the blues, and cried to herself. Just sort of feeble-minded."

"You say the whole family's queer. What about the others?"

"Anna's sister is in a madhouse. And her brother's a regular bum. He had a good education, but never was able to settle down to anything sensible. He works on ships, off and on, as a sailor."

"Then it's only the wife's side of the family that's queer?"

"That's what I mean. Henry Mulholland is sane enough. But he's a bad actor."

"How so?"

"He's been a brute to Anna for years. He's often beaten her—as if the poor thing could help her condition! And he's taken up with another woman, so they say."

If Mrs. Bates had been able to give details, instead of

"I WENT at my job carefully. With the aid of a pocket flashlight, I satisfied myself that a man had broken into the premises. His footprints, coming toward the house, were plain on the soft earth under the window. Why were there no footprints leading away from the house? How had the unknown intruder escaped?"

correct, except for one important detail, which I was far from guessing that first evening.

At the end of two hours I decided that I had learned all that was possible until I could make a more detailed investigation by daylight. I left the patrolman, Boyle, on guard and reported back to Headquarters. My only hunch was a feeling of vague suspicion where Henry Mulholland was concerned. He was a shifty, morbid type of man, whose expressions of grief at his wife's terrible end had struck me as being phoney. There were no witnesses to support his statement, since the couple had lived alone in the house. Their one servant slept out. Somehow, I could not believe Mulholland had told me all he knew.

In the morning, I returned to 306-A Columbia Heights and discovered that an undertaker had removed the corpse at one A. M., barely an hour after I had left.

My second hunt for clues yielded nothing new. It didn't even result in my getting a line on the direction of the murderer's flight. There was plenty of evidence to show he had entered the house, but none as to how he had left. Beyond the trampled earth by the window, the grassy lawn was unmarked. Probably he had squeezed between the iron bars of the fence to the street, as suggested by Mulholland. The point appeared to be of small importance, any way, since there was no denying he had escaped and had had hours in which to find a hiding place.

I THEN extended my inquiry among the neighbors, and at once ran into interesting stuff.

"That whole Mulholland family is queer," a Mrs. Bates across the street told me. "I'm not surprised that something terrible has happened to them."

generalities—if she'd known just a little bit more—the case might have proved to be one of my easy ones. The germ of the mystery was hidden in what she told me. But her supply of gossip was already exhausted. Unfortunately, a detective is rarely so lucky as to get all his leads from a single person. He must pick up loose ends here and there, and then piece them together.

I now believed that Mulholland had either killed his wife, or arranged to have it done by a gun-man, and had called in the police to divert suspicion from himself. I based this on his shifty behavior toward me, and on his presumable eagerness to get rid of the crazy Anna in order to enjoy life with another woman. The theory, however, wouldn't be worth a hoot in Court unless I could produce the gun-man, or unless I could forge a strong chain of circumstantial evidence.

From another neighbor, one Whitman Brown, I learned this:

"Anna Mulholland owned the house at 306-A Columbia Heights. She'd willed it to her husband. He always seemed scared she'd change the will. She wasn't legally insane, you see," said Brown.

Here was another sinister motive.

"Who was the woman he was supposed to be fooling around with on the side?" I asked.

But the man could not give me this information. I was able to pick it up only the next day, when I located the servant who had worked at the Mulholland house, and who I had been told slept out. She was a middle-aged woman named Sarah Kennedy. I found her in a sordid room on Atlantic Avenue.

"Sure, I'm not with Mulholland any more," was the first

statement out of her mouth. "Yesterday morning when I went to work, he paid me what was owing to me and said I needn't come again, glory be to God! I could never have stood it where the poor lady had been murdered, so I couldn't."

The fact that Sarah Kennedy had been fired appeared to me to be a damaging point against Mulholland. What had he to hide from one who had known him too well?

Answering a series of questions, the servant said that the strange couple had used only the basement and first floor of the house. They had kept the up-stairs rooms locked, had never required her to clean them. They had quarreled frequently. She had pitied the wife, and had thought the husband a black-hearted villain.

I then asked her about the other woman in Mulholland's life. Eagerly, a note of malice in her voice, she gave me the name of Katharine Prentice, and the latter's address in an apartment house on Pine-apple Street.

The Prentice person, as was to be expected, would give me absolutely no information about her relations with Henry Mulholland. Yet I got a hint of great value from her.

"What's the idea of persecuting me?" she asked. "Mr. Mulholland is just

a social acquaintance. Why should I have to tell the story of his life?"

"He's in too nervous a condition to reply to the most simple questions," I stalled. "And you were recommended to me as the only living soul who knew much about him."

"Applesauce!" she exclaimed. "What about his brother?"

"I don't think he's in the city," I replied, with deliberate carelessness.

"Jim Mulholland not in the city! The undertaker on Henry Street. You're crazy. Why, he's preparing Anna's body for the funeral right now."

I PRESSED her no further. The importance of other leads faded beside the fact that the undertaker into whose hands the corpse had been rushed with such unseemly haste was Henry Mulholland's brother.

As fast as I could make it, I hurried over to the funeral parlors. The man was not there. His assistant told me that Anna's body had already been sent back in a casket to 306-A Columbia Heights. I did not have a scrap of evidence that I could reasonably offer to halt her burial,

which was set for the next morning. My suspicions were not enough. A detective is apt to get in very wrong if he advances wild theories that may injure the reputation of a murder victim's relatives.

I WAS expected at Headquarters that afternoon, and I thought it best to go there early, in order to see if any dope had turned up concerning the identity of the escaped thug, who might or might not have done the killing. I learned that the finger-prints I had found on the window-frame were not on record with the Department. In other words, he was not an old-timer, had not been Bertilloned. And his getaway had been so complete that only as a result of dumb luck could we hope to pick up his trail.

But there was time to work on the Mulhollands, while Anna was still above ground. I returned to Columbia Heights, partly to examine the scene of the crime once more, partly in the hope of finding the brothers there together.

If I live to be a hundred, I shall probably never again be in so doleful a house of death. I arrived after dark. The shades were drawn, and the musty living-room, where the coffin rested on four chairs, was gloomier than a vault. Henry Mulholland was sitting there, without a friend to keep him company, without even a book to read. His expression had become stolid. My sudden reappearance must have surprised him, but he didn't show it.

"When did your brother leave?" I snapped out.

"A couple of hours ago," he answered, coolly accepting the fact that I knew he had a brother.

"I'm going down to the basement to make some coffee. Want to have a cup with me?"

I pulled back the shroud—and made the most astounding discovery the Mulholland case had so far brought to light

"No, thank you," I said, shuddering. "Don't mind about me. I just want to take measurements of the window."

"Well, I'll be back soon," he said, and walked out.

It suited me to be alone with the body. He had played right into my hands. An idea had occurred to me. No matter how carefully the undertaker had fixed it up, the wound in Anna's head might yet furnish a clue. I'd satisfy myself by looking at it. I hesitated for a moment. Then I stepped up to the open coffin. I pulled back the shroud—and made the most astounding discovery the Mulholland case had so far brought to light.

The top of the head held my gaze at first. It was neatly swathed in a sort of turban, to hide the disfigurement. I reflected it would be quite a job to uncover it. My eyes moved downward and rested on the face, particularly on the waxy cheek nearest to me. I bent (Continued on page 79)



The CRIME in the

*They found her in the schoolroom where
in her heart, dead. Who killed her—*

By Sheriff GLENWOOD MAXWELL

As told to
CHADWYN BAEN

TO be first to greet the teacher was the early-morning ambition of the younger children of Rural School District 76. The race was close one day, when three little girls squeezed through the school door at the same time, shouting triumphantly:

"Good morning, Miss Wilson! I'm first this——"

The words died on their innocent lips as the sight of the thing on the floor by the teacher's desk petrified them with horror. For a moment they stood mute—eyes dilated and color gone. Then, so terrified that they could not even scream, they stumbled from the room.

Fred Harris, the genial driver of the free bus for the school district, was inspecting a tire on his big car at the front of the building, when the children in speechless terror fled to him for protection.

"What is it, girls?" he asked kindly.

But the children could only gesticulate feebly and babble incoherently. Sensing that something was amiss, Harris ran up the steps and into the one-room building. Before him in the grey light of early morning, her life-blood hardly more than dry on the hellish knife that spoke silently of the brutal crime that had been committed in the lonely schoolroom, lay all that was mortal of the pretty Miss Wilson.

Harris, stupefied by the fearful presence of death, backed from the place and closed the door.

"Get in the bus, everybody," he called hoarsely; "there'll be no school to-day."

Immediately he was the center of inquiring faces. What was the matter? What was wrong? But even the boldest child present did not question the man's authority in announcing that there would be no session that day.

The news of the murder of Emily Wilson spread through the community with the speed of a forest fire before a mighty gale. In an hour the schoolhouse was the immediate objective of three-fourths of the population of the sparsely settled county.

I HURRIED to the scene, to find Blake Simpson, county school superintendent, holding back a curious crowd at the front door.

"I'll take charge here," I told him. "Get to the nearest telephone and ask the police department in Wallaston to send Dick Hemlin, the finger-print expert, out here at once. Also call Coroner Lake and an undertaker."

"Isn't there something we can do?" cried a middle-aged woman, wiping her eyes.

"Not now," I answered, "unless you can tell me something of Miss Wilson's movements during the past few days."

A dozen voices spoke at once, none of which gave any information considered worth while.

"I didn't know Miss Wilson," volunteered a young farmer, "but I was out after the cows this morning about five, when I saw two lumberjacks coming from this direction."

"Describe them."

"Well, they were just ordinary lumberjacks, wearing brown mackinaws, high-laced shoes, and slouch hats. They had only one roll of blankets between them. I met them on the road going south. They were sure in some hurry, and I did not get a good look at their faces."

"Did they say anything as they passed you?" I asked.

"No, they didn't even look my way," said the farmer. "I didn't think anything of it at the time, but when I heard the teacher was murdered, I thought I'd better come up and tell about seeing them."

There were about fifteen men in the crowd gathered about me as I stood on the schoolhouse steps.

"You fellows scatter and search for these lumberjacks," I ordered. "I deputize all of you, and you have the authority to arrest anyone answering the description of either of them. Hurry up! Perhaps they are hiding in the vicinity."

THE men responded with alacrity, some cutting across pastures on foot, others starting off in their cars.

When the coroner arrived, I cautioned him to wait for the finger-print expert from Wallaston before touching anything in the room. It was the first time Lake had been called upon to function in his official capacity. There had not been another murder in the county for fifteen years.

"Lord A'mighty, this is awful," he whispered. "When will the expert be here?"

"Perhaps in an hour," I answered. "Wallaston is about fifty miles from here, and there is no one in this county who knows anything about finger-prints."

Superintendent Simpson returned a few minutes later with a man whom he introduced as Mr. Hender, a member of the board of school directors.

I then ordered the growing crowd back into the road and held a conference with Coroner Lake, Simpson, and Hender. From the discussion, I learned that Miss Wilson's predecessor had resigned after a brief stay of two weeks, being forced out by inability to curb the insubordination of some of the older pupils. Miss Wilson had succeeded where the former teacher had failed, becoming very popular with her students from the very beginning of her work. She had been with the district nearly two years, and had lived with the Brookfields, a prosperous family owning extensive mines in the bordering State. Miss Wilson had organized a literary club among the married women of the district, and had been interested in general community betterment. A graduate of an Eastern university, she had come highly recommended by a well-known teachers' agency.

As we talked, a bearded man of some fifty years of age drove up in a roadster.

"There's Brookfield now," said Simpson. "Perhaps he can tell us something of importance."

"I'm the sheriff," I informed the newcomer as he pushed his way through the crowd and approached the door. "No one

Country Schoolhouse

she had taught young children—a dagger lumberjack, sweetheart, or some unknown?

is to enter until Hemlin comes. In the meantime, what can you tell us of Miss Wilson's movements yesterday?"

"Very little," replied Brookfield. "I was not at home

"Seemingly not," explained Brookfield. "The wife and I retired about nine—Miss Wilson had a duplicate key—and it was only this morning that the wife discovered that Miss Wilson's bed had not been slept in. She immediately telephoned the Webbers and was told that Miss Wilson had not been there and that there had been no bridge party there last night. We were still wondering what could be wrong when Fred Harris came by in the bus and told us that Miss Wilson had been murdered."

AT this point, there was a commotion in the yard. A lad was running from behind the schoolhouse, carrying an army blanket in his arms. Immediately he was the center of interest, everybody crowding in to look. I took the blanket from the boy and spread it out. On one corner was a reddish-brown stain.

"Where did you get this?" I demanded.

"In back of them lilac bushes," the boy shouted in his excitement. "Me and Ed was kinda looking around, and there it was, tucked down 'tween the branches. I seen it first, but Ed—"

The finding of the bloodstained blanket corroborated the farmer's statement that he had seen the two lumberjacks—one of whom was without the usual roll of blankets. It also emphasized the importance of catching the fugitives. However, knowing the value of undisturbed fingerprints in such cases, I did not leave my place on guard at the schoolhouse until Hemlin arrived.

With Dick Hemlin, Coroner Lake and I entered the room of death. A glance was sufficient to tell us that the young woman had died only after a fierce struggle for life.

The schoolroom was upset, and the

"When I woke up the next morning, my hand touched a cold clammy face"

when she returned from her work yesterday afternoon. When I came in about eight o'clock, my wife told me that Miss Wilson had gone up to the Webbers' for supper and a game of bridge, and that Mr. Webber would bring her back in his car afterwards. We were not to wait up for her."

"And did she return last night?"

furniture, books, and papers were in wild disorder. Hemlin's minute inspection of the door, the windows, the papers, the furniture, and the knife, was punctuated with

grunts of satisfaction as he moved quickly about the room.

"The finger-prints on the handle of the knife are the woman's own!" he stated when he had finished.

"But this couldn't be suicide!" exclaimed Simpson, with a wave of his hand about the disordered room.

"Well, hardly," assented Hemlin grimly.

"Then—"

"Well, let me finish," interrupted Hemlin. "I find three other sets of finger-prints—all different—about the door-knob. One set of them is partially duplicated on the back of the desk chair."

"How about the windows?" asked Lake.

"No fresh marks there," replied Hemlin. Turning to me, he added: "I shall take a number of photographs and supply you with prints as soon as I can."

Returning to the court-house, I sent

"It doesn't seem right, our sitting here, and poor Miss Wilson—"

out telegrams to the officers in surrounding towns to be on the lookout for the lumberjacks. Since I had only a meager description of them, I did not hope for much encouragement in that direction. However, the following week, the sheriff in Louistown, in the southeastern part of the State, wired that he was holding two men who were unable to give satisfactory accounts of their whereabouts on the night of the murder.

WITH a deputy, I went down to Louistown and brought back the two suspects and lodged them in separate cells in the jail, which is on the second floor above my office in the court-house. The older one of the lumberjacks, who gave his name as Clifford Corrigan, was tall, muscular, unshaven. He had fought the officers who arrested him, and made life miserable for me all the way up on the train. The other was a youth hardly more than out of his teens, but his leering eyes pronounced him capable of almost any crime in the calendar. He gave the name of Sid Burltan.

Since I am not equipped for finger-print work, I asked Hemlin to come over again from Wallaston. When he finished making finger-print cards of the two men, Hemlin came down to my office with the exclamation:

"You've got your murderers all right. Both of these men were in the schoolhouse on the night of the murder. Here is positive proof."

He handed me the cards showing the prints just taken and those photographed on the schoolhouse door.

I took the cards up to Corrigan's cell and told him what the finger-prints showed. He was silent, his face expressing neither fear nor anger.

"Have you nothing to say?" I asked.

"What's the use? A jury would hang any man—innocent or guilty—on evidence like that."

"We'll see about that," I persisted.

"Tell your story."

"Might as well," Corrigan assented, after some persua-



tion. "Sid and I were sore at the foreman up in the woods and decided to quit. We got our pay along in the afternoon and set out to walk to the nearest railway crossing, where we expected to flag the evening train for Wallaston. When we reached the crossing, it was dark. The train had already gone through, and it looked like rain. We walked on, looking for a shed or a culvert where we could spend the night. About a quarter of a mile further, we came to the schoolhouse. We expected to force open a window, but found the door was not locked. We slipped in, and, for fear of attracting attention from the road, did not strike a light, but rolled out our blankets and lay down in the dark. We talked awhile and went to sleep.

"When I woke up the next morning, I stretched out my arms, and my hand touched a cold, clammy face. It made

me kinda dizzy—I saw that we had slept in the room with a murdered woman. I kicked Sid, and he got up swearing we were done for. When we rolled up our blankets, one corner of mine was stuck to the floor.

"That's blood," says Sid; 'you better get rid of that blanket.'

"Where can I put it?" I asked.

"Anywhere, but we gotta beat it quick," says Sid, excited.

"As we went out the door, Sid says: 'You ain't gonna be caught with that bloody blanket, are you?'

"What can I do?"

"Chuck it somewheres," says Sid; 'back in them bushes, but step on the gas, we gotta beat it quick.'

I RAN back and stuffed the blanket deep down among the leaves, and we hurried down the road. That's all, and it's the God's truth—every word of it."

Sid Burltan told substantially the same story with the added detail that he had waited in the road near a farmhouse earlier in the afternoon while Corrigan went in to



"The child is right," the judge managed to say

telephone, to find out when the train would pass the crossing. I went back to Corrigan's cell to check up on the telephone item.

"Are you sure you told me everything?" I asked in an offhand manner.

"Absolutely," he emphasized.

"Then your pal would be lying if he said you phoned the teacher to meet you at the schoolhouse?" I insinuated, watching him closely.

"Did Sid say that?" he demanded with an oath.

"Did you telephone?" I countered.

"I telephoned, but not to the teacher. I didn't even know there was a teacher. I called the station at Van Horn to know when the train went through there on its way to Wallaston."

"Did Sid hear you?"

"No, he waited out on the road."

"Did anyone about the house hear your end of the telephone conversation?"

"I don't know; the woman of the place went out into the yard while I was talking."

"Then I suppose we could check up on your story by

inquiring of the agent at Van Horn," I remarked dryly.

"But," Corrigan swore under breath, "I couldn't get the station. The line was busy, or something was wrong."

"Very interesting," I commented, not without sarcasm.

Corrigan shrugged and remained silent.

My next move was to drive up to the lumber camp where Corrigan had said they worked. The foreman was not surprised to learn that the two men were in jail on a charge of murder. They had a bad reputation among the fellows, and were constantly in trouble with the boss. At the farmhouse where Corrigan had telephoned, the woman told me that the two lumberjacks had stopped there at about five o'clock. The short one had remained out in the road while the tall one came up and asked to use the telephone.

"My husband was not at home," explained the woman, "and I was afraid to refuse the man. While he was at the phone, I went out in the yard as if to feed the chickens—I did not care to be in the house alone with him—and so did not hear any of his conversation."

At the Brookfield home, where Miss Wilson had lived, I learned that Mrs. Brookfield had grown very fond of the teacher, and was badly broken up over the tragedy. Mrs. Brookfield told me that Miss Wilson had returned from her school work at about four o'clock in the afternoon. Some time later—it may have been an hour or more—the telephone bell rang. Mrs. Brookfield was in the kitchen, and Miss Wilson answered. In a few minutes she came to the kitchen and said that the Webbers wanted her to come up for supper and give them some lessons in bridge. She said she would walk, and that Mr. Webber would bring her back in the car afterwards.

"Have you any reason to doubt her story?" I asked.

"NO," answered Mrs. Brookfield. "The Webbers were just learning bridge, and she had been there one or two times before to teach them."

From the Brookfield place, I went up the road past the schoolhouse to call on the Webbers. Mrs. Webber told me that she had not telephoned Miss Wilson, and had not played bridge that night. She had not seen the teacher for two or three days previous to the murder.

As I returned to my office, I tried to reason it all out: Corrigan had telephoned at about five. Miss Wilson had received a call at about the same hour. Unless Corrigan was acquainted with the Webbers' ambition to learn to play bridge, he would not be able to deceive the teacher with such an invitation as Miss Walton had received. But someone had deceived the school-teacher, or she had lied to Mrs. Brookfield for reasons not yet apparent. Could there have been some previous relationship between Corrigan and the teacher? I wondered. If so, was he trying to blackmail her? Had she on her part, slipped away to meet him at the school to dissuade him from publishing some indiscretion? Unable to answer these questions, I decided to be on the alert for further developments.

The importance of the case against the lumberjacks caused minor matters pending on the docket to be postponed, and the trial of Corrigan and Burltan was rushed before the court. A jury was impaneled, and the trial began.

SUMMED up, the case of the prosecution was as follows: Corrigan and Burltan had a bad reputation at the lumber camp; Corrigan had telephoned, and Miss Wilson had received a call at the same time; Miss Wilson was lured to the schoolhouse and murdered; Corrigan's bloodstained blanket was found outside, and the finger-prints of both men were unmistakably identified on the inside of the door; the two lumberjacks had fled and resisted arrest.

The jury was out less than ten minutes, bringing in a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree. The prisoners were sentenced to hang.

The countryside expressed satisfaction at the speedy administration of justice. The (Continued on page 92)

The MYSTERY of the

IN the library of his palatial Washington home, some time during New Year's eve and morning, Commodore Whitney was murdered. Some unknown person had driven a dagger through his heart. When Detective Barlow took charge of the case, he quickly unearthed the fact that Commodore Whitney was engaged to marry his housekeeper, Mrs. Ruggles. At the time of the murder there were known to be in his house, Harriet Whitney, the niece of the

The murderer of Commodore Whitney of Detective Barlow is tested to its place, how would you

dead man, the servants, including the colored maids and Mose Thompson, chauffeur and general factotum of the household.



Blue Car

By NATALIE
SUMNER LINCOLN

is revealed—but not until the acumen fullest extent. If you had been in his have handled the case?

Ned Terry, legal representative of the dead man, on that fatal New Year's eve drove home in his blue car. But with the morning he discovered that while it was identical in make, he had picked the wrong car, which was the new model of the same company. He was summoned to the Whitney home by the beautiful but deeply distressed Harriet. Ned Terry drove Harriet out to visit her brother at Walter Reed hospital, where he was a patient suffering from shell shock. On the way home Harriet pointed out certain cryptic marks on the dashboard of Terry's car.

The next night Barlow, the detective, remained in the library hoping that the murderer would return. Someone stealthily entered the room near midnight. Barlow grappled with the intruder, who escaped, leaving only a silk stocking, which had been used for a mask, in the detective's hand. At the coroner's inquest evidence was found that Commodore Whitney always went armed and that Harriet had quarreled with him the night before the murder. In the middle of her evidence Harriet fainted and the inquest was postponed. At the funeral she saw a strange shadow on the wall which she could not identify as that of anyone present.

WHEN the will was read, Harriet was discovered to be her uncle's heiress. On opening the Commodore's safe it was found that one hundred thousand dollars in bonds, mentioned as a dowry for Mrs. Ruggles, had been stolen.

Three days later Terry finds his lost blue car abandoned on a side street. In it is found the Commodore's rattan sword-cane. Then comes a curio dealer from New York who swears he sold Harriet Whitney the murder dagger.

Harriet is taken to Police Headquarters and accused of murdering Commodore Whitney. Detective Barlow had found a letter written by Harriet's mother, thanking her for a ten-thousand-dollar bond.

Harriet would have wrenched her hand free, but Mitchell held it against the Bible with deathlike grip. "Uncle Jim was alive when he presented me with the bond," she said. Except for a slight huskiness, her voice was entirely natural.

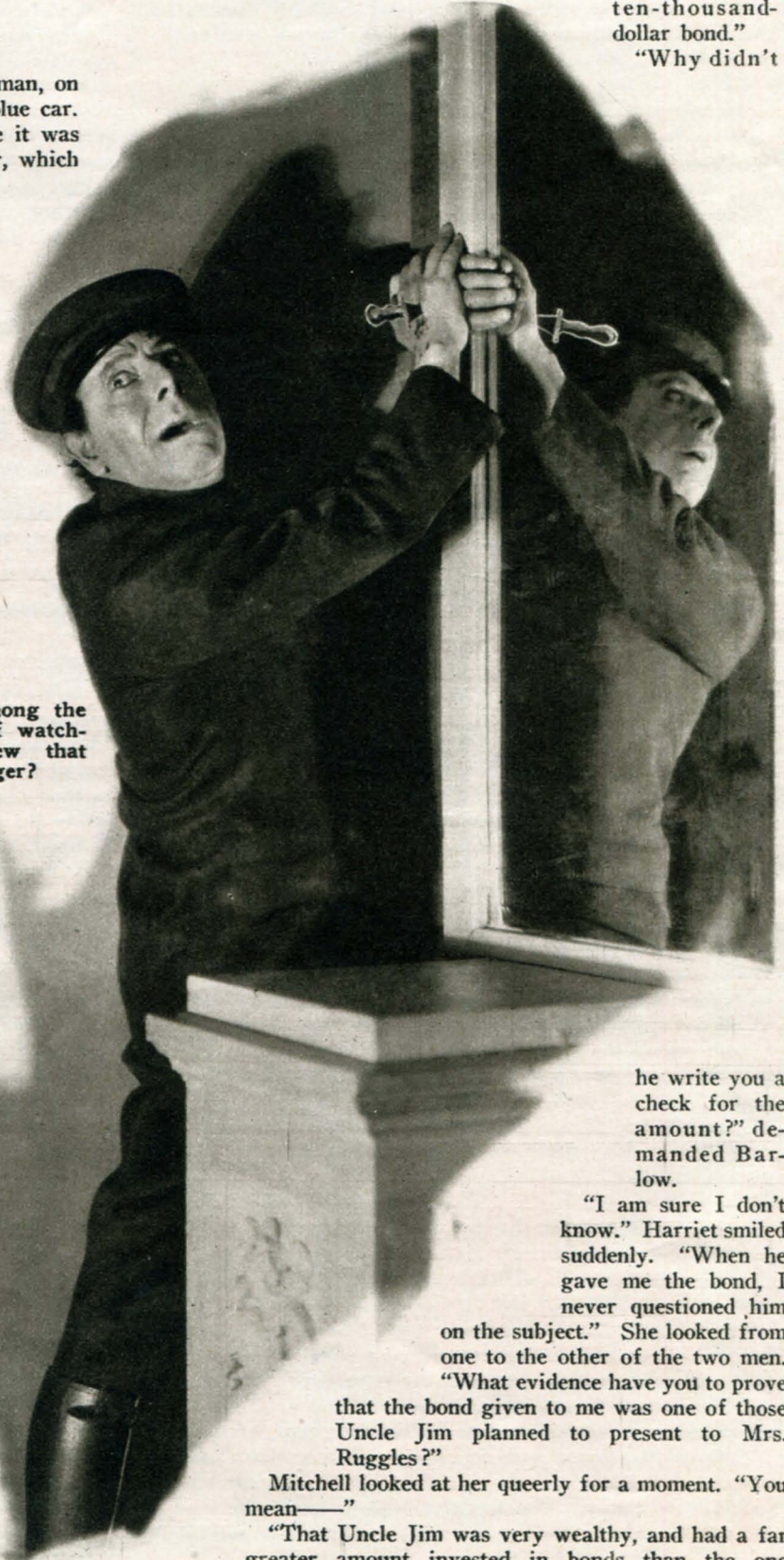
"Where did you get this page from my mother's letter?" she asked.

"You acknowledge it was written by your mother?" quickly.

"Of course I do," she exclaimed. "I asked my uncle for financial assistance and he gave me the ten-thousand-dollar bond."

"Why didn't

Who among the group of watchers threw that dagger?



he write you a check for the amount?" demanded Barlow.

"I am sure I don't know." Harriet smiled suddenly. "When he gave me the bond, I never questioned him on the subject." She looked from one to the other of the two men.

"What evidence have you to prove that the bond given to me was one of those Uncle Jim planned to present to Mrs. Ruggles?"

Mitchell looked at her queerly for a moment. "You mean—"

"That Uncle Jim was very wealthy, and had a far greater amount invested in bonds than the one

hundred thousand dollars which has disappeared," she explained rapidly. "Mr. Mitchell, you never have answered my question," she added after a pause. "Where did you get this sheet from my mother's letter?"

"From your confederate——"

"I have none."

MITCHELL, leaned back in his chair and regarded her steadfastly.

"Miss Whitney, the Bible is still there at your elbow. Can you place your hand upon it and swear that you do not know who killed your uncle?"

The minutes ticked themselves away and still Harriet remained apparently tongue-tied. It was Barlow who finally broke the silence.

"Shall the inspector repeat his question?"

Harriet settled back in her chair. "Well, when I am convinced that Mr. Mitchell has the legal right to put the question, I will answer it."

Harriet closed her eyes and would say not another word. They waited. The minutes became an hour, the hour stretched into another, and then into a third.

without the formality of knocking. Mrs. Ruggles, reposing comfortably on the couch looked up, while her son, seated in the Commodore's favorite armchair, laid down the magazine he had been glancing through.

"Where's sister?" asked John.

Mrs. Ruggles regarded him in mild surprise. "Didn't she come in with you?"

"With me?" John shook his head. "No, Harriet hasn't been with me since she left here this afternoon to go to the Cathedral."

"What!" The ejaculation came from the hunchback. "Why, Mother and I thought Miss Whitney was dining with you when she didn't show up for dinner."

"She wasn't here for dinner!" he stammered. His startled gaze swept the room and rested on the dial of the mantel clock. "It's after ten. Have you looked in her room?" Without waiting for any response he ran from the study and they heard him calling Harriet's name, softly at first, and then more loudly.

Left to themselves, mother and son exchanged glances.

"Very odd!" the former commented in a low tone.

Stuffing his hands in his pockets, Ruggles stared in front

MANY of the readers of TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES Magazine have written in to ask us to run a fiction story. We aim to please all. For those of our readers who want fiction along with the truth, we consider ourselves most fortunate to obtain this masterpiece by a master writer of detective fiction—*Natalie Sumner Lincoln*.

Some time later Harriet opened her eyes to see that Mitchell, as well as Barlow, had gone. Another detective took Barlow's place. Harriet looked down again in haste as the newcomer repeated Mitchell's question over and over with varying intonations. She scarcely heard him.

From the doorway Inspector Mitchell beckoned to the detective on Harriet's left, and gave him a few whispered directions.

"You can go home, Miss Whitney," he stated; "there's a taxi outside."

Harriet rose, and still maintaining the silence behind which she had entrenched herself, she walked with Mitchell to the entrance of the building. Not until she was safely inside the car did she glance at her wrist watch—midnight!

One side of the glass partition between the driver and his passenger was open and Harriet leaned over and addressed him.

"Ten dollars if you get me home in five minutes," she said. "And don't drive to the front door, but stop at the garage entrance."

PAUL BARLOW, in the taxi driver's seat and in uniform, stepped on the gas.

John Whitney paused, latch-key in hand, and recrossed the portico. His foot had certainly struck against something on his way to the front door. Stooping down he groped about until his fingers touched a small bundle. Carrying it to the electric light over the front door, John found the hastily tied bundle coming open at one end. A look convinced him that its contents belonged to him.

Entering the house with characteristic haste, John looked first in the drawing-room and then in the library; both rooms were empty. The sound of voices inside the study, the door of which stood ajar, caused him to enter the room

of him. Involuntarily his mother glanced in the same direction.

On the wall opposite where she lay was silhouetted a likeness of Commodore Whitney! The profile brought out with startling distinctness his aquiline nose and pugnacious chin. Before their staring eyes, the likeness faded away and only the blank wall confronted them.

With a low moan Mrs. Ruggles wrung her hands in agony.

"Oh Rudy, did you see that?" she cried. "Oh, I wish I hadn't——"

Ruggles moved swiftly about the study and from every angle examined the blank wall where they had seen the Commodore's silhouette apparently materialize before their eyes. Then he left the room.

It was nearly midnight when Patrick O'Day appeared in the doorway of Ned Terry's house in response to the violent ringing of the front door bell.

"Who are you, disturbin' honest folk at this hour!" he shouted.

THE man standing with his finger still on the bell button, stepped forward, and in the light from the reception hall behind him, the excited Irishman recognized Rudolph Ruggles. "Excuse me, sir," standing to one side, so that the hunchback could enter. "I thought y' was the other one come back.

"The young master's not in, Mr. Ruggles," went on O'Day. "Will y' wait?"

The hunchback hesitated. "Has he been here at all this evening?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know where I can reach him?"

O'Day eyed him inquisitively. "That's what the lunatic

who called here awhile back, wanted to know," he said. "Would y' mind tellin' me what's up, sir? Is the young master in trouble?"

"Who do you mean by 'lunatic'?" asked the hunchback cautiously.

"I don't know, sir." O'Day shook a puzzled head.

Then, changing the subject, "There's a cable come for Mr. Ned some hours gone." O'Day concealed a yawn with difficulty. "The young master has been keepin' late hours," he remarked, "I'm afraid you'll wait some time, sir."

"That's all right. I have the evening paper——"

So John Whitney had been there before him!

Unable to keep still, the hunchback wandered up and down the office and from there into the reception hall. He noticed the rugs were out of place. Evidently John Whitney, in his hurricane entrance, had slipped on the rug. Ruggles paused and looked more carefully about him. The rugs were not the only objects out of place. From an open door which led to a large coat closet, protruded hats, caps and golf sticks. Ruggles smiled to himself. Was it possible that John, excited by his sister's absence, had thought to find her hiding in the coat closet? He stepped inside the closet and switched on the electric light. The same disorder was visible the whole length of the closet.

RUGGLES stooped down to gather some golf sticks together, so as to close the door, and as he did so he struck—a cane? No, the cane! The gold crest was unmistakably like that on Commodore Whitney's signet-ring.

"Well, sir, what are you doing in my closet?" demanded a voice behind him.

"Waiting for you, Mr. Terry," responded Ruggles calmly. "And wondering where you picked this up?" raising the cane as he spoke.

The pupils of Terry's eyes contracted to mere pin pricks.

"Is the question prompted by idle curiosity?" he asked.

"How long have you been here, Mr. Terry?" the hunchback demanded, striving to keep excitement out of his voice.

"Long enough to take an interest in what you have been doing; how much longer do you wish to remain?"

"Only long enough to find out what has become of Miss

Whitney," was the bitter retort.

Terry's air of indifference gave place to startled wonder.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"That Miss Whitney never returned home for dinner——"

WHAT! Why I left her on the portico about seven o'clock."

"Great heavens!"

Terry sprang toward the front door. Ruggles, at his side, snatched up his hat and overcoat and jumped into the blue coupé after his companion. Terry drove as if possessed.

Within a few feet of the closed (Continued on page 88)



"Harriet, I dared not try to help you"

"My wife went to the door and in burst a youngish man, with gray hair, demandin' to see Mr. Ned, an' when he learned the young master was out, he asked to see the young lady.

"There's no young lady," replies my wife.

"He flew in a passion and says he knowed Mr. Terry had her here.

"He runs past my wife upstairs and she hears him a-calling and a-racing from room to room. And then she comes for me, working in the basement, banking the furnace fire."

"What then?" prompted Ruggles as the servant stopped to take breath.

"I hurried up here, but he had gone."

"Was the 'lunatic' Mr. John Whitney, by chance?"

O'Day scratched his head. "I can't say, sir, neither my wife nor I have ever seen Mr. Whitney."

On the *Trail* of the Orloff BLUE

*No detective ever should overlook small things.
limp, he started on the trail of a murderer*

By NEIL JENNINGS

Private Investigator

and

EDWIN A. GOEWY

"I bet there's only one man in America with a limp like that—Maurice Kofel. But why is he shambling along in that baggy outfit, instead of being dressed in the extreme of fashion?"

This thought flashed through my mind while I sat near the rail along Dufferin Terrace, Quebec's stretch of boardwalk, listening to the military band from the near-by citadel and watching the lights on the craft which crept lazily along the bosom of the St. Lawrence, two hundred feet below.

The man who limped had appeared suddenly from the shadow of a kiosk a few feet distant. At each step, his left knee gave way and struck against his right leg.

As the man started away, moving toward the darker end of the great promenade, there came a second mental query; what was Maurice Kofel, crook, former convict and gem dealer doing there in disguise? Shabby clothes made another man out of the fashionable Maurice.

Upon the instant, forgetting that I had been but a few days in the old French city where I had come for a long and much needed rest, I was on his trail. I was anxious to learn more of the present purpose of the man known to the police of two continents as "Maurie the Shadow," and who, until recent years, had been the arch smuggler of the Atlantic seaboard.

Reason told me to forget him and yield to the demands of my health, but my detective instincts would not be denied. I had a hunch that something was amiss, and I hoped to learn what it was.

Leaving the terrace, he climbed one of the narrow, dark streets beyond the Governor's Garden. I thought he did this to avoid observation, but when he made his way down the other side of the hill and turned into brilliantly lighted St. Jean Street, the business thoroughfare of the upper town, I realized my mistake. He had been favoring his crippled leg by avoiding the crowds.

I HAD known the man by sight for years. But I was certain that he did not know me, though twice I had laid traps to catch him smuggling gems into the United States, and had failed. I was careful not to let him learn he was being trailed. This was difficult, for he paused before many of the shop windows, studying articles on display which were unusual to the traveler from the States. And from this I judged he had just arrived in the city; that everything was new to him.

When I was beginning to wonder if he ever would turn so I could obtain a full view of his features, he entered a

tobacconist's. As he came out I obtained the good look I desired. And I also got a better view of his massive shoulders and powerful arms which had made him a terror to the continental police at close quarters.

Beyond question, the man was Maurice Kofel.

No thought of abandoning the trail came to me after that. Twice he had beaten me. This chance meeting might give me opportunity to trip him.

Passing beyond the last of the theatres and shops, he continued along the thoroughfare until the abutments of old St. John's Gate were reached. Then he began climbing the hill toward the rooming-house district, where there were sufficient shadows to enable me to follow him undetected.

Finally he entered a shabby old house. While I watched, lights flashed from the windows on the second floor. Then Maurice appeared and closed the half-shutters before each. I noted in the window of the house directly facing the one in which I was interested, a sign reading, "Chambre à louer." I wrote down the number, intending to return on the morrow and rent that vacant room.

ON the way back to the hotel, I tried to figure out some explanation of why Maurice was in hiding in Quebec. Some years back, after a long period of beating the authorities of many countries, he had been caught dead to rights by the French police in a gigantic swindle. In the fight to avoid arrest, he had received the wound which had crippled him for life. After serving his term he had come to New York City and set himself up in business with a relative as a dealer in gems. And, according to what I had heard, he had conducted a legitimate enterprise.

Whatever he had done or contemplated doing, he had chosen an ideal hideout. Any but minor crimes were practically unknown in Quebec, and its few policeman paid scant heed to the always numerous transient population.

Early the next morning I hired the room in the house opposite Maurice's hideout. I paid liberally and as I spoke French well, my landlady became talkative. While we stood near a window gossiping, Kofel came out and went down the street. She saw that I watched him.

"He walks queerly, doesn't he?" she said. "And he's rather strange besides. He came yesterday, to my sister's—she runs the place over there. He talks but little and goes out for all his meals. His name is Bael, he said, and he is here to search for a half-brother, who came to Quebec from Paris after the war."

When she had gone I watched for Maurice's return. My vigil was brief. He came up the hill with newspapers beneath his arm. At the doorway of his temporary home he encountered a messenger boy. A brief exchange of words and Kofel handed the boy some coins and took the envelope. Without delay he opened it, read the telegram, then plunged inside. But I guessed the news was disturbing, for I saw him pacing his room for half an hour thereafter.

Later, at the immigration office, I looked over the declaration Maurice had made out on the train which had brought him to Canada. He had used the name "Alexander Bael,"

DIAMOND

When Neil Jennings spotted the man with a and gem thief of international reputation

and stated he was from New York. Then I returned to my rooms to continue my watch.

IT was shortly after one o'clock when my man again left the house, walked to St. Jean Street and took a taxicab. I trailed him to the Canadian Pacific Railway Terminal, where each of us took up positions where we could see the passengers who, at two o'clock, arrived on the train which had left New York the previous night.

In the hustle and bustle of persons running between the

Several persons entered and left. Then a tall, beautiful woman, stately in her gown of severe black, alighted from a cab. I gasped as I recognized her as Olga Vershoft, known to the police of Europe and America as "The Countess," and also a notorious smuggler.

Luckily I glanced toward Maurie as she caught sight of him against the wall. And I distinctly saw him make the



What was Kofel doing with that woman?

customs and baggage rooms and the taxicabs, I saw no one in whom Maurice appeared to be particularly interested. But I was right behind him when he re-entered his taxi. And I was not far distant when he reached one of the upper-town hotels, and limped to a post near the main entrance.

mute signs with his fingers for "seven o'clock." Confident the woman knew me no better than Kofel, I followed her inside and discovered she used an alias when registering.

Both were smugglers, both were in Canada under assumed names, and the signal indicated they were there by

pre-arrangement. What were they after? In my recollection of the cases of both, I never had known them to work together. However, what I had seen satisfied me that the telegram of the morning had been from the woman.

If I had read the signal right, it meant they would meet that evening at seven. I decided my best course was to watch Maurie. There were too many exits to the hotel for me to be certain I could keep track of the Countess.

My hunch proved a good one. When Kofel left his rooms at six, I followed. He walked straight to the Governor's Garden, where he chose a bench beneath a great tree which concealed him from the street side. I located another from which I could watch him. I stretched out, and with my hat pulled over my eyes, pretended to sleep.

THE Countess entered the park from behind us, moved about for a time, then took her place beside Maurie with a quick exchange of hand clasps. Then she drew some papers from a bag—some of them looked as though they might be newspaper clippings—over which they bent with heads close together. They talked earnestly, and after a time their excited gestures made me believe they were quarreling. I would have given much to have caught a few words, but they did not raise their voices. The misunderstanding evidently was adjusted, for they resumed their intent discussion, talking until long after darkness almost hid them from me.

When they parted, the Countess headed straight for the hotel, while Maurie swung himself clumsily up the hill and disappeared in the general direction of his hideout. Then I too made for the hotel, trusting to the morrow to uncover some new phase of the mystery.

But within a few minutes, all thoughts of the arch smuggler and his confederate were driven from my mind.

As I entered the great lobby I heard the name I had assumed for my vacation being paged. The youth piloted me to the manager, who turned over a letter with "urgent" scrawled in great letters across the envelope.

HURRYING to my room I found it was from Pyrke, my office manager. The fact that it was in code established its importance. And, as I translated, I received the greatest shock which had come to me in a long time; one which at

first stunned me, then sent me hot with rage. It read:

Professor Andrew Drysdale was murdered in the study of his West End Avenue home some time in the night of June tenth. Rogers Lansing, his secretary, who has been making his home with the Professor for some time, had been sent to Washington on a business errand by his employer in the morning of the same day, to be absent about twenty-four hours. Toge Muri, the Japanese man-of-all-work at the place for two years, had departed more than a week previous to visit friends in Seattle. The Professor was alone in the house.

Drysdale worked in his laboratory at the University until four in the afternoon, then left for his home. That was the last seen of him alive. However, neighbors saw lights in the windows of his study until ten, after which,

as far as has been learned, the house remained dark. Lansing discovered the body of the

Professor lying near a desk when he returned about noon on the eleventh. The murderer had beaten Drysdale to death with a short sword of Oriental make, snatched from the collection of Far Eastern war implements which hung on the walls of the room. His face was very badly hacked, his skull crushed, and his hands cut, evidently in attempting to ward off the killer's blows. Overturned chairs and the Professor's torn clothing indi-

cated that the old man had made a desperate fight for his life.

Obviously the assassin kept his wits. The blood upon the sword and the papers upon the desk had been smeared to obliterate all fingerprints. The killer had gone to the bathroom and washed his hands. The physician summoned stated Drysdale had been dead since about the previous midnight.

Heavy velvet curtains had been drawn across the study windows. The Professor never closed these hangings. Probably the murderer took this precaution, and to prevent any light showing outside while he was there.

In the rear of the house, on the same floor as the study, is the library. When Lansing returned, he found a light burning there, beneath which was a chair with an open book lying on the arm. The authorities believe Drysdale was reading or had fallen asleep before the killer entered. In the study, in display cabinets, strong boxes, and a safe, were the Professor's extensive collection of curios, including some gems of worth and many semi-precious stones. These appeared to be undisturbed. Lansing's check-up showed that, apparently, nothing had been taken except several copies of the papers which were to have been used in the chemistry examinations next week.



It seemed to me I was in for a battle to the death. Maurie was a killer!

The police are working on the theory that one of the students in Drysdale's classes, realizing he was not prepared to pass the tests, went to the Professor's study to steal copies of the questions to be used. Seeing no lights in the windows, the thief evidently believed the Professor was away or had retired. Entrance was gained by forcing a basement window in the shadow of the stoop. Probably the killer was surprised while in the act of stealing the papers; he may have been recognized and denounced by his teacher. The police believe that the Professor was killed when he tried to detain the robber or was deliberately murdered to prevent him disclosing the identity of the intruder.

The authorities support this contention with the argument that because the murderer used a weapon snatched from the wall instead of a revolver, he was not a professional thief and did not come prepared for extreme emergencies. However, on the day the body was found, they informed the newspapers only that Drysdale had been killed, probably by a robber. Yesterday they gave out their theory concerning a student as the perpetrator of the crime, and why. That story was given considerable space.

We do not know whether to accept the police theory or not. We know facts which they do not, which makes us doubt it. If a student killed Drysdale, he also committed a second crime, opportunity for which came to him unexpectedly. Here is something for your own information; a reason why you should return home at once. Drysdale was identified with something of great importance, the nature of which I can't state even in code. His death and the attendant circumstances are likely to produce disastrous results in high places. When you learn why we have not confided in the police, you will appreciate what a tremendous problem confronts us.

Knowing how much you needed a rest, we hesitated to summon you, hoping to solve the mystery ourselves. We are against a stone wall. We must have your help.

The funeral took place to-day.

Though Pyrke knew I frequently consulted with Drysdale on technical matters, he did not know of our intimate relations since my boyhood. Lansing, however, knew the truth; that the old man looked upon me almost as a son. But he probably had not urged sending for me after the tragedy when Pyrke informed him how fagged I had been when I left for the north.

How I regretted deliberately refraining from reading the newspapers since reaching Quebec! I determined never to follow that course again, no matter how much my brain needed rest. Then came a second thought to comfort me. Drysdale was so little known, except in professional circles, that the local papers probably would not have carried the story. And as for the New York papers, they usually were twenty-four hours late, or more, in reaching Quebec. So, even had I been following them, I probably would not have learned of the tragedy many hours before Pyrke's message arrived.

I hastily packed a suitcase, for there still remained time

for me to catch the late train for Montreal, and from there, the following morning, I could head directly for New York City. I sent a telegram to Pyrke, and obtained a compartment on the train. And, after satisfying the queries of the customs and immigrant inspectors, I locked my door, undressed, stretched in my berth, and gave my first uninterrupted thought to the case.

My manager, Pyrke, who was on the scene, had expressed a doubt concerning the police theory. He must have good reason for this. Probably it was based upon the second mystery to which he had referred. Anyway, I was impatient



with the police for their argument that the intruder must have been an amateur because he had not used a revolver. In the neighborhood in which the killing occurred,

the houses were built wall to wall. A shot almost certainly would have been heard by many. And a professional would have realized it was safer to beat the old man insensible and then kill him, particularly if he could stifle his cries during the attack.

ENEMIES? Drysdale had none. Of that I was certain. He possessed no relatives of whom I knew. His wife had died when he was a young teacher, and he had devoted his life to college work, research and study. His brilliant attainments were known only to professional men and a limited circle of intimates and business acquaintances. As a teacher of chemistry he had few peers. He also was an authority on antiques and precious stones. And, in his experiments, he had gone so far as to create gems by chemical process. However, the cost of producing these had been so great that his discoveries were of no commercial value.

Because of his amazing knowledge of stones and their worth, he frequently had been commissioned by museums and men and women of wealth to procure exceptional gems for them. He had made several trips abroad for this purpose. And it was during these ventures he had purchased the curios which graced his study.

These thoughts made me wonder if the reason for the murder wasn't in some manner connected with an article of great value which he had obtained for another. Possibly a thief had killed him to steal something he had in his possession temporarily. But, if so, why keep the truth from the police? Drysdale never would have participated in anything underhanded—

A half-hour wait at Windsor station before a train left for New York gave me time for breakfast. I made straight for the depot restaurant. And, to my surprise, I noted the Countess, still dressed in black, just ahead of me. Obviously we had left Quebec at the same time. For a moment my thoughts reverted to her meeting with Maurie and his reason for hiding in Canada. But recollection of my friend's murder and my impatience to begin my investigations of the case, quickly drove speculation concerning this precious pair from my mind.

WHETHER they were scheming to cheat Uncle Sam or the Canadian Government with some clever smuggling swindle was no concern of mine then. But I did note that the stately Olga boarded the same train as I, though her chair was in another car. After that I forgot all about her.

Lansing and Pyrke met me at the Grand Central Terminal in one of my own cars. Both asked me not to question them until we reached my uptown office, where I would be introduced to a third person, the one most interested in the case.

As we entered the inner room, the Man of Mystery arose—tall, well featured, with frosted hair and mustache. His bearing was that of a military man and an aristocrat. And,

studying him intently as he extended his hand, I decided I had seen him before.

"This is Colonel Akim Tchekhova, formerly in the service of the Czar," said Lansing.

At the words I caught the bit of the past for which my memory had been searching. "Glad to see you again," I said, exchanging grips. "This is a far step from London."

"We have met then?" He was puzzled.

"Not exactly. But sit down. I was in Europe, doing secret-service work, during the war. Before we took a hand, in fact. I was told who and what you were by a Frenchman with whom I worked. He, like you and I, was on a government commission. I am glad you escaped the crash in which so many I had known in Russia were wiped out. Now for the case: I understand you are directly interested, and can give the probable reason for the slaying."

YES. And, as a former detective of a sort, I believe I shall be of some real assistance to you in helping to solve this mystery. I will begin with this positive statement. I feel certain Professor Drysdale was deliberately murdered for something of value he held in trust. I know that such an article was stolen; also, that the theft plot was carefully planned over a long period, and was no chance burglary. I shall tell you much to support my theory. In addition to the murder and the theft, something of the utmost importance is involved, which makes it imperative I should recover the stolen article. And I will pay you any price within reason to do just that."

"I am going to go the limit on this case, irrespective of rewards," I replied. "I want to hear everything you can tell me. Already too much time has been lost. It is important I begin with every known fact in my possession."

"You shall have them. And when you know all I do, you will understand that if the press had printed all I could have told, every Bolshevik spy and Soviet agent in this country would be blocking the investigation and probably trying to do away with me.

"To begin my story properly, I must go back to the days before the Reds ruined my country and murdered its rulers. All those in authority knew of the impending uprising well in advance, and some of them obtained permission to remove some of the crown jewels to a safe hiding-place. Treasures worth many millions were smuggled across the border before the crash came.

"Later some of those who had held high places in Russia, who either were abroad or managed to escape from the country, formed an organization to restore the monarchy.

"At present the leaders are in safe places in all lands. And there are other officers, thousands of them, ready upon a moment's call to go where directed and take charge of troops.

"For certain reasons, which I (Continued on page 72)

CASH FOR OPINIONS

WHEN you have read this issue of TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES Magazine, let us know what you think of the stories it contains.

Which story is best? Which poorest? Why? Have you any suggestions for improving the magazine?

Ten dollars will be paid to the person whose letter, in the opinion of judges in charge of this award, offers the most intelligent, constructive criticism; \$5 to the letter considered second best; \$3 to the third.

Address your opinions to the Judges of Award, c/o TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES, 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y. This contest closes June 30th, 1926.

Three awards will be made promptly. See that your opinion gets one of them.




Fine Pores Make Fine Skins

Will she
"live happily ever after?"

RADIANT, starry eyed, she looks inquiringly to the future. Will her rosy dreams come true? Will he love her always? Will he be as proud of her five years hence?

Who can tell? It depends so much on her—on her tact, her loyalty, but most of all, her skill in retaining her vibrant, youthful loveliness. For it is only too true—love often fades as beauty fades.

Don't let happiness flit out of your hands. Whether you are a bride of the past or present—or one for future years—make up your mind now to be and *stay* as beautiful as *he* would have you. Make up your mind to keep your skin always fresh and youthful—always satiny-soft and fine-textured as that of the youngest bride. It's all a matter of proper care—care that will refine the pores and keep them normally invisible. For, as you know, *fine pores make fine skins*.

If you would learn the secret of a lovely complexion, learn to refine the pores

All beauty specialists will caution you against powdering over open pores. For the tiny particles of powder enter the little openings, clog and enlarge the pores and make the skin rough, coarse and unlovely.

That's why most beauty parlors finish their treatments with the application of ice to close the pores. Ice does the work all right, but it is a little too harsh for most skins and quite inconvenient to apply at home.

*A new and better way—
Princess Pat Ice Astringent*

Fortunately you no longer have to bother with chopping ice nor risk its harsh effect upon your skin. For Science has now pro-

vided a new and better way—Princess Pat Ice Astringent—a delightful, fresh, "freezy" cream that is really both *ice* and *finishing* cream combined—an astringent that has all the pore-refining and skin-firming qualities of ice without any of its disadvantages.

At the first touch of this magic cream you will feel a reviving, cooling sensation—a joyous tingle that will flush your cheeks with new life and vigor and leave your face glowingly refreshed for hours. In a second this cream has disappeared and you have a splendid foundation for your make-up. Your pores are closed and you can powder without clogging and enlarging them; without causing that "flaky" effect which comes from powdering over open pores. Your make-up stays on longer and looks more natural; your complexion is protected against dust, wind and exposure; you have the lasting loveliness that comes only with a satiny-soft, fine-textured skin.

Keep your skin fresh and youthful this new way

Begin today to win and keep the beauty that all men adore. Get Princess Pat Ice Astringent at your favorite toilet goods counter and always apply a little before putting on your powder and rouge. You'll be rewarded with an added loveliness and charm you have never known before.

If you prefer to try this delightful Ice Astringent before purchasing, simply mail the coupon and a generous sample will be sent you without cost or obligation.



Princess Pat

PRINCESS PAT, LTD., Chicago, U. S. A.
Canadian Address, 107 Duke St., Toronto, Ont.

This new Ice Astringent is the second "twin" of our famous Twin Cream Treatment—known everywhere as the ideal pore-refining method. It is a Princess Pat discovery and only Princess Pat can offer it to you. Do not confuse it with ordinary "astringent creams." There is no similarity. Princess Pat is the *one and only* Ice Astringent.

Free So that you may know for yourself the lovely effect of Princess Pat Ice Astringent, we take pleasure in sending you a free trial tube. Just mail the coupon.

PRINCESS PAT, Ltd., Dept. 1556
2709 South Wells Street, Chicago.

Without cost or obligation please send me a free trial tube of Princess Pat Ice Astringent.

Name.....

Street.....

City.....State.....
(Print name and address plainly)

Every preparation made by Princess Pat is made for a definite purpose. Each is guaranteed to achieve that end most effectively. If you are not delighted with results, your dealer will cheerfully refund your money.

The Mystery of the Disappearing Girls

(Continued from page 35)

and left her. But a look of interest came into her eye that held me.

"I've heard about a couple of girls dropping out yesterday, with jewelry," she said, her face lighting up. "We're carrying a spread on it in the morning. I've been thinking. It seems to me there's a big story in these disappearances. There's some big reason behind them, and they're all related. Why couldn't we work together on this, you and I?"

THE idea struck me like a palm-tree in a desert. I jumped at it. For fifteen minutes we stood there going over what I had and what she knew, and the result of it was that we worked out a plan to get action and reach the bottom of this disappearing girl mystery—or so we figured.

The first step in our plan was for Ruth to get an indefinite leave of absence from her paper. (The name of that paper, by the way, has no place in the story of this case, and it's best left unnamed.)

The next step for us was to put an ad in the paper, which we did the following morning. It read:

Prominent Clifton family has quantity of jewelry for sale at a sacrifice. Heirlooms. Sale private, incognito. Address Box 793 for appointment.

Ruth and I believed that a gang of men were at work, that they were behind these numerous and systematic disappearances. The girls who vanished all had jewels worth a fortune on them at the time they disappeared. I couldn't see why kidnapers, if there was nothing else to the disappearances, would wait only till they had girls with jewelry—and I couldn't see why jewel thieves, if jewel thieves were responsible, should cause the disappearance of the girls. In fact, I still felt I was entirely in the dark on this case. But that ad we intended should act for bait, and if we were correct in supposing that a gang was behind the crimes, then we had laid a trap we were sure would bring results.

I had taken the Chief into my confidence, and told him what Ruth and I planned to do. "Go ahead!" he said. "Push it to the limit. Do anything that'll get results—only get results!"

That word "incognito" in the ad was meant to indicate that the family ready to part with valuable heirlooms was forced to keep its identity from the public. That fitted in well, for Ruth was scheduled to play the daughter of the family who owned the jewels, in case the plan worked.

A plucky girl, Ruth. She was ready for anything, any risk, any hardship. All she'd get out of the play, if it went over, would be a story for her paper. I well knew that if we were correct about being up against a gang, she risked her life. Actually we were "setting her up" to go the same route that the other half-dozen or more missing girls had gone, which was—we knew not what—

THERE was nothing to do, after the ad appeared, but to lie back and wait for answers. Then action.

We hadn't long to wait. The first day brought four answers to the ad, three of them from dealers in jewelry, the fourth

from a man who signed himself *Mervin Armstrong*. That name roused my suspicions at once, for it looked like an assumed name, if ever I saw one. I read the letter carefully, then studied it for indications of a criminal character. And I found plenty.

There was no address at the head of the letter. No return address on the envelope. Nothing to show where the sender of the letter lived or had his place of business. That showed me that the sender wanted to work under cover.

The letter itself further proved my suspicions were well founded. After reading it, I was elated to think we were on the trail of what we sought. Ruth agreed with me.

The letter follows:

Box 793.

DEAR SIR: If the owner of the jewels for sale, will meet the writer in the lobby of the Egyptian House any evening after nine o'clock, I'm certain we can do business. If you will bring the jewels with you, I can have them appraised and the sale can be terminated at one meeting. You will know the writer by a strip of red ribbon worn in the lapel of the coat, worn for identification only. Trusting to have the pleasure of an interview and purchase some evening soon, I am,

Yours truly,

MERVIN ARMSTRONG.

"Reads like fiction, doesn't it?" Ruth commented. "What do you think?"

"Think?" I said. "I know that luck is with us—or we've made a brilliant play and are ready to land a crook of no mean caliber. The writer of that letter's a crook, or I don't know the first thing about detective work," and I showed Ruth the points I had noted about the letter. Then I said to her: "Notice this Armstrong's prepared to come to the Egyptian House more than one evening to meet the jewel owner. Why do you suppose that is? To suit the convenience of the owner, do you think? Not a bit of it. That's to protect himself. Crooks always are cautious, particularly the intelligent kind we're dealing with. He'll be at the hotel every night, you can be sure. But if he suspects a trap, or sees anything suspicious about any of the people in the hotel lobby, you can be sure he won't come out from cover. We've got a big job ahead. Make no mistake about that."

"When do we start? I wish it was time now. I'm so thrilled!"

I GAVE Ruth a keen look. It's all right to be thrilled about danger, and a case like this; but care and caution are the requisites. And I told her so.

That day I prepared for our big play. I thought of every contingency I could, and planned accordingly. When nine o'clock that night came, Ruth walked into the brightly lighted Egyptian House, down on lower Walnut Street, with me a few steps behind her, and two automobiles loaded with plain-clothes men pulled up across the street.

According to plan, Ruth went into the lobby and looked around at the several men sitting smoking or reading their newspapers. I spotted one of them wearing a thin bit of red ribbon in his buttonhole,

IT'S OFF because IT'S OUT

That is why ZIP is so popular today. It destroys the growth. It attacks the cause and eliminates it gently, quickly and safely, at the same time making your skin *adorable*. This action is totally unlike depilatories which merely remove surface hair.

Use ZIP once on your face, underarms or body and you will never resort to ordinary depilatories, or electric treatments. Ideal for perfecting the hair line below the bob.

Sold Everywhere—Moneyback Guarantee
Write for "Beauty's Greatest Secret" FREE

VERY SPECIAL: Enclose 4c in stamps and I will send you also liberal samples of A-B-SCENT (deodorant), Face Powder, and Massage, Cleansing and Tissue Building Cream.

Treatment or FREE Demonstration at my Saloon

Madame's Best's

Specialist
562 Fifth Avenue
New York

Dept. 480,
(Ent. on 46th St.)

Destroy Your Superfluous
Hair & ROOTS
with

ZIP

IT'S OFF
because
IT'S OUT



Just Touch

a Corn or Callus
With This

Acts like anaesthetic
Stops all pain in 3 seconds

HERE'S scientific treatment for corns and calluses. A new way that's ending dangerous paring, that's ending old-time ways. First it deadens all pain. Then it removes the corn completely.

A single drop will take ALL PAIN out of the most painful corn. Instantly and at once, you walk, dance, stand in comfort. Acts just like a local anaesthetic.

Then the corn begins to dry and shrivel. You remove it with your fingers, like dead skin.

Noted dancers use it. Doctors approve it. You will find it a great comfort. The name is "GETS-IT." At all druggists. For your own sake, try it. Satisfaction guaranteed.

"GETS-IT"

World's
Fastest Way

So that's it!

ALL of a sudden it dawned on him.

For a long time he had felt that things were being said about him behind his back.

Now—he had actually overheard it.

And said by men whom he had regarded as his best friends in the business!

Maybe they were right—he didn't know. But at least he would find out and apply the right remedy.

* * *

You, yourself, rarely know when you have halitosis (unpleasant breath). That's the insidious thing about it. And even your closest friends won't tell you.

Sometimes, of course, halitosis comes from some deep-seated organic disorder that requires professional advice. But usually—and fortunately—halitosis is only a local condition that yields to the regular use of Listerine as a mouth wash and gargle. **It puts you on the safe and polite side. Moreover, in using Listerine to combat halitosis, you are quite sure to avoid sore throat and those more serious illnesses that start with throat infections.**

Listerine halts food fermentation in the mouth and leaves the breath sweet, fresh and clean. *Not* by substituting some other odor but by really removing the old one. The Listerine odor itself quickly disappears.

This safe and long-trusted antiseptic has dozens of different uses; note the little circular that comes with every bottle. Your druggist sells Listerine in the original brown package only—*never in bulk*. There are four sizes: 14 ounce, 7 ounce, 3 ounce and 1¼ ounce. Buy the large size for economy.—*Lambert Pharmaceutical Company, Saint Louis, U.S.A.*

A CHALLENGE
We'll make a little wager with you that if you try one tube of Listerine Tooth Paste, you'll come back for more.
LARGE TUBE—25 CENTS

For
HALITOSIS



USE
LISTERINE



Gray Hair Brought Back to Its Original Shade

Is your hair fast becoming gray or streaked? No matter to what extent or the cause, Kolor-Bak will quickly bring back the original shade—whether black, brown, red or blonde. Wonderful also for keeping scalp clean and free from dandruff.

Go to your druggist today and get a bottle of this clean, colorless fluid. No testing with samples of hair necessary. As easy to use as water. Thousands of men and women have quickly made themselves look ten years younger with this thoroughly tested and dependable preparation. Over 3,500,000 bottles sold. To be had—with an absolute money-back guarantee—at all druggists and stores handling high-grade toilet aids.

Kolor-Bak

Banishes Gray Hair



MOLER System of Colleges

Beauty culture is work women just naturally love to do, and it pays well. Home-like accommodations procured during a short practical MOLER course. Write nearest branch for Booklet ML

Omaha, Nebr. — New Orleans, La.
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stretched across his coat lapel. He was tall and thin, dressed in expensive clothes, with a thin face and prominent nose. I caught my breath when I saw him, for I sensed that action was at hand. But I'd have given half my present pension if I could have known where the case was to lead, and what amazing criminality was to come to light, before that night had ended.

Ruth saw the man almost as soon as I did. I quietly sat down across the lobby, near the door, where I could see what happened, and waited.

Ruth went up to the man Armstrong, carrying a paper-wrapped package supposed to contain a jewel case. She said a few words to him, and he rose politely. He stood talking to her for a few moments—I couldn't hear what they said, but I could see he was impressed. Ruth, I was sure, was telling him a story of family money trouble, to justify the sale.

Suddenly I saw the man turn and head for the door, Ruth with him. They came past me, almost close enough for me to have touched the man (Ruth was by his side, away from me). I could see that Ruth wanted to give me a message but her companion was too close to me. She could give me no hint of why they were leaving or where they were going. Nothing for me to do but follow, and be ready for whatever turned up.

Outside, the pair turned down Walnut Street, toward the river. They were half a square away from me. I waved my hand to Brogan, the police chauffeur who sat at the wheel of the first car. He started the machine, so that it crept after us at a pace no swifter than I was walking. I was fearful that Armstrong would turn around and spot that car, and the one which followed it, for the pace was slow enough to give away what we were doing, to a trained criminal. But Armstrong evidently was interested in Ruth too much to give a thought to anything else.

AT Fifth Street the pair turned east. Wherever were they going? And why?

I strained my eyes through the darkness to get a look at Ruth, but I couldn't; I was too far behind. But I could see that the girl was holding up well. She and Armstrong kept up a steady conversation.

On they went, along Fifth Street, till the business district was left behind, and the houses began to thin out. At Sycamore they crossed Fifth, to the river side of the street. And on they continued.

During the day I had wondered why the man Armstrong waited till night, "after nine o'clock," to do his business. I couldn't figure it out. But what happened in the next two minutes told me!

At the corner of Pike Street, two men dashed out of the shadows of the house that stood on the corner. While Armstrong pinioned Ruth's arms, the two threw a cloth over her head and carried her around the corner and down Pike Street on a run.

Instantly my revolver was out. But I checked myself at the moment I was about to open fire. Ruth was in mortal danger. That was sure. But if I did what was necessary to rescue her, I killed my chances of uncovering the mystery of the other disappearances.

I glanced around to see where Brogan and the other car were, and just in time,

Lieutenant Kelsey, in the first car, had seen what had happened, and had made Brogan step on the gas to overtake the three ahead. I ran out in the middle of the street in front of the car and stopped them.

"You can't do that, Lieutenant," I said. "That'll spoil the whole business. Lay back, and I'll go after them. You follow. Use your own judgment."

I waited for nothing else. I knew I could depend on Kelsey. At a fast run I made the corner of Fifth and Pike, then turned. The trio had disappeared. Nobody was ahead of me, nothing but darkness and the river a few squares along.

Quickly I reviewed the situation. The trio were only half a square ahead of me. They had not had time to get far away. They must have gone into one of the houses on the street. Which?

In that sparsely settled section, the answer was easy. There was only one house on the west side of Pike Street between Fifth and Fourth, none on the east side. That house must be the one. I made for it on the run, my revolver drawn and ready.

IT was a frame house, three-storied, capable of accommodating many persons. Evidently it had been a boarding-house when East Cincinnati was suburbs. There wasn't a light to be seen, no life about the place. But that didn't signify.

I hurried back to Fifth, where the two cars were pulled up around the corner. Quickly I told Kelsey, and Lieutenant Murk, in the second car, what the situation was, and suggested a raid on the house. Moments were precious. No telling what was happening to Ruth. We couldn't take time to make a close survey of the grounds behind the house, or on the river side. We had to plunge right in and act in a hurry.

Kelsey and Murk were with me. They issued orders, and six men made off around Sycamore to cover the off side of the house and the rear. The rest, led by Kelsey and Murk and myself, came on down to the front.

I wish there were space to tell of that raid in detail. We battered down the front door of the place, while Dingwall, a first-grade detective, broke through a kitchen door in the rear. We pushed right on in—and there in that front hallway, out of the darkness, we were met with a fusillade of pistol fire.

A young detective, Schwartz, went down, a bullet through his thigh. We opened fire into the darkness and within a minute it was over. Out of the darkness came a voice:

"Let up! You got us. And you've done for Healey. To hell with you and what happens to us. We're not worth a damn now!"

"How many are there?" I called.

"Four."

"And this Healey—if you're on the level, slide your guns across the floor at us—and no lights and no tricks, or we'll stick till we shoot down the lot of you!"

There was a rumbling sound, and then a heavy automatic came out of the darkness and hit my foot. I stooped to pick it up, telling what it was only by the feel of it. Then came four others, which our men retrieved.

Within the next two minutes we had handcuffed four of the cleverest crooks

You can Look Younger

By using the tone of this rouge that gives the perfect, natural coloring of lovely girlhood.

By MADAME JEANNETTE

Famous cosmetician, retained by The Pompeian Laboratories as a consultant to give authentic advice regarding the care of the skin and the proper use of beauty preparations.

RECENTLY overheard one of my friends say to another, "You, for one, need no rouge, my dear. What lovely natural coloring!" But the truth was this—like thousands of other women, she found a rouge that gave her cheeks the exquisite natural coloring of a girl in her 'teens. That rouge is Pompeian Bloom.

Today women everywhere realize the necessity of using rouge that matches perfectly their natural skin tones. They know that the effect of obvious rouge is just as unattractive as lack of coloring. They want rouge that appears to be part of their own complexions. And when they use the right shade of Pompeian Bloom they achieve the wholly natural effect they desire.

Rouge to match the various skin tones must be a blend of several colors. Pompeian Bloom comes in five scientifically blended shades—scientifically blended because Pompeian chemists know that complexions are not composed of single colors, but a blend of many.

From the shade chart below you can easily select your particular shade of Pompeian Bloom. Listed there is your type of complexion together with the shade of Pompeian Bloom that matches it perfectly.

SHADE CHART for selecting your shade of Pompeian Bloom

Medium Skin: The average American woman has the medium skin-tone—pleasantly warm in tone with a faint suggestion of old ivory or sun-kissed russet. The *Medium* tone of Pompeian Bloom suits this skin. If with a medium skin you are slightly tanned, you may find the *Orange* tint more becoming. And sometimes women with medium skin who have very dark hair get a brilliant result with the *Oriental* tint.

Olive Skin: Women with the true olive skin are generally dark of eyes and hair—and require the *Dark* tone of Pompeian Bloom. If you wish to accent the brilliancy of your complexion, the *Oriental* tint will accomplish it.

Pink Skin: This is the youthful skin, most often found in blondes or red-haired women, and should use the *Oriental* shade.

White Skin: The pure white skin is rare, but



The intriguing beauty of olive skin and Dark brown hair is always enhanced with the rich color of the damask rose. If you are this type you may use Pompeian Bloom in the Dark tone or the Oriental Tint for this enchanting effect.

if you have this rare skin you must use the *Light* tone of Bloom.

Special Note: Remember that an unusual coloring of hair and eyes sometimes demands a different selection of Bloom-tone than that given above. If in doubt, write a description of your skin, hair and eyes to me for special advice.

If you really want your color to look natural, try Pompeian Bloom. 60c at all toilette counters (slightly higher in Canada). Purity and satisfaction guaranteed.

Madame Jeannette
Specialiste en Beauté

P. S. I also suggest that you use Pompeian Day Cream as a foundation for your Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom.



He watched her as the sun slanted down on her pretty face and felt an impulse to tell her she was like a rose! Even in the most scrutinizing light Pompeian Bloom has the natural glow of youth—an effect every woman can achieve!

SPECIAL OFFER

1/3 of a 60c box of Bloom, the 1926 Panel with three valuable Pompeian samples—all for 20c.

THIS generous offer of Bloom gives you an opportunity to really know how good is this popular Pompeian product. For 20c you get 1/3 of a 60c box of Pompeian Bloom, valuable samples of Pompeian Day Cream (protecting), Night Cream (cleansing), Beauty Powder, Madame Jeannette's beauty booklet and the famous 1926 Pompeian Panel entitled, "Moments That Will Treasured Be, in the Mint of Memory." This panel was executed by a famous artist and is reproduced in full color. Art store value 75c to \$1.00.

Tear off, sign and send

Madame Jeannette, THE POMPEIAN LABORATORIES
2517 Payne Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Madame: I enclose 2 dimes (20c) for 1926 Panel, 1/3 of 60c box of Bloom, Beauty Booklet and samples.

Name.....

Street Address.....

City..... State.....

Shade of powder wanted.....

This coupon void after Dec. 1, 1926



The Over-Fat Are Rare Now

A few years ago you saw in every crowd many abnormal figures. Now excess fat is the exception. Slenderness prevails.

One reason lies in Marmola Prescription Tablets. For 18 years they have been eliminating fat. Delighted users have told others about them, and the use has spread. Now people are using a million boxes yearly, and you see the results everywhere.

Marmola combats the cause of obesity, which usually lies in a gland. You simply take four tablets daily until the trouble is corrected and the weight comes down to normal. No special exercise or diet is required.

Excess fat blights beauty, health and fitness. No one can afford it, and today it has no excuse. Investigate Marmola. The coupon will bring you samples, our books and our guarantee. Learn what millions know about it. Clip coupon now.

Marmola is sold by all druggists at \$1.00 per box, or mailed direct in plain wrappers by Marmola Co. Address in coupon.

The Pleasant Way to Reduce

MARMOLA 2-235 General Motors Bldg. DETROIT, MICH.	25c Sample Free
	Mail Coupon Send No Money
_____ _____ _____	
21 A	



Both FREE!



Jarnac—the French-formula powder that has done away with all fuss and muss with "powder base"! No need now, for "foundation" creams—nor heavy, stifling powders! Try this medium weight powder of low visibility—time it—prove how it stays for hours and hours. And Jarnac cream that makes skin grow beautiful!

Both free for a real test—plenty of each—but clip this ad now and mail to—

JARNACet Cie, 546 W. Randolph St., Chicago

I would like FREE generous trial boxes of both—Jarnac CREAM AND Jarnac POWDER—and don't forget the little Jarnac Book of Big beauty secrets!

Name.....

Address.....

the Department had caught in years. Lights were turned on in the house, and we saw that the tall, thin man, Healey, who had posed as Armstrong, was dead—a bullet through his chest that must have reached his heart.

THE mystery of the disappearing girls was solved in the next ten minutes. The missing girls all were up-stairs, locked in rooms. They were unnerved, shaken with fright—but unharmed. Ruth we found in a room on the ground floor, with a burlap bag over her head, nearly smothered.

One of the four prisoners, Kid Sullivan, broke when we got the lot of them to Headquarters.

Their crime, under the leadership of the dead Healey, was unequalled for its daring. The thieves waited till they got a line on a collection of jewelry. Then they kidnapped the owner or the purveyor of the gems, with the intention of keeping their operations secret until they had made a killing. This they would have completed with the "Clifton" job Ruth and I cooked up. We found the five crooks' grips packed, the loot in them, ready for a quick getaway.

The girls they kidnapped were fed and kept comfortably, and not molested in any way. It was the intention of Healey to release them as soon as the Clifton job was

over. He had kept them for precautionary measures only.

The confession of Sullivan cleared up a big problem in my mind. I wondered why I hadn't recognized the man who called himself Armstrong. If he had had a criminal record, I'm certain I'd have placed him when I saw him in the Egyptian House. But he was an amateur. This series of jewel robberies was his first attempt and intended for his last—though he didn't count on the termination of his underworld career in such a tragic way. He was a college graduate (the name of the college doesn't matter; neither does his real name, which wasn't Healey. Out of respect for his family, it was withheld from the public when the case reached the newspapers). He had been a wild boy, gambler and heavy speculator in later life, and had planned this for years. That, to me, accounted for the bizarre methods he used at several stages in his game.

That concludes the case. Except that Lena Mellish was restored to Gus' protection at Headquarters the night of the raid, and the pair were married six weeks later.

The real credit for the work we did on the case should go to that plucky girl, Ruth Tempest. For without her we'd probably have missed our chance of clearing up the most baffling and sensational case of my experience.

The Capture of Chicago's Dope Queen

(Continued from page 27)

agents, led by Roche, and accompanied by a police-woman, made their raid on the dope queen's kingdom.

Roche rapped at her door.

Kitty, dignified, blond, and well dressed, opened it.

SHE smiled as she saw Roche and his men.

"Hello, boys." She was calm. "What can I do for you?"

The agents stepped into the apartment.

"Where's the stuff, Kitty?" they asked.

"What stuff?" It was evident the pretty woman would give no information. So the agents began their search of the expensively appointed apartment. Not one grain of dope was there.

"Fooled again, eh, boys?" Kitty laughed as she stood by smoking a cigarette and watching the search.

But Roche was not fooled. He noticed on a small mahogany table three keys joined on a key-ring. Idly he tossed them in his hand.

"Where do these fit?" he asked.

"Keys to the front and back doors and my trunk," replied Kitty.

Roche tried the keys to the doors of the apartment. They didn't work the locks. Kitty's face whitened.

The telephone rang. The police-woman, disguising her voice as Kitty's, answered. It was a customer. He was instructed to come up in five minutes. He came, surprised into speechlessness, and was arrested.

Roche went out of the back door, onto the rear porch. He tried the keys in the lock of the back door to another apartment, across the porch. One of them turned the lock and the door swung open. He stepped

inside and found himself in an apartment entirely separated from Kitty's.

An examination revealed it to be what he had anticipated—a cleverly arranged storehouse for narcotics. In one narrow hallway of the flat he found two trunks filled with morphine and opium—enough to assure him that Kitty and Willie Gilhooley were acting as not mere dope peddlers, but as wholesalers to peddlers, who in turn distributed the stuff to addicts. On the shelves of the closet were empty "toys" waiting to be filled with small quantities of opium. There was also a pair of small delicate scales used by wholesale dealers in illicit drugs for the measuring of "shots."

Another room was outfitted as an opium-smoking den. Wet blankets hung over the windows to prevent fumes from the oriental pipes seeping into the clean air of the neighborhood and thus arousing suspicion. A wall bed was pulled down ready to accommodate the next smoker. Three smoking outfits lay on stools about the room.

Still another room was fitted as comfortable living quarters and it later developed that Willie Gilhooley had hired an unsuspecting man named Ebler and his wife, to live in this one room of the narcotic storehouse as an effective blind, making it appear the flat was the ordinary living quarters of a quiet, law-abiding couple as respectable as any in this exclusive building.

Returning to the Bennett, or Gilhooley flat, Roche found the police-woman had searched Kitty and found in one of her silken stockings the marked money given by the Government's purchaser.

Kitty, confronted with this evidence against her, lost her carefree, laugh-

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Whether your hair is strong or weak, snow-white or black, bleached or dyed—no matter whether you've ever had a permanent or not—send for Mr. Nestle's new book on the Circuline Process. It is alive with helpful information on the care of the hair—material that has taken a lifetime

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Remove hair with cool cream!

—a method you will enjoy

To well-groomed women everywhere, this new cream, called Pryde, is most truly welcome. It is so distinctly feminine. Harmless to the most sensitive skin. And as easy to use as powdering your nose.

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Pryde Cream combines amazing efficiency with delightful ease of use. There is no mixing or messing. And nothing to melt. Like a cold cream, you merely press it from the tube and cover the hair to be removed. Then, after a few minutes, with ordinary water, simply rinse the hair away. The skin is left cool, whitened, free from odor, and as smooth as satin.

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Pryde is so much superior to old methods, authorities now urge its use. The masculine razor, as is well known, does cause coarser growth. Pryde does not. On the contrary its formula and principle is not only to remove the hair, but also to act upon the root, so as to deaden it; which is the gentle, natural way now advised by the best authorities. With Pryde Cream, the underarms, both arms and the limbs may be entirely freed from hair in one quick, complete operation, that is pleasant and surprisingly inexpensive. A large Tube of Pryde, enough for several times, is only 50c.

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ing attitude and became sullen and non-committal. She would answer no questions.

Willie Gilhooley, her husband, was found a few weeks later by government agents. He was absent from the city at the time of the raid, taking a cure for a nervous breakdown.

Within a few hours that night, police squads, led by Roche, Converse, and a group of other government men, flocked into the Twenty-second Street Chinatown and made wholesale raids upon opium-smoking and dope-peddling joints there.

Hundreds of theatregoers, returning home, swarmed off near-by Michigan Boulevard to watch the raiders. Men ran wildly through the narrow streets as official axes swung against heavy doors. This raid was one of the most memorable narcotic drives ever conducted in the Middle West, and was the direct outgrowth of the snaring of the pretty and crafty Kitty Gilhooley. Hundreds of dollars' worth of narcotics were seized, besides the \$100,000 worth of dope taken from the Gilhooley storehouse.

Shortly, Kitty and her husband went to trial in Federal Court. Gilhooley held that the agents had no right to seize the

dope in the second flat, inasmuch as their search-warrant described only the Bennett apartment. The Court, however, upheld the Government's contention that the agents were free to raid the second apartment.

Willie Gilhooley was sentenced to ten years imprisonment, and Kitty to five.

Strangely and pathetically Kitty entered her cell almost on the same day that her convent-reared daughter, unaware of her mother's crimes, was married in an Eastern city.

But the sensational Gilhooley dope case has not been fully solved in the mind of Patrick T. Roche, Intelligence Ace. For in Kitty's apartment, during the raid, he picked up from a library table a red-covered note-book. In it, in Kitty's handwriting, were scores of telephone numbers in code.

The telephone exchanges are in ordinary lettering, but the numbers are in a letter code that has baffled the Government. The secret of Kitty's supersecret code is locked within her. She refuses to give the key. And so, Pat Roche still has a Gilhooley puzzle to fit together. When he does he will rest easily, for then and only then will the great Chicago dope mystery be completely solved.

On the Trail of the Orloff Blue Diamond

(Continued from page 64)

cannot divulge even to you, it was determined, in March, to raise at least two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the cause. The Bolsheviks know of the hidden jewels and our organization. They have thousands of spies, and many of us are under constant espionage, which makes the task of selling anything difficult. It was decided, therefore, to sell one article, something of great value and which could be concealed easily.

"THE thing finally selected was a gold and platinum reliquary, with a great diamond set in the center and surrounded by rubies of considerable size. This magnificent jewel was originally purchased by Empress Catharine the Second—the extravagant Catharine the Great. The diamond weighs forty-six carats, two more than the famous Hope diamond. It is of a peculiar blue shade, and was one of the finest gems among the crown jewels. And, because of its color and brilliancy, it has been known for more than a century as 'The Eye of the Orloffs.' Combined with the rubies and the exquisite setting, it should bring the full quarter of a million for which we are willing to dispose of it.

"I was chosen to negotiate the sale, and see that the money obtained was returned to our headquarters in Paris. On two previous occasions our people had disposed of valuable gems through Drysdale to some of his wealthy customers, so I determined to operate through him, if possible.

"I reached this city on June first, declared the jewel with the customs people, posted the required bond, then placed the treasure in a vault for safe-keeping. Drysdale, who was familiar with its history, saw it there and at once began negotiations for its sale. I kept away from his home until I felt certain I was not being trailed, communicating with him over the tele-

phone in terms which no outsider would have understood.

"It was on June sixth that he notified me that he had a customer, and asked me to bring the jewel to him. I did this, and it was placed in the safe in his study. Neither of us believed it would be disturbed there. The reason I did not keep it with me was that he desired to show it to the prospective purchaser alone, as I was not to know his identity if he bought it. The purchaser feared the Soviet agents or other Russians might try to rob him of his purchase. Drysdale sent for me again on the ninth and informed me that the man was quibbling about the price. However, he was to return again on the eleventh with a famous lapidary, whose advice he desired before purchasing.

"As the time was so brief, neither of us thought of removing the jewel temporarily from the Professor's home. However, I became a bit nervous, so called him on the telephone on the night of the tenth and asked if everything were all right. His reply was in the affirmative. He said he had obtained a book giving most detailed information concerning the 'thing,' and had just been examining it."

"WHAT time did you talk with him?" I interrupted.

"Shortly before ten, when the neighbors reported the lights in the house were last seen. The thief may have been in the place at the time. My theory is this: Drysdale, after using the telephone in his study, put out the lights and went to the library to continue his reading. The book we found on his chair was open at a chapter on 'The Eye of the Orloffs.' While he was reading, or possibly while he dozed, he heard a noise in the study and went there to investigate. The murder and robbery followed."

"Just a moment," I interrupted. "Lan-

sing, do you know the identity of the prospective purchaser?"

"Yes. He's bought many things from the Professor," answered the secretary. "If you have the slightest suspicion he might have instigated the crime, dismiss it. He's an international celebrity and one of America's greatest bankers."

"Good. How about the Japanese servant? Did he really go to Seattle?"

"Yes. We received a telegram from him upon his arrival. And you can be certain he never arranged with others to commit the robbery after he had gone. The Professor has left him alone for months, when he could have cleaned out the place. Really, he took better care of things than we did."

"That simplifies matters. Now, Colonel, for the remainder of your story. Do you believe Soviet spies learned of your mission, followed you to America and, discovering you had turned the jewel over to Drysdale, murdered him to regain it? Remember, it is possible that a student did the killing, then stole the jewel as an afterthought, believing that, should suspicion point his way, he could pawn it for funds with which to make a getaway."

"You are the more experienced policeman, Mr. Jennings," and the Russian bowed. "What do you think?"

"Personally, I can't accept the student theory. The killer was a cool one. He obliterated all finger-prints; washed the blood from his person. Now, even granting for argument's sake he was a student and had stolen the examination papers before being interrupted by Drysdale, does it stand to reason he would have carried them away with him? Never. He'd have known their absence would point toward a pupil of the professor's as the killer. No, the papers were taken to create a false clue."

"I agree," said Tchekhova.

THE most reasonable conclusion is that your mission was discovered in France and you were followed by a Red spy or a traitor in your own ranks. Think carefully. Was there no one on shipboard whose actions excited your suspicions?"

"There was a woman on board, tall, dark and decidedly good-looking, but whose dress was most inconspicuous. The reason I noted her was that she had the appearance of a Russian. However, when I learned her name was distinctly American and heard her speak perfect English, I lost interest in her. Anyway, she seldom appeared on deck and seemed to have no intimates.

"When we reached Quarantine and were having our passports examined and our shore passes issued, I explained to one of the customs men that I had something of considerable value which I wished to take before the executives to declare and for the entry of which I would give bond.

"It was while we were talking that the woman passed, and he noted her with a grin, saying: 'Well, there's one who won't follow your example. Some years ago she was one of the cleverest of the international smugglers, usually beating us at our own game. Originally she came from Russia but speaks United States like a book. Guess she's been on another lay off late, for this is the first I've seen her in a long time. We'll give her a thorough search, though.'

"I'm telling you this, Mr. Jennings, only

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because the woman was a Russian and came on the same vessel with me."

"Didn't you learn her name?" I inquired.

"The inspector didn't state, and at the time I thought too little of the matter to ask. But afterward I recollected he spoke of her as the Countess."

"What?" I fairly gasped. And, for a moment, all that he had told me, all the suspicious things I had noted in Canada were jumbled together in my brain.

"You know her?" asked the Russian, observing my excitement.

"I know a Countess. Maybe yours and mine will prove to be one. Have you any more to tell?"

"I'll complete the story," said Lansing. "After the murder, when the Colonel and I compared notes, I began to suspect this smuggler might have been interested in his movements. In fact, had trailed him all the way from Paris. On the day he brought the jewel to Professor Drysdale, a tall, dark, handsome woman arrived at the house, asked to see the Professor, and informed me she desired to obtain pearls to match a string she had with her. She was dressed in mourning and a half veil concealed part of her face. I put her in the reception-room to wait, as the Colonel was up in the study. She must have seen him when he came down the stairway and left the house. He did not notice her. When she consulted the Professor she showed him her pearls, which really were very fine ones; left one as a sample and told him to match it with six others.

"WHEN the Colonel came on the ninth, she arrived close behind him, again took her place in the reception-room, and probably watched him depart. She talked with the Professor, who had not yet procured the pearls for her, and departed. I have not seen her since. We have compared descriptions, and that of the Countess and the mysterious visitor here tally closely. Now what do you think?"

"I'm thinking so many things," I said, "I can't get them straight—just yet. But there is a long-shot chance that I'm ninety per cent. nearer guessing the solution of this double crime than I was ten minutes ago. And, if I make a bull's-eye, it will be a case of chance and luck plus the detective instinct which caused me to follow a hunch. Within five minutes I may have great news or the disappointment of my life."

Knowing that someone was certain to be in the executive offices at the Customs House all night, I called a number not listed in the telephone directory. "This is Neil Jennings," I said when I got my party. "Hello!"

"Lo, Neil. This is Bachelor. What's up?"

"Listen, old man. On June first a woman smuggler known as the Countess reached here from Cherbourg. Was she the same Countess who used to keep you fellows guessing?"

"Sure thing. Our old friend Olga Ver-shoff. But she was clean when searched. I happened to be on the pier when she landed and saw that the job was thorough."

"Fine," I said. Then I took a long breath preparatory to the next query: "Did you, by any chance, learn where she went?"

"You said it. That lady always interests us. I had her trailed. She has an apart-

ment at No. — West Sixty-seventh Street under the name of Mrs. George Roberts. Got anything on her?"

"Don't know yet. I'll post you later."

I dropped into an easy chair, laughing for sheer joy. Lady Luck surely was strewing my pathway with four-leaf clovers. The Countess from Cherbourg and the one who had returned from Canada when I did, were one and the same. And Maurie had arrived in Quebec in disguise and under an alias two days following the murder. The solution of the case began to assume real form.

"You have good news?" queried Tchek-hova as I faced him, with Lansing standing near, breathing heavily while waiting my words.

"The best, I think. But I cannot detail what I have learned and what I suspect yet. I've got to have a long think first. Meet me here at eight to-morrow morning sharp. I'll have use for you both."

THEN I left them and, after determining the lines of investigation I would follow on the morrow, I turned in for a much needed rest.

The following morning I posted Tchek-hova and Lansing where they could command a view of those entering and leaving the Sixty-seventh Street address. I took up my lookout at another point. There were hours of tedious waiting before our quarry came out, walked to the corner, entered a taxicab and disappeared. Our vigil had not been in vain. "Mrs. George Roberts" was the Countess. My co-workers were as positive in their identifications.

I sent them home without satisfying their curiosity, then made straight for Maurice Kofel's place of business in Maiden Lane. From a gem dealer in the same building, a friend, I learned something of importance, something which plugged a decided gap in my reasoning of the solution of the mystery. Early in March, Kofel left New York for Caracas, Venezuela, to be gone for several months. The reason given for his trip was that he had been commissioned to investigate some recently discovered gold deposits in the interior of that country.

Immediately I returned to my headquarters, locked myself in an inner sanctum, drew the shades, and for hours, sitting in the dark, I turned the case over in my mind, approaching it from every angle. My final deductions, those upon which I intended to work, were:

Olga Verhoff and Maurie Kofel, notorious international smugglers, had joined forces some time in the past. I never had known they were acquainted before their meeting in Quebec. But with their crooked proclivities, it was not surprising that they should be working together. The Countess was a Russian; possibly had identified herself with the Bolshevists.

In some way Tchekhova's mission to America had been learned. It was possible she had been commissioned by the Reds to regain the famous and valuable jewel. If so, she probably had planned to obtain it, then double-cross her confederates and keep the loot for herself and Maurie. But that didn't matter so much. The outstanding fact was that she had known, in advance, of the Colonel's mission. She communicated with Kofel, outlining a tentative plan for the great theft. He went to Venezuela without delay, so that, in the event of

trouble, he might be able to establish an alibi concerning his whereabouts. Probably they contemplated getting rid of Tchek-hova. At all times the woman kept in touch with him. After establishing a residence in the southern country, Maurie returned to some place near New York, probably in May, and remained in hiding.

AFTER reaching New York, the Countess probably trailed the Russian when he went to a bank to place the jewel in a vault. Also, she noted Drysdale when he was taken there to inspect it. Trailing the latter, she learned that he dealt in precious stones and arranged the scheme to purchase pearls so that she could enter the Professor's home if she so desired. It proved a winning card for her. Undoubtedly she was close to Tchekhova when he took the jewel from the bank, suspected he had removed it and why. She went to Drysdale's home on both days the Colonel was there, for the purpose of making morally certain the prize had been left there. And, once satisfied, she notified Kofel. The murder and robbery followed.

But I did not believe the slaying was planned in advance. Maurie had entered the house when he thought it deserted or the old man was asleep, and had killed only when cornered. Of course, all this was merely deduction. But it appeared to stand up under all the objections I could think of.

My further reasoning was founded upon nothing more substantial than guess and probability. Had there been only a robbery, Kofel probably would have been able to escape at once. He would have gone to South America with his loot and returned to New York when the hue and cry had subsided. But the killing had altered the situation. There was bound to be a wide-flung man-hunt. And if he were recognized in the States, when he was supposed to be thousands of miles away, he might face an awkward situation. There had been but one course open to him; to make a quick getaway to the nearest safe hide-out. Quebec was the answer.

He had hidden his plunder, notified the Countess of the tragedy, obtained shabby clothing and headed North. And the chances were a hundred to one, despite the declaration he had made for the immigration authorities, he had not taken a train in New York. His limp was most noticeable. It was possible that some of Drysdale's neighbors had seen a lame man near his home on the night of the tragedy. Following the discovery of the murder they might tell this to the police. And if, in their investigations, they had learned that a man who limped had taken a train for Canada the same night as the killing, it would have sent them hot foot on Maurie's trail. No, he had boarded the train at some other city. This thought was supported by others. The murder had taken place on the night of the tenth. Kofel had not reached Quebec until the twelfth. In the day which could not be accounted for he probably covered a portion of his journey in a motor-car.

LOCATING a suitable hideout as soon as he reached Quebec, he had wired the Countess his assumed name and address. She had taken the night train on the twelfth, reaching the Canadian city on the thirteenth. No doubt she had sent a wire

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to the murderer notifying him when she would arrive. Why did she go to Quebec? Probably because she wanted to learn where the jewel had been hidden, whether she was to remove it, and his plans for the immediate future for both.

The quarrel in the park, I surmised, came when she upbraided him for the killing. Also she may have added to his anger by telling him he bungled in his get-away in stealing the examination papers—that he would have done better to have left no clues, making the murder appear more that of a chance burglar or a yegg. Personally, I did not believe Maurie realized the nature of the papers when he took them, only that they had something to do with the Professor's college duties. On the spur of the moment he had taken them, hoping to throw suspicion upon someone connected with the institution. And the ruse had fulfilled its objective.

But the Countess was a cautious worker. Probably to her the "plant" appeared too transparent. She did not know, as I did, that the police really had fallen for it. She knew there had been a theft of something of great value, while the police had announced that nothing had been stolen but the papers. She feared they were working along lines which meant danger to her and her confederate, and supposed they had given out the story as a smoke screen to hide their real suspicions.

I surmised that, as a result of their consultation, the pair decided to make no effort to recover the jewel then, but to mark time until they learned definitely what the police were doing. Consequently, the Countess immediately returned to her home in New York. And Maurie? Probably he still was in Canada.

However, deduction, theories and guesses were not evidence. Even if I were correct, there still remained the herculean task of obtaining proofs before I could begin to close in upon them.

So, my mental recasting of the case completed, I at once detailed three men to shadow the Countess, directing that they never let her out of their sight except when in her own rooms. A most dependable man, Bentley, left on the night train for Quebec, with all details necessary to locate Kofel and instructions to stick to him even if he went around the world.

WITHIN another twelve hours I had located and questioned the conductor who had been in charge of the through sleeping-cars from New York to Quebec on the night of June eleventh. He remembered his lame passenger well. And, despite his shabby clothing, the man had a ticket for an entire compartment. But the most important fact he told me was that the man had boarded the train at Albany!

When I informed him I had seen the immigration slip made out by the lame traveler and that it stated he came from New York, he said he was not surprised. Passengers made out the declarations and gave them to a porter. And the porters, at times, let the slips accumulate for hours before turning them over to the inspector. It was quite possible, therefore, that Maurie had misstated where he boarded the train and that it never was discovered.

That suggested a new query. Why had the smuggler endeavored to conceal the fact that he took the train at Albany? My guess was that he did it so no one

would know he had been there. And that thought fixed, I determined to take the night train and continue my immediate investigations in the up-State capital.

Before starting, however, I received a setback, one which annoyed me more than a little. It came in a telegram from Bentley, stating our quarry had left Quebec before his arrival. Taking a long chance that Maurie had headed for Caracas, I wired Bentley to go there and try and pick up the trail.

The following day I sought out an old acquaintance in the Albany Police Department. Had they, by any chance, recovered an abandoned or stolen automobile around June eleventh or twelfth? They had—in the morning of the latter date. It was a new eight-cylinder car, splendidly equipped. Apparently it had been driven a considerable distance under pressure, because it was mud-spattered and had practically no gasoline in the tank. The driver had abandoned it in a thick wood just outside the city, where it had been discovered by some boys on a fishing excursion.

"Have you got it where I can look it over?"

"Yes," and he grinned. "But it won't do you much good. The motor number has been chiseled off, the model plate is gone; and the horn, which probably was numbered, had disappeared."

NEVERTHELESS, I gave the car a microscopic examination. And, after hours of scraping away mud and grease, I uncovered the serial number and a special factory mark on the inner side of the frame beneath the rear left fender. That was sufficient for my purpose, however.

Soon after, with the assistance of the local sales manager, I obtained the missing motor number from the factory over the long-distance telephone. And I completed my investigations in that quarter by ascertaining from the State License Bureau that an owner's license for the car had been issued a few months previous to John Hill, of Suncrest Drive, Riverford, New York. I was sure this was another alias of the elusive Maurie, and that the address in the fashionable Hudson River town was one of his hideouts.

I settled that question early the next day.

First I located the house, a magnificent suburban home with spacious grounds. It had every appearance of having been closed for a considerable time, though peeps through several windows showed it was fully furnished, indicating the absence of its tenants was but temporary. The garage was locked, but contained no car.

Questioning persons in the neighborhood, I learned that John Hill, the owner of the place, answered the general description of Kofel, particularly the limp. Also, that Mrs. Hill was tall, dark and handsome, apparently of foreign extraction. She was, no doubt, the Countess. But that they were man and wife, or living as such, came as a real surprise. Further information was that the man had lived there at infrequent intervals, for two years, always bringing his own servants; but that his wife was there but seldom. Neither had been seen about the place for a long period.

Then, for a time, I wandered about the town to dodge those I had been interrogating. But in the afternoon I slipped back and picked the garage lock. And, as I had hoped, I found a hammer, chisel and

file, the teeth of the latter filled with bits of steel. Apparently it was there that Maurie had paused in his flight to prepare his automobile against identification.

Naturally, I suspected the famous jewel might be hidden in the house. But I dared not search. For it was almost certain I would be detected if I attempted to conduct a thorough hunt, possibly by a lookout for the smuggler, and surely by the neighbors or the local police. No, my best course was to continue to watch and wait, to do nothing to alarm the pair I expected to trap. For, if they ever suspected someone was close upon their trail and fled the country, I might never be able to bring the murderers to justice or recover the reliquary. I also decided it was unnecessary to place the house under surveillance for a time, for Maurie was out of the country and the Countess could not go there without my men at her heels.

NOW a considerable and uneventful wait began. The Countess did nothing suspicious. Most of the time she remained in her rooms. And, as we were not working with the authorities, we could not listen in on her telephone wire or intercept her mail or telegrams.

Then, one day in late July, there was a break in our weary vigil. I received a wireless from Bentley, stating that he and Maurie were on their way from Venezuela, bound for Brooklyn, and giving the date of their scheduled arrival. Immediately I doubled the watch upon the Countess, certain she knew more than I. Sooner or later, following Kofel's arrival, I felt sure they would meet.

When the ship arrived, Tchekhova and I were at the pier. I moved about freely, certain Maurie would not know me. The Russian I placed where he could see, without being seen. Bentley was among the first down the gang-plank. He grinned at passing and signaled my man was still on board. It was some time before the latter limped to the pier, scowling, obviously in a bad humor. From those who kept me posted, I learned the reason. One of the customs men who had boarded the vessel at Quarantine had spotted him and insisted upon accompanying him ashore. But a thorough search of his clothing and trunks revealed no contraband.

When he left the wharf in a taxicab the Colonel and I followed, straight to his place of business in Maiden Lane. Tchekhova said he never had seen the man before. After an hour's wait our man came out, took another taxi and headed up-town. We trailed him to a fashionable Park Avenue hotel, and I was at his elbow when he engaged a small suite and registered under his own name.

Realizing that he intended to make no attempt at concealment and could be picked up at any time, I rejoined the Colonel and hastened to my headquarters to receive Bentley's report. Summarized, my agent had experienced no difficulty in locating Kofel in Caracas, where he had acted no differently from any other visiting foreigner. From employees in the hotel where both stopped, Bentley learned that Maurie had arrived there first in May, but had been away for some weeks in the interior looking over a new gold discovery. This corresponded with the statement given out at his office. But we knew that in his period



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of absence he most certainly had been in Canada and New York.

HOWEVER, Bentley's most significant announcement was that on the day previous, Kofel had sent a wireless message addressed to Mrs. George Roberts, at West Sixty-seventh Street. The message itself he had not learned, but we guessed its contents. The crook had informed his confederate of his imminent arrival.

On the fifth day after Maurie's arrival things began to move. Tchekhova and I were in my up-town office in the early evening, when a telephone message from one of my lookouts informed me Kofel had just left his office alone in a fast-looking automobile, and headed north. It was the first time he had used a machine other than a taxicab since returning to the city. My guess was that he finally was bound for a rendezvous with the Countess. I called to the Colonel to follow me. Before my office stood my own car, also capable of great speed. We swung into Sixty-seventh Street, and we were none too soon. One of my men spotted us, leaped to the running-board, and informed me that the woman was in the taxi just leaving the place.

As he dropped off, I took up the trail which continued far up into the Bronx, to where two great thoroughfares crossed. There the Countess left the cab, walked a block, and took her seat beside the driver of a big machine of foreign make standing at the curb. The man promptly swung his vehicle into the traffic; we were satisfied he was Maurie.

Then for two hours he led us a merry chase, for a time remaining in the congested streets with the obvious intention of losing any possible trailers. It was not until he had passed through Scarsdale and headed toward the Hudson that I became satisfied he was making for Riverford. And, fearing he would note us if we attempted to follow along the less frequented thoroughfares, I cut ahead of him and put on all the speed the law would allow.

Arriving at Maurie's suburban home, I placed my machine near the gateway of a house opposite. Then Tchekhova and I made our way into the Kofel grounds and concealed ourselves in the shrubbery. The wait was not long, but a light rain which had begun falling while we were skirting the river made our post in the open most uncomfortable.

THE car we had trailed came to a halt close to the gate. Then the passengers came toward us out of the drizzle, moving over the sodden turf without noise or conversation. And quite as silently they mounted the steps and disappeared. It was only when we caught slivers of light showing at the sides of the curtains of a second floor front room that we were certain they were inside.

"Listen, Colonel," I said, "I believe we are in for some quick action. We're going inside and learn what those two are doing. Don't make a sound on your life, but follow me!"

Passing along the porch I located a long window which opened into the main hallway. Forcing the catch of this, we soon were inside. There was just a suggestion of light, which came through the many windows above us. And, when my eyes

became accustomed to the semidarkness, I took my companion by the arm, found the stairs, and motioned him to keep close. In my right hand I held my automatic, ready for instant use. Unless I covered Maurie first, in the event we were discovered, I felt it would be a battle to the death. And I was going to try to get in the first shot. Maurie was a killer!

We mounted with fair speed, for the covering was thick and prevented sound. Reaching the hallway above, we paused and looked toward the room in which we had seen the shreds of light. The door was open a little, enabling us to catch the murmur of voices and note the room was fully illuminated. I gave the Colonel a tug to follow. We tiptoed—nearer—nearer—striving unsuccessfully to catch what was being said. Finally, just before we reached the opening, all sound within ceased. I looked through. The Countess and Maurie were standing before a wall safe.

Suddenly the woman gave a little cry. And, as she drew back a step, Maurie turned, a great jewel in his hand, which caught and reflected the light. Over my shoulder I caught a smothered gasp.

"At last," I thought, "we have both the crooks and their plunder." Then I took hold of the handle of the door and attempted to push it wider without noise. But it creaked. There came a shrill scream from the woman, and the next instant all went black as the lights were switched off. I dropped to the floor, dragging Tchekhova with me, expecting a shot. But none came. Then I caught a faint sound, as of a door closing. Immediately I determined to take a desperate chance, leaped into the room, drew my flash-light and swung it about. The place was empty. I could not detect how the crooks had made their getaway.

"QUICK! After me!" I shouted, and dashed down the stairway and for the window by which we had entered, lighting our way with my flash. The Colonel and I tumbled upon the porch just in time to see two shadowy forms running from the building. But they were not shadows, as two pistol reports and the sound of bullets tearing through the bushes near us proved. In another moment we caught the hum of a spinning motor and a rasping of gears, and knew they were off in their car.

But we were after them in seconds, crashing and swinging along through the rain. We knew they had turned north, for we had commanded a view of the south road. On we tore, our machine swaying and lurching like a crazed monster. Fortunately the rain appeared to have cleared the road from Riverford of cars, giving pursued and pursuers a free course. But we turned our lights on full, keeping the sharpest lookout. And, after a time, we picked out the shadow of a car ahead, without lights and zigzagging as badly as we were doing.

Certain it contained Maurie and the Countess, I forced more speed. We gained until we were within a hundred yards of them. Then we lost again. The driver ahead was extending his car to its limit. But, being much lighter than mine, it jumped and swerved badly. I guessed that the effort required to keep it on the road kept the man from shooting at us.

Then, suddenly, I caught the flash of a red danger signal, and slowed down for

the probable curve ahead. Those in front paid no heed to the light. As we swung around the turn, we saw the other car, full in the glare of our lights, swerve wildly on two wheels, crash through a white "warning fence" and go hurtling down into the blackness below. A woman's cry reached us as we whizzed past the spot, hugging the inside of the road.

I brought our machine to a halt, and Tchekhova and I ran back. Using the flash-light, we made our way through the broken fence. The descent was not difficult, for there were trees and bushes in abundance to cling to. But we went far before we found them, almost to the railroad tracks which paralleled the river.

THERE they were, Maurie and the Countess—both dead. She lay against a great stone, unmarked, but with an expression of awful fear in her set features. He was beneath the wreck of the car, which had turned over and crashed against a tree.

Dropping beside Maurie, I found what I sought—the Orloff blue diamond—in the breast pocket of his coat. I held the reliquary in the light of the flash so Tchekhova could see it, then pressed it into his hand.

"Unless someone is falsely accused of Drysdale's murder," I said, "the case ends right here. We'll talk only to save the innocent. Let's get back to the car and the city. The broken fence will lead someone to them in the morning. There will be no question of how they died."

And so the amazing case ended.

The Clue in the Coffin

(Continued from page 51)

closer, incredulous—stunned by what I saw. The cheek was tinted blue-black with a short scrub of beard.

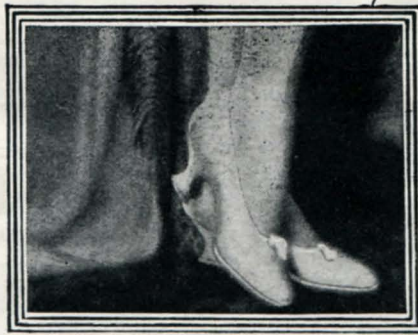
Less than twenty seconds were needed to convince me I wasn't dreaming. The coffin held the corpse of a man!

It was the same corpse that had lain on the floor two nights earlier when I had entered the case. It was being palmed off as the body of Anna Mulholland. The beard grows on a dead man as rapidly as it does in life.

THE disjointed evidence I had been gathering regarding the family fell quickly into a pattern after I found this clue in the coffin. Why, this dead man, who looked enough like Anna to pass for her in woman's clothes, was her own brother! He must be the ne'er-do-well who sometimes went to sea. Had he tried to visit his sister secretly—crawled through the window—asked her for money, perhaps? But, I figured, Mulholland had caught them together, had got into a row with the brother and shot him down. Then he had thought of this monstrous plan of changing his costume, of burying him as Anna, so that he could inherit the house and doubtless marry Katharine Prentice.

But how had he disposed of Anna?

I went downstairs, pulled my gun on Mulholland as he sat at a kitchen table sipping hot coffee, and got the white-collar desperado handcuffed before I uttered a word.



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"Now," I said, without preliminaries, "tell me how you killed him!"

It took some hard persuading on my part. But he ended by confessing the crime exactly as I had imagined it.

"And your wife?" I demanded. "What have you done with her?"

"She's on the top floor," he answered sullenly.

"Dead or alive?"

"Alive. She went completely out of her mind when I shot her brother. That's what made me feel I was safe. Her craziness isn't the noisy kind. She's sort of struck dumb."

"You figured on keeping her a prisoner

for the rest of her life?" I asked, amazed.

"Yes. But not around here. After the funeral, I was going to take her out to the Middle West somewhere and commit her to an asylum under a false name," he declared in a monotone. I have never encountered such callousness as his.

I didn't fully credit the details about Anna, I guess, until I released her myself from a garret room.

She recovered her reason a few months later.

Henry Mulholland paid the penalty he more than deserved in the electric chair. Jim, the undertaker, was given a long stretch up the river for his share in the fraud I had uncovered.

Why It Can Never Be Told

(Continued from page 47)

time for repairs or cleaning or registration, he had hesitated before identifying the firm who had cleaned the diamond a few months before. Those are just a couple of instances of his embarrassment; on the whole, however, he had been apparently quite candid, and anyone is liable to forget such things.

"If you like, Mrs. Borland," I said gently, "I will defer any further questioning until to-morrow."

"No, no, go ahead," she insisted feverishly. "Take all our finger-prints. I know neither Jim nor Marie had anything to do with the robbery."

"What rot!" her husband flung out sharply. Then, meeting the beseeching glance in his wife's tired, tear-filled eyes, he went over to the divan where we had laid her, and kneeling down put his arms about her. "Marian, darling, I don't wonder you are upset, little girl. I'm nervous myself. Browne only wants to take our finger-prints so as to check up on any others which may be on the door-knob. It'll probably only take a minute."

"Oh, then, I must have mine taken, too," she insisted. "And Ollie must have hers taken." Ollie, she explained, was Mrs. Oliphant, the masseuse. I knew this woman well. She is a regular vault of information and any blackmailer who could entice her on to his staff would be in clover for the rest of his life.

I had with me my finger-printing paraphernalia and was just about to place Mrs. Borland's tips on the inked paper when the telephone bell rang. Marie was on the point of answering it when I suggested that it would be better if, for the time being, she let someone else attend to all outside communications.

The girl tossed her head and scowled at me. "Jim, please see who it is," Mrs. Borland requested. "I hope it is Ollie; she promised to come back as soon as she had finished with Mrs. Ashley." Turning toward the table, she readjusted her fingers on the paper, and continued, "I called her up at once when I discovered my loss. She is such a comfort—there, is that all?"

Holding up her inky fingers, she requested her maid to bring a towel. "This should be done in the bathroom; it isn't a drawing-room trick at all," she remarked with a brave attempt at lightness. "Now, Jim, it's your turn. Come on. Was that Ollie?"

"Yes, dear," he replied. "I told her to come right up."

Without any trace of reluctance, he submitted his fingers to a freshly inked pad and watched with every evidence of interest while I gently pressed each finger-tip on its surface. In addition to this I took an imprint of the palm of the hand.

WHEN it came Marie's turn, however, the girl at first refused to have her prints taken. "You can't force me neither," she said, angrily, in a low voice. "I haven't done anything."

"Now listen, my girl, if you are innocent why are you afraid of having your finger-prints taken? There's enough circumstantial evidence to hold you, though I don't believe you had anything to do with the robbery. Will you have them printed here or down-town?"

Sulkily, she came forward. Before I had a chance to touch her hand, she placed her fingers firmly on the sheet. From the way she did this I judged that it was not the first time, and when I looked at the impression, I was sure of it. She had attempted an old-timer's trick: by compressing her finger-tips, she had smudged the print. It was, however, clear enough for my purpose and I refrained from comment.

I am much interested in dactylography as discussed by Cesare Lombroso, and as I folded up the now-dried print of Mr. Borland's palm, his words in *Criminal Man* recurred to me: "Long fingers are common to swindlers, thieves and pickpockets. The lines on the palmar surfaces of the finger-tips are often of a simple nature." Borland's lines were exceptionally simple.

"Has anyone left the suite since the diamond was missed?" I asked Mrs. Borland.

"No one except Ollie," she replied. "She and I made a thorough search of the bedroom, and at Marie's own suggestion searched her and her room, before the masseuse left."

At this point the bell rang. I went to the door and admitted Mrs. Oliphant. She is a tall, strong, muscular woman; her blonde hair is streaked with gray, for she is well along in her forties, but her face is without a wrinkle. Her whole being exudes health and good nature. Broadway beauties and Fifth Avenue Mayfairites keep her busy eight hours a day. She has a daughter at one of the smartest women's

colleges and a son attending one of the large universities.

"How d'ye do, Mr. Browne?" she greeted me heartily. "I've just come in for a minute or two and I'm glad to find you here."

"Spare us a little more time," I begged her, after shaking hands, "I want you to help me make a thorough search of the premises."

"Sure I will," she agreed gladly. "And how are you, now, dearie?" she continued, going up to Mrs. Borland, who was seated on the divan. "We're just going to make another quick search of the place and then you're going straight to bed. Everything's going to be all right."

WELL, we did make a thorough search of every nook and cranny; in the folds of every piece of drapery; through every article of wear in the place; under the carpets; behind pictures; every receptacle was emptied. Not even a quarter-carat stone could have escaped our scrutiny.

But—on the lower frame of the transom I found a fine film of dust with a distinct impression of two hands, and on the glass knob of the bathroom door a set of fingerprints which did not correspond with any of those which I had taken. Both of these surfaces, Marie informed me, had been dusted earlier in the evening.

It was nearly midnight when Mrs. Oliphant and I took our departure.

As we passed the floor clerk, who is a sort of deputy house-detective, I questioned her about visitors to that wing of the hotel. No one is permitted to pass her desk until she telephones the guest who is being called upon, and learns that the caller is expected.

"Are these all suites on this floor?" I asked her.

"Oh, no, sir," she replied. "The Borlands have the only large suite in this wing. The rooms on both sides of them are single or doubles, with bath. They are very quiet people, though: one is occupied by a lady and her daughter who are permanent guests and the one on the other end has an old man who came here last week. On the opposite side of the corridor, there are two small suites of parlor, bedroom and bath, and two single and two double rooms with baths: all tenanted by permanent guests for the season."

I thanked the girl for her information and joined Mrs. Oliphant at the elevator. The case certainly seemed like an inside job. But how had the thief managed to dispose of the ring? The Borland's suite was on the fifteenth floor; it would have been impossible to have thrown the loot out of the window to a confederate. There was no space for concealment in the corridor; the walls were in paneled wood, the ceiling too high to reach, and the carpets were nailed down.

Over a midnight lunch, I discussed the matter with Mrs. Oliphant.

"I know you are inclined to suspect Jim Borland," she said, regarding me quizzically out of her wise gray eyes, "but I think you are wrong. Why should he take the engagement ring his wife is so crazy over, when there were other jewels there? You are going to investigate him and find out that he was pretty wild before he married, and that last summer when his wife was in Deauville, he was chasing around with a very gay set. But you can't blame the man! You know it's a pretty hard job,

being married to a woman who is superior to you socially and financially. Jim told me once that he loved his wife more than any woman he had ever met, but that there were times when he felt like a worm. When they live in their Fifth Avenue home, the best he can do is to supply the place with flowers."

"**Y**ES," I conceded, "it must be a pretty tough position. But," I suggested, "you know I have an idea that Mrs. Borland suspects her husband."

"No, she doesn't," Mrs. Oliphant snapped me up quickly. "She is always on the defensive, though. Some cat wrote her a letter when she was abroad giving her an earful of hubby's goings-on, and she came right back home. That ring that Jim gave her cost every cent of his capital, and he really works like a dog down-town. Sometimes he is pretty hard up, but his wife believes it is for his own good to make him work, thought she often thinks it would be easier if she just settled so much on him, tied up so that he couldn't speculate with it, and then have him travel about with her all the time. I wouldn't tell you all this, but I want you to see Jim's side fairly."

After we had finished our wheat cakes and coffee, I saw Mrs. Oliphant to her home. Before returning to my hotel I sent a long cable to our Paris agents, requesting full information regarding the man from whom Borland claimed to have purchased the diamond, and any gossip which might be useful, in connection with the transaction.

I called up Hansen and had him station two men at the entrances of the St. John to shadow the maid Marie. Then, I called it a day and went home.

The following day I sent the maid's finger-prints to the Bureau at Headquarters, asking if she were listed. It would be a day or so before I could hear from Paris.

I had two definite suspects: Mr. Borland and the maid Marie. The man's motive—need of cash; the girl's—to aid some criminal friend.

Yet, why was Mrs. Borland's engagement ring stolen when there were other jewels there? Borland knew the attachment his wife had for the ring. No professional jewel thief would be likely to steal a conspicuous gem like the missing diamond, when there were other pickings which would be much more easily disposed of.

If it was an outside job, how did the thief know just when and where the jewel could be obtained?

Who made those hand smudges on the transom frame?

The door into the outer corridor was closed, locking automatically; the lock had not been tampered with in any way: therefore, whoever entered must have possessed a key, or have been admitted by some one inside.

THE most obvious suspect was, naturally, the maid. We had only her word for it that some mysterious stranger had calmly entered Mrs. Borland's bedroom, closed the bathroom door and leisurely stolen the valuable gem.

Borland was a well-known figure in Wall Street. This doesn't mean that he was one of the big guns, though he was con-

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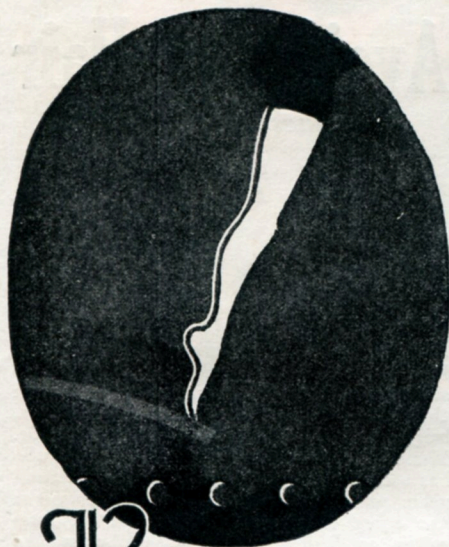
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nected with a large, first-rate firm. He was known as a plunger, according to men who were thoroughly acquainted with all the inside gossip of the Exchange, and had made and lost large sums since his marriage three years before. I know many of the men in that district and easily obtained all the information I needed.

What I learned, however, exonerated rather than implicated him in the robbery. It appeared that Borland had been desperately hard up for months before and had been threatened with dismissal by his employers. However, a week before the theft, he had made a big killing and had cleared \$150,000.

There was one reason I could think of why Borland might have taken the ring. His wife had told him that she was going to have it set in platinum, and he had demurred, saying that the old-world gold setting was more appropriate. When she insisted, he promised to have it reset for her birthday and wanted to pick out the design himself. However, here, too, she had protested that she wanted to take the ring to the jeweler herself and have it done. The upshot of the argument had been that Borland had arranged to take his wife to an artist he knew who made a specialty of unique designs and they had planned to go the day following the robbery.

"Why was the ring stolen the evening before?" I asked myself aloud, as I often do when seeking motives of suspects. And, my busy little subconscious chirped up, joyfully: "Because the diamond was phony! Borland didn't dare have it submitted to the examination of an expert!"

"Had Borland given his wife an imitation diamond as an engagement ring? Of course not. The Customs House appraisers would have given the show away in the first place, and the jewelers who cleaned Mrs. Borland's jewels would have advised her of the substitution."

I remembered Borland's hesitation in mentioning the name of the firm which had cleaned the diamond and decided to pay them a visit.

SENDING in my card, I requested an interview with the head of the firm. To him I put the question: "Had his firm made a duplicate of Mrs. Borland's ring, and if so, who had ordered it?"

At first, he refused to answer, but after I had convinced him that I was working in the interests of one of his best customers, he told me that Borland had brought the ring in to be cleaned and had paid him \$350 to make an exact duplicate. There was nothing out of the ordinary in the transaction, as many women wear paste duplicates of their precious gems. After obtaining his promise to keep our talk confidential, I left.

Did Mrs. Borland know of the paste duplicate? It was possible, and without arousing any unpleasant suspicions in her mind there would be little difficulty in discovering this in my next interview with her.

However, before calling upon her, I paid a short visit to my friends at Police Headquarters and obtained the identification of Marie's finger-prints. Three years before she had been arrested in the company of a notorious crook. As no definite connection with any crime could be proven

against her, she had been placed in a home for delinquent girls, and her "gentleman friend" had been sent to Sing Sing. She had been released on probation, and had been reporting regularly to the officer who had her in charge. This woman, who has had over twenty years' experience in the work, after listening to my account of Marie's connection with the diamond theft, declared that she believed the girl innocent. She had kept a close watch on her, knew exactly where she spent her free hours, and was certain that she was really going straight.

When I reached my office I learned that Mrs. Borland had called me up and left word that I was to get in immediate touch with her on my arrival.

As her hotel was quite near, instead of telephoning, I jumped into a cab and within a few minutes I was soaring in the elevator of the St. John.

Leaving the car, I ran into a tall, slender old man who was waiting with a luggage-burdened bell-boy a few steps away.

Murmuring apologies, I happened to glance at his face. For a moment I stood stunned. The body was the body of an old man, but the eyes that flashed into mine for an instant were bright as a sparrow's and hard as stone; the left eyelid drooped lower than the right, and a small white scar appeared on the upper lip.

"Hayden, by all that's holy," I muttered to myself. "What on earth was he doing there?" He was one of the cleverest young detectives I knew.

HE might be on a case, so naturally I didn't give him away, though I knew he knew I had recognized him. I hadn't seen him since he had enlisted in the A. E. F. and even through the disguise, I realized he had changed greatly. However, that lame eyelid and scar were trophies of a scrap he had had in making an arrest while in my employ some years before.

I walked on past the Borlands' suite and found the door of the room on the farther side open, just as I expected. "So, Hayden was the transient old man of whom the night floor clerk had spoken," I soliloquized.

I hated to consider for a moment that my old employee was mixed up in something crooked, but the clerk had described the other guests in that wing as quiet, conservative people and I couldn't imagine what might have brought him there.

Although I had been only two days on the case, I knew that Mrs. Borland would be expecting a report of definite advancement. And, with the exception of the discovery of the identity of her neighbor, I was practically no further along than I had been when I started. Borland and Marie were still under suspicion, but I had learned nothing which I hadn't surmised when I cross-examined them. Until I received the requested information from Paris, I didn't expect to make any startling discoveries.

"Mr. Browne, I want you to publish the offer of a reward of fifteen thousand dollars for the recovery of the ring," my client exclaimed, after the barest of greetings. "You know how to word it, 'no questions asked,' and that sort of thing."

"If you will just be patient for a little while, Mrs. Borland, I am sure we will recover the ring without rewarding the

crooks," I said. "It is an unusual case, and I am sure it is going to have an unusual ending."

"Have you learned anything?" she asked eagerly.

"Not yet—" I began, when rising to her feet abruptly, she crossed to a side table, opened a box, selected a cigarette, tapped it nervously on the back of her hand, and, without lighting it, resumed her seat. Her action silenced me more effectively than words. There was really nothing for me to say.

"By the way, did you have a paste duplicate of the missing ring?" I asked.

"Yes. Why?" she exclaimed, leaning forward eagerly.

"Well—I would like to see it," I said.

"I haven't it," she said shortly. "My husband had one made for me, but I loved wearing the original. The imitation one is in the vault," she added with the shade of an impish grin, which reminded me of the high-spirited, fun-loving little deb I had known years before. "I'm going to get it out to-night, though, and Jim has promised to buy me another ring if the missing one doesn't turn up."

"Well, wait just a little longer before offering a reward," I suggested, rising to go. "I have some information I can't give you yet, but just trust me, won't you? I will work on the case night and day. If you hear anything call my hotel, and they will have word where you can reach me if I'm not in."

NO first-class detective likes to recover jewels through offering a reward to the crooks who stole them, but when clients are impatient and insist on taking matters into their own hands, what can you do about it?

I didn't see how I could force matters unless Lady Luck took a hand. She did, that evening. I was visiting a friend, playing poker with the bunch, in fact, when the maid came in and told me someone wanted me on the phone.

There were protests from the other players and a bit of chaff. When at last I reached the hall and grabbed the receiver, Central informed me with maddening sweetness: "Sorry, party has hung up."

The girl at our switchboard had been given instructions to give the location of my whereabouts to no one but Mrs. Borland or Hansen. I tried Hansen first; he had not called. Next I called the Borland suite—Mrs. Borland was not at home.

If it was important, I consoled myself, the party would call again. Just as I was about to re-enter the room where we had been playing, the bell rang again. I answered it myself.

"This is Mrs. Borland," an impatient voice greeted me. "Your line has been busy for the last fifteen minutes—or has it? Central said so; and if it wasn't I'm going to send a complaint in. Please ask Mr. Browne to come to the phone."

As soon as I could get a word in, I assured her that in this instance Central had been innocent, and explained how I had been trying to trace a call which had come in for me.

"That was probably my call," she answered. "I thought your end had cut off, you were so slow in getting to the phone."

"I am sure I saw my ring on the hand of a girl dancing in the Ambassador Caba-

ret about half an hour ago! She was with a tall, slender man who had odd droopy eyes. I called Jim's attention to the ring and wanted him to have somebody arrest them on suspicion, but he wouldn't do it. Then I came out here and called you up. When you didn't answer, I went back into the Cabaret and found they had left. I am certain that was my ring. It is cut in a very odd shape, as I described to you. Can't you trace those people? They can't be far from here. The girl is red-haired—flaming red—and she has brown eyes."

I promised to do my best, but as she described the man I had a sickening feeling that he was Hayden, the detective I'd seen in the disguise of an old man. How could Hayden have known about the location of the jewel case and just when the diamond was going to be placed there? If Hayden wanted to steal jewels, why had he chosen one so difficult to dispose of as this large registered gem?

TERSELY, I explained to my host that I would have to leave immediately. I made the rounds of all the cabarets, which fringe Broadway, Fifth and Park Avenues, without coming across the couple.

As a last resort, I decided to visit an old hang-out of Hayden's, a place never visited by the uninitiated public, but very popular with its habitués. It is hidden away on the second floor back of an old-fashioned brownstone front in the Forties between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. Good music, good food, good liquor and good fellowship were offered here for twenty years before Buckner came along recently and padlocked its doors.

There, sure enough, I found Hayden and his fiery redhead. To the raucous strains of a colored orchestra, they were gliding through a dance.

I waited until they were seated. So engrossed were they with each other that neither noticed me until I spoke Hayden's name. He sprang to his feet.

"Hello, Browne," he exclaimed familiarly, "I half expected you would look me up."

With a rather hollow bravado, he introduced me to his companion. On her finger sparkled the ring which had attracted Mrs. Borland's attention.

"May I examine that ring, Miss Adler?" I asked her.

She glanced inquiringly at her escort.

"You may not!" he answered for her. "Why the devil should she show you that ring?"

"You know darn well why!" I retorted. "That is the ring that was stolen from the Borland's suite in the St. John two days ago."

"Is that right, Al?" the girl demanded, her eyes large with fright.

"No!" he said sharply.

"Well, will you come up to the St. John and let Mrs. Borland examine it?" I asked. He hesitated.

"I am positive that is the ring, and if you won't come along I'll be obliged to have the young lady arrested for having stolen property in her possession," I threatened.

"All right, we'll go along," he agreed, "but first you'd better call up Borland and tell him we're coming," he added grimly.

Mrs. Borland had told me that she



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would go straight back to her hotel and wait for my report there.

I got her on the phone and told her that we were about to start up-town. The girl had handed me the ring, and I described it exactly to her. Inside were the initials M. B. and J. B. and the date of her engagement.

"Yes, that's it. I was sure it was. Hurry up here as soon as you can and I'll have a check ready for you!"

NOT much was said on the journey up-town. I couldn't make Hayden out at all. He had been such a decent sort of chap and I would have banked my last chip on his honor.

When we reached the St. John, I expected to find that Mrs. Borland had left word for us to go right up. Instead, I found a request for us to wait until she sent down further word.

For over half an hour we sat around the lobby, before the message came.

Mrs. Borland opened the door for us herself. There was something dead about the way she received us. All the joy and enthusiasm which had rung over the wire had been battered out.

"Please come into the drawing-room," she directed. "I'm sorry to have kept you waiting. Now where is this ring?"

I silently handed it over. I think all three of us felt as if we were attending a funeral.

Mrs. Borland made a pretense of examining the bauble. The stone flashed mockingly with myriad, ever-changing fires, as it reflected and threw off the light from its surface.

"That is not my ring," she said at last, quietly but positively.

"But it has all the identification marks—"

"That is not my ring," Mrs. Borland repeated coldly. "Good night. I am sorry to have put you to this trouble," she murmured politely to the girl, and then added, turning to me: "Will you please go now. I'll call you up to-morrow. Do nothing until you hear from me further."

I am sure that Miss Adler was as much surprised as I was at our reception and its termination; and I was equally sure that Hayden was not.

We hadn't seen Borland, but as we passed down the hall, I heard him moving about in his bedroom.

"What's the answer to the riddle?" I asked Hayden when the three of us stood on the sidewalk before parting.

"Sorry, old man," he answered, giving me a peculiar look, "but it's—all right."

For an instant he paused. Uncertainly, he held out his hand, while the girl watched us sharply. "Some time you may learn the details; but probably you won't. Take my word for it, though, your case ends right here."

I would give Hayden the benefit of the doubt, so, shaking his hand, I shrugged my shoulders and bade him and Miss Adler good night.

NEXT morning, shortly after I was awake, Mrs. Borland called me on the phone and requested me to send my bill and discontinue my work on the case.

I might never have learned the explanation had I not send that cable to Paris.

A week later, I received a long report from our French agent with full details.

Borland had purchased the ring from a certain dealer in gems who was really a high-grade fence, paying \$1,000 down and giving his notes for the balance. This was to be paid as soon as he married the wealthy divorcee; should the marriage not come off, he was to return the ring. The marriage came off all right, but the husband was as poorly off financially as he had been when he was single.

The best Borland had been able to do was to send five thousand dollars, which served as a sop for a year. However, he had made the mistake of remarking upon receipt of a dunning letter, that the French crook wouldn't dare sue him for the remainder. His friends knew how the ring had been purchased, and they backed him up in this decision.

Somehow—just exactly how our agent couldn't discover—news of this had drifted to Paris, and the fence had retorted by sending Hayden over to obtain the ring for the full-owing balance. The alternative was exposure of Borland's letter in which he promised to pay for the ring as soon as his marriage to the wealthy countess was accomplished.

Armed with this information, I paid a visit to Hayden and asked him how he had come to be mixed up in the affair.

"I was working in the Paris branch of a New York agency and the Delvaile fellow gave them the commission to bring back the ring. I didn't know the details. When Borland explained them to me, I suggested his having the duplicate made and making the substitution since the man wouldn't give him more time. He did, and sent the real ring back to Paris. Mrs. Borland thought the substitute was in the vault, but she was wearing it.

"Borland was to trust to luck to make a big strike and buy the diamond back. Well, he made his cleaning, \$150,000 on stock exchange. I sent the money over to Delvaile and the ring is on its way back to Borland now. But it was just his rotten luck to get the 'necessary' together just at the time Mrs. Borland decided to have the diamond reset in platinum. Borland knew she'd find out she had a phoney ring."

"So you had to steal that, too?" I suggested.

"Exactly," Hayden acknowledged, cheerfully. "We planned a perfect crime. I engaged the room next door to the Borland drawing-room; I got the cue that the way was clear and the ring in the before-designated place, when Borland whistled a certain tune. He had left the outer door off the latch. I walked in; chinned myself up to the open transom; saw the maid bending over the bathtub; closed the door on her until I helped myself to the ring and then walked out.

"Borland told me I could keep the substitute—he never wanted to see it again. That's how Miss Adler happened to have it on. I gave it to her.

"Now you understand why it can never be told."

Three weeks later I received a large check from Mrs. Borland with thanks for my services.

From Mrs. Oliphant I received the news that the Borlands had started out on a second honeymoon.



Unsolved Mysteries

The Problem of the Spanish Shawl

Here Is a Chance to Show What Kind of Detective You Are

IF you ever go to Cuba, don't make the mistake of trying to test the ability of the Customs authorities. If you have dutiable merchandise, declare it and avoid trouble, for mighty few articles get by the argus-eyed representatives of the law.

One case that came to light a few years ago still is an unsolved mystery in the mind of Inspector Peterson (now retired).

The Inspector was in the shop of Señor Natchez one night in Havana. He saw a woman, whom he knew as Mrs. Burke, purchase half-a-dozen Spanish shawls. She paid \$400 apiece for them. The purchase registered itself on Inspector Peterson's mind because it was made the day Mrs. Burke was scheduled to sail for New York and because Inspector Peterson

knew that those shawls were bound to come to his notice in his official capacity at the time of sailing. One hundred dollars in purchases is all the law allows American visitors to Cuba, so that here was represented \$2,300 worth of dutiable merchandise—unless Mrs. Burke should deliberately try to evade the law.

Inspector Peterson was surprised the following day, upon looking over Mrs. Burke's declaration, to find that the shawls were not listed. His suspicions aroused, he searched Mrs. Burke's trunks and bags thoroughly. The shawls were not brought to light. Thinking that possibly Mrs. Burke had forwarded the shawls by freight, he dismissed the matter from his mind, knowing that the shawls so shipped would be declared anyway and the Government would not lose.

Inspector Peterson puzzled his mind to find out why Mrs. Burke should purchase six shawls. One would be sufficient for her use for several seasons, as the shawls were a splendid quality and of high purchase price. He made up his mind that the answer lay in Mrs. Burke's generosity with her friends.

Mrs. Burke was a widow. She traveled, however, with two maids. One of the maids acted suspiciously when going through the Customs inspection and the apparent upset and nervousness of the maid was not lost on the Inspector. He went through her belongings and found nothing wrong. Tempted to search the person of the maid, he was about to order this done when a

fracas on deck drew his attention elsewhere. The search never was made. (It is hardly probable that half-a-dozen shawls of the size and heavy texture of a good Spanish shawl could be so folded or draped about the person of this maid that they would not be apparent.)

Mrs. Burke lived in Miami. Peterson's family was in Miami also. This, by the way, is how Peterson

knew Mrs. Burke, at least by sight. Peterson's natural curiosity aroused, he directed his son, an intelligent boy of nineteen, to do a little sleuthing about the Burke estate and find out if Mrs. Burke wore or displayed a new Spanish shawl. This line of inquiry failed, showing to Peterson's satisfaction that the shawls purchased by Mrs. Burke had not been forwarded to her home by express.

About six weeks after the incident of the purchase, Peterson had occasion to be in the shop of Señor Natchez once again and he inquired of the Señor if a purchase of half-a-dozen Spanish shawls was an ordinary thing.

"Quite the contrary," was the reply Peterson received. And the unusualness of the sale caused the fact to be registered on the mind of Señor Natchez also.

Peterson began to think that a new method of smuggling was afoot that he knew nothing about. Once this idea entered his mind, he set himself to work on this case unceasingly to locate this half-a-dozen shawls and find out how they entered the States. Still another two months went by without developments. Then Inspector

TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES Magazine is offering its readers an opportunity to show what clever detectives they can be. In each issue we propose to state the facts of an unsolved crime, taken from records of police departments throughout the country. We offer awards of \$15, \$10 and \$5 for the best three letters showing, in the opinion of the judges in charge of this department, that the readers displayed greatest ingenuity in arriving at a solution of each of these crime mysteries. We are concerned with: Who is guilty? How was the crime committed? What was the motive?—as the case may be.

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Peterson, again in the shop of Señor Natchez, learned a startling thing.

The Señor had been to the States for a brief vacation. At a vaudeville theater in Charleston the Señor saw an act composed of six dancing girls. The finale of the act was a Spanish dance. Each of the dancers wore a Spanish shawl. The Señor's natural interest in shawls was aroused. Giving the girls close scrutiny from his seat in the third row of the orchestra pit, and during the twirl and swirl of the dance, he noticed his own salesman's label on three of the six shawls! He was convinced beyond a doubt that these were the shawls purchased by Mrs. Burke.

Peterson started on a new line of investigation. Was Mrs. Burke the "owner" of the dancing act? Was one of her friends or relatives one of the half-dozen girls? What other interest had she in that vaudeville act? A thorough job of detective work failed to produce any connection between Mrs. Burke and the dancing girls.

To this day the problem of how those shawls came into the United States—and even greater, Mrs. Burke's motive for the purchase—remains unsolved.

For a while Peterson doubted his own identification of Mrs. Burke the night he was in the shop and saw the shawls sold. But an identification of the purchaser by Señor Natchez himself convinced Peterson that Mrs. Burke and no double of hers bought the shawls.

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There were times when Watson had premonitions of disaster at the end of the crime trail



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HOW I CAPTURED "BLUEBEARD WATSON"

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**WATSON'S OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS CAPTURE
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The Mystery of the Blue Car

(Continued from page 59)



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door of the Whitney garage he stopped and sprang out, followed more slowly by the hunchback.

Inside the garage a crouching figure listened to their receding footsteps on the ice-covered snow. When all was once more still the figure moved from its cramped position over to an automobile. A hand was laid on the nickel radiator—it was hot to the touch. A short time intervened, then the tail-light of the car was switched on. Under its red glow, three figures stood out on the license tag—130. The ever-restless fingers passed over the numbers, rapidly at first, then more slowly, then stopped altogether. The fumbling commenced again and a second later a faint ripping sound broke the stillness, as a piece of adhesive tape was pulled away from the tag—disclosing the full District of Columbia number—9-130.

THE hunchback was some seconds locating the key to the front door of the Whitney mansion and Terry chafed at the delay, but once inside the square central hall he hesitated perceptibly. He turned and walked over to the library. It was in total darkness. Wheeling again he strode across the hall into the drawing-room, just as Ruggles, who had preceded him, switched on one of the side lights. From the room beyond came faintly the sound of glass touching glass. As Terry started in that direction John Whitney appeared from the dining-room, a flask in one hand and an empty glass in the other. Breathing unevenly, white-faced, haggard, John stood and eyed them. Then as his vision cleared he recognized Terry. Rage sobered him. Flinging down the flask and glass, he crossed the room and stopped directly in front of the lawyer.

"Harriet," he said, in little above a whisper, "what have you done with her?"

"I left her here at dinner-time—"
"You lie!" John's powerful fingers closed and unclosed as they crept upward toward Terry's throat.

"Hands off." Terry's low commanding voice brought the infuriated man partly to his senses. "Has your sister returned since Ruggles left here to go to my house?"

John shook his head.
"She is at the police station," interposed a quiet voice behind them, and turning with one accord, they saw Inspector Mitchell, followed by Mrs. Ruggles. "Miss Whitney has been charged with the murder of her uncle."

"She did not kill him." The denial came from John Whitney, his hollow voice barely reached his hearers, his tragic eyes shifted from one white face to another.

"Look!" the Inspector broke in. Following his guiding finger, they stared at the blank wall underneath the one side light turned on in the room. A shadow showed below it. It grew and contracted, twisted and turned, and slowly, very slowly the distinctive profile of Commodore Whitney was visible on the wall.

A piece of burnished steel swished by the Inspector's head and sailed through the doorway leading into the central hall. A piercing cry—then silence.

They rushed into the hall, where they

were joined by others who had heard the scream.

A PAIR of clasped hands were pinned firmly by a dagger to a mirror. At the mirror crouched Mose, his terrified face turned toward them.

Who had thrown that dagger?
A frightened moan came from Mrs. Ruggles. "I saw those hands waving back and forth in front of the mirror and—and now look!"

"Shadow silhouettes!" broke in Inspector Mitchell. "I have seen them made by vaudeville artists on the stage, but none more cleverly done than yours, Mose." He aided Terry in binding the chauffeur's wounds with handkerchiefs. "What was your object, to terrify the people in this house?"

A snarl prefaced Mose's reply. "Find out for yourself; I'm going—"
But the chauffeur found his way blocked by Harriet Whitney.

"Stop!" she ordered. Her eyes were shining. "Tell them, Mr. Barlow, what we found in the garage."

Barlow was still wearing his borrowed chauffeur's uniform. "We've got you at last, Mose," he exclaimed, "thanks to Miss Whitney's quick wit." Barlow turned to his silent audience. "Mose is the leader of a stolen-car ring." A muttered oath escaped the chauffeur. "He cloaked his traffic in stolen cars under honest employment, using the Commodore's big garage to house cars, while license tags and engine numbers were altered by his confederates, chief among them being Sam Dean at Hyattsville."

"I found a list of names in your favorite code, Mose," supplemented Harriet, "in the car in the garage, which we chased this afternoon," turning to Terry. "With its license tag number cleverly altered by means of adhesive tape, the color of the tag, from 9-130 to 130. Mr. Barlow joined me in the garage and with his assistance, we decoded some of this"—and she displayed a small memorandum-book, as Mose's bandaged hand went involuntarily to the empty inside pocket of his coat. "How did you come to follow me to Walter Reed this afternoon?"

"The boy admitted dropping the note and described you." Mose sat down on a chair; he was growing conscious of a feeling of deadly weakness. "I had to have the message and tried first to catch you at the Cathedral. The code was one Commodore Whitney showed me. I—" he hesitated. "I used it on your mirror and on Mr. Terry's car just to scare you."

"For the same reason that you used your ability with your hands to throw shadow pictures of poor Uncle Jim on the wall," broke in Harriet shrewdly, "to make us leave the house so you could find the lost bonds."

FOR the first time Mose smiled. "Yes, I wanted to cop the coin and make a getaway," he admitted. "I overheard the Commodore and Mr. Terry talking about the bonds on New Year's eve—"

"And so you murdered him!" The exclamation leaped from Harriet's trembling lips. But the eager light in her eyes

turned to agony as her brother broke the painful silence.

"No, I killed Uncle Jim!" said John Whitney.

"I had permission to spend New Year's eve with Ned Terry. After a party given for Walter Reed boys, we drove around town to see the old year out, then Ned brought me here. I knew Uncle Jim sat up in his library until late. Going into the garden, I saw a light burning and Uncle Jim standing in one of the long French windows. He let me in and I asked him to let me have some money—and—and—" He drew his hands across his eyes as if to shut out some frightful vision. "When I came to my senses, Uncle Jim lay there on the floor, in front of me, dead.

Mrs. Ruggles was the first to speak. "I found your permit from the hospital authorities, John, and I realized I held the key to the Commodore's murder in my hand."

"Is that so?" Mose spoke with sneering emphasis, his detestation of the house-keeper getting the upper hand. "I'll tell you what really happened in the library, for I was there hiding behind one of the long window curtains waiting for the Commodore to go to bed so I could get the bonds. Come here—"

With one accord they followed him into the library.

"You sat in that chair, writing at the table," began Mose, and John nodded.

"Yes, I had just scrawled 'I promise to pay,' when Uncle Jim, who stood looking down, yelled something and tore a corner of the paper from me," he added.

"Just so," declared the chauffeur. "The Commodore yelled: 'I kill,' his hand went to his pocket, he tugged at something, and then—and then—I saw a dagger sail through the air—it struck the Commodore and he dropped backwards—dead."

John Whitney gazed at Mose in silence for one long second. "Do you mean I didn't stab Uncle Jim?" he asked, incredulous.

"That is exactly what I mean. You were still sitting in that chair and the dagger was thrown over your left shoulder. I did not see who threw it." Mose pointed an accusing finger at Mrs. Ruggles. "But you were here that night and not in Baltimore."

WITH cheeks ashen, Mrs. Ruggles faced her accuser. "I did go to Baltimore." She spoke in odd jerks. "By chance I met my sister in the station there—she had been called unexpectedly to Chicago—I returned to Washington by late train," she broke down, then by a great effort continued her narrative. "I decided to spend the night in my son's apartment—"

Mose whirled on the hunchback. "Did she?"

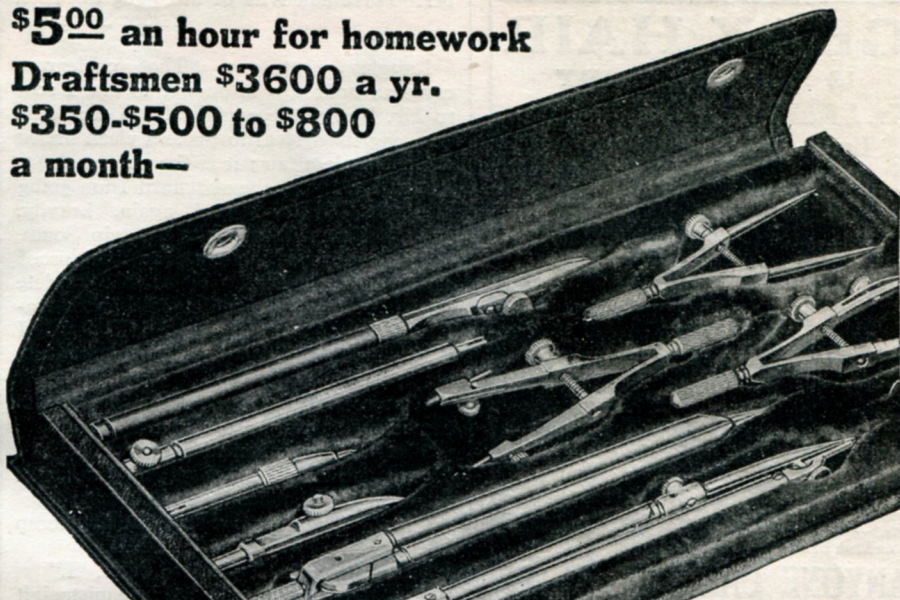
Young Ruggles looked at his tormentor. "I was not there, but here." A terrified scream broke from his mother. "Hush!" He laid his hand tenderly on her bowed head. "I killed Commodore Whitney, as Mose has described, to save John Whitney's life!"

"What?" Inspector Mitchell was the only one to move in the horror-stricken group.

Ruggles took from his pocket a cable-gram. "Read this aloud," he directed.

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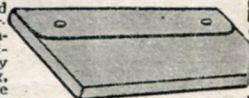
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TERRY SENIOR.

Ruggles went on: "That cablegram came an hour ago in answer to one I sent to 'Mr. Terry,' he explained. "I was only awaiting its arrival to make a clean breast of the whole affair; it is the only evidence I have to support the statement I am going to make." He sighed again, heavily. "When I came back from my trip South, the Commodore asked me to read proof of his book with him. We came to a delete mark. At sight of it he cried, with maniacal fury: 'At that sign I kill, I kill, I kill!' And looking up, I saw dementia in his eyes."

"Good God!" The shocked interruption came involuntarily from John Whitney.

The hunchback looked across at Barlow. "Have you that slip of paper which you found in Commodore Whitney's hand?"

"Yes." The detective held the tiny scrap of paper so that all might see it.

"That is my 'I,'" declared John. "I."

"Exactly. And the Commodore mistook it for a hastily drawn delete sign," explained Ruggles, speaking more slowly. "I came in that door," pointing to it, "in time to hear the Commodore's frenzied cry: 'I kill,' and caught the significance of the scene, for I knew he carried a loaded revolver. I was too far away to get to him in time, but I saw the dagger on that table and threw it at him."

IMPULSIVELY Harriet went over to him. "God bless you," she said, between her tears. "John undoubtedly owes his life to you."

"And I owe Ned Terry an abject apology." John looked around at the others. "When I ran out of here I was convinced I was responsible for Uncle Jim's death. My brain isn't always clear since I was shell-shocked. I joined Ned and told him I had killed Uncle Jim. I started to get in his car and found my glove was missing." He showed his hand with its crooked finger. "I knew the glove would identify me, so Ned volunteered to get it." He spoke with deeper emotion. "I got in his car, but I was too excited to think, so I drove off without waiting for Ned to return. Then I abandoned his car somewhere on the way out to Walter Reed and wandered around the outskirts of the city until it was time to report back."

"The bonds!" exclaimed the Inspector. "Where are they?"

"I can explain." Harriet fitted a key in a small door under the stairs and swung it open. "I heard what I thought was John's voice, so I came down-stairs with an electric torch and went into the dark library. I found Uncle Jim lying dead on the floor. The glove, which I recognized as one I had given John for Christmas, was on the floor. I fainted. When I regained consciousness, the glove was gone."

Harriet extended a large leather wallet to Terry. "I picked this up off the floor by Uncle Jim's body, and put it in this closet, thinking it was dropped by John."

Terry drew out the documents. "The bonds," he announced.

An oath escaped Mose. "I never thought of that closet," he remarked. "I took an envelope out of your bag, Miss Whitney, but the key wouldn't fit in any door in the house. But that closet—nothing was ever

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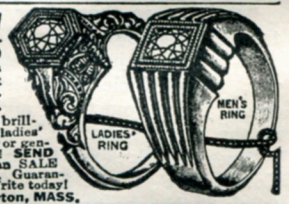
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kept in it, and I never knew it to be locked."

"BUT Uncle Jim evidently planned to put something of value in it, for early that evening he showed me the key in the glass table," retored Harriet. "And so I thought of it when I wanted to secrete the carpet-sweeper. Some queer noise, probably the furniture creaking, frightened me, and I accidently dropped the key in the letter-box and fled up to my room."

Barlow addressed the chauffeur. "Did you try to steal the dagger out of that glass table on Thursday night?"

"Not the dagger, no," Mose explained. "But I wanted some of those jeweled ornaments locked up in the table. Mr. Terry had walked off with one of our new cars, just as Dean was in the garage getting some license tags for it; and so we were hard up."

"So you are driving stolen property, Mr. Terry!"

Harriet threw her strong arms tenderly about Mrs. Ruggles.

"I will see your mother has the best of care," she promised, and looking back, as he followed the others out of the front door, the hunchback realized, with a lightning of his heavy heart, that Harriet would loyally abide by her word.

It was after eight o'clock in the morning when Ned Terry and Paul Barlow again entered the library, ushered in by Anna.

"The hunchback is every inch a man," declared Barlow. "The way he flung that dagger at the hands in the hall told me that was all he saw of Mose. He must have unusual eyesight and great strength and dexterity."

"Mose is a clever scamp," said Terry.

"But Miss Whitney was one too many for him," Barlow replied. "I'd driven her over here from Headquarters. It took me a second or two to lock the car at the curb, and then I joined her in the garage and helped decipher the code in that note-book which Mose said dropped out through a hole in his pocket. There's one thing more, though, how did the Commodore's cane get back here?"

"Ruggles and I brought it back," explained Terry. "John Whitney had it in his hand when he rushed out of here on New Year's eve, and he left it in my car."

The detective discreetly vanished through one of the French windows opening into the garden, as Harriet came in.

"HARRIET," Terry had grown deadly white. "I dared not try to help you, I dared not question the ownership of the blue coupé or trace the whereabouts of my own car for fear of directing suspicion toward John. For the same reason I did not like to communicate with him. I blame myself for keeping quiet about the bonds—"

"Hush!" She looked at him with glowing eyes.

Terry drew closer. "Harriet!" His half teasing, wholly tender tone brought a wave of color to her cheeks. "There is a mystery not solved—yet—the old, old story," he slipped his fingers under her chin and raised her head until he could look straight into her glorious eyes. "Shall we solve it together, my darling?"

And her happy "Yes" reached his ears alone.

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"DON'T be silly, Mary. You're perfectly foolish to believe you can learn to play music by that method. You are silly to even think about it. Why it claims to teach music in half the usual time and *without a teacher*. It's impossible."

That is how my husband felt when I showed him an ad telling about a new way to learn music. But how I *hated* to give up my new hope of learning to play the piano. When I heard others playing, I envied them so that it almost spoiled the pleasure of the music for me. For *they* could entertain their friends and family . . . *they* were musicians. I had to be satisfied with only hearing music.

I was so disappointed. I felt very bitter as I put away the magazine containing the advertisement. For a week I resisted the temptation to look at it again, but finally I couldn't keep from "peeking" at it. It fascinated me so much that finally, half-frightened, half-enthusiastic I wrote to the U. S. School of Music—without letting my husband know.

Imagine my joy when the course arrived and I found that it was as easy as A, B, C. Why, a mere child could master it! My progress was wonderfully rapid and before I realized it, I was rendering selections which pupils who study with private teachers for years can't play. For thru this short-cut method, all the difficult, tiresome parts of music have been eliminated and the playing of melodies has been reduced to a simplicity which *anyone* can follow with ease.

Finally I decided to play for Jack, and show him what a "crazy course" had taught me. So one night when he was sitting reading I went casually over to the piano and started playing a lovely song. Words can't describe

his astonishment. "Why... why..." he floundered. I simply smiled and went on playing. But soon Jack insisted that I tell him where I had learned . . . when . . . how? So I told of my secret.

One day not long after my husband came to me and said, "Mary, don't



laugh, but I want to try learning to play the violin by that wonderful method. You certainly proved to me that it is a good way to learn music."

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The Crime in the Country Schoolhouse

(Continued from page 55)

prosecutor received letters of commendation from points as far distant as Salt Lake City.

But I was uneasy. Somehow, I could not explain things to my own satisfaction. Did Corrigan know of conditions in the neighborhood before the murder? Did Miss Wilson fabricate the story about the invitation to supper, knowing who it was that called her. If so, was it Corrigan or some other person. If some other person, who was it? Whose was the third set of finger-prints which Hemlin had found on the door and on the back of the desk chair? These questions and others refused to be dismissed from my mind.

SINCE the day of execution was approaching with alarming swiftness, I wired to the teachers' agency that had recommended Miss Wilson, to the college from which she was graduated, and to detectives in the same city, asking for any details of the young woman's private life that might be obtainable. The replies I received convinced me that Miss Wilson's life had been protected from contact with such characters as Corrigan and Burltan. So imbued was I with the thought that justice was about to miscarry that I prevailed upon certain influential friends to get the governor to grant a stay of execution until June 1. As a result, I was made the butt of many a gibe at the hands of my fellow officers, and the object of indignation meetings on the part of some of the patrons of School District 76.

Meanwhile, I cultivated the acquaintance of the children of the school, as well as their parents, hoping that some clue would turn up that would prove my growing belief that the murderer was still at large. I also became friendly with the new teacher, a Mr. Brambley. (No woman had been found who was willing to take Miss Wilson's place.)

The school term closed, and the following Saturday—May 30—was set for the annual picnic, an event participated in by school children, patrons, and their friends. It was a yearly event of importance in this rural community. By this time I was well acquainted in the district, and no one evinced surprise when I showed up at the picnic with a lunch basket on my arm.

Tables were spread and the lunches distributed thereon. At the head of one table sat Superintendent Simpson, at another Mr. Brambley, and at a third Judge Dunsell, a widower who had retired from the bench some fifteen years before, and who was now a member of the board of school directors.

On the left, some distance down the table from Judge Dunsell, sat a little girl about eleven years of age. I noticed as the dinner proceeded that she took no part in the laughter and gayety of the occasion, but sat brooding in silence.

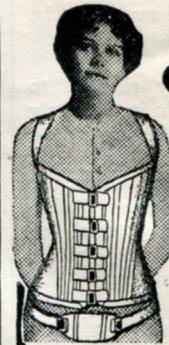
"Why don't you eat, Dorothy?" asked the girl's mother. "Are you sick?"

Whereupon the child began to cry. All eyes were turned in her direction.

"It don't seem just right," she said, "our sitting here, having a good time, and poor Miss Wilson—" She fell into a violent

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fit of weeping. A strange silence settled over the crowd, broken only by the child's sobbing. "I remember her just as plain! This time last year she was sitting up there—"

The child stopped.

AS though controlled by a single invisible thread touched by some magic hand, every head turned in the direction indicated by the child—now looking straight at Judge Dunsell at the head of the table. Could silence be more potent? Judge Dunsell's face turned ghastly white. Staggering to his feet, he cleared his throat loudly. Still no one else moved.

"The child is right," the Judge managed to say in a hoarse whisper. "It—doesn't seem—right. I think—we should—all go."

As he turned away toward his car, his legs seemed to crumple under him. Simpson and Bramble sprang to his assistance, and eased him down to the ground.

"God—give me air!" Dunsell tugged at his collar and tried to moisten his lips with thick, dry tongue.

"Get the children away," called Simpson to some of the women, at the same time placing himself between them and the Judge.

Someone produced a pocket flask, and the Judge drank the raw whiskey held to his lips.

"Take that child away," he cried. "Make her stop pointing at me—make her stop it—make her—"

"The child has gone; all the children have gone," soothed Simpson.

"No," shrieked the Judge, holding his hands before his face. "She's still there. For God's sake, take her away. Make her stop looking at me. Make her—" His words were smothered in a paroxysm of coughing. Then he lay as one dead—eyes closed, limbs relaxed.

Deliberately, I took up a plate from the table-cloth, and coated the bottom of it with a thin film of grease from a slice of beef. One after the other, I took up the man's lifeless hands and carefully pressed his fingers one by one on the bottom of the tin. He made no resistance. When I finished, he whispered in an awed voice:

"I know what you are doing, but it isn't necessary. I killed Miss Wilson—she knew things—I lured her to the schoolhouse on a pretext—knew she'd have to pass the place on her way to the Webbers—but she fought me— When, at last, she took up a knife from her desk, my hand closed over her fingers and turned the point into her own heart—"

Horrified, the other men fell back, and it was my duty to take him away.

Judge Dunsell was hanged for the crime in the country schoolhouse not long after the lumberjacks were set free.

I Was Hired to Clear a Murderer

(Continued from page 39)

Except for one or two couples sitting drinking at tables, the dimly lighted room was empty. Selecting a table in a far corner I slumped into a chair and ordered whiskey from the hard-eyed waiter. Before long Iwanami came in through the side entrance. He ignored me completely

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and sat down at a table opposite. Five minutes later John Ross made his appearance. Tall, thin and wiry, his face the color of muddy chalk, he paused and took in the room with his shifty eyes, then sank into a chair close to me.

Toying with my glass I could feel him sizing me up. I pretended I wasn't aware of his presence. According to prearranged plan, Iwanami came over and stopped at my table. He drew up a chair and motioned Ross to move in closer.

"Ross, meet Belcher, the mouthpiece I told you about," said the Japanese. "Ross and I talked over your proposition," continued Iwanami, "and he's passing it up. Fifty grand isn't enough for the risk involved, he says."

"I'll say it ain't," put in Ross. "What'n hell d'you guys think I am, a sob-stiff lookin' for a hand-out? I'm no crust-flopper (no one who contents himself with remnants) nor I ain't a squatter (grab-all) either. An even break'll suit me. Tell your spouter (lawyer) my price is a century-grand (\$100,000)." Ross narrowed his eyes at me. "Young Worster's got plenty o' fall-dough, an' he's got to spread it if he wants my monicker for sniffin' that slack-moll."

"A century-grand?" I registered indignant surprise. "You're shooting too high, Ross."

"Look here!" Ross brought his face close to mine. "It's a century-grand, or the deal's off."

Iwanami nudged me under the table to accept.

"Ross won't do it for less," he said. "Better pay it."

"It isn't my dough," I replied. "When and where do we draw up the papers?"

"WELL, mosey over to my slab-joint," said Ross eagerly. "You scratch what you want me to say, and the Jap here'll hold the paper. To-morrow you come with the dough to the same place, give it to the Jap, and I'll sign. He'll keep the paper for three days while I make my gallagher, then turn it over to you when he gets the office from one o' my pals that I'm clear."

I pretended to consider the matter, but in reality I was studying the man next to me. I could hardly believe it possible that a pretty young girl like Carmel Hawtrey would marry such a rough criminal type. Also it seemed queer that Ross so readily accepted me and was willing to sign a confession of murder, knowing as he must have, that it would be easy for me to double-cross him in his getaway. However, I finally concluded, I'd have to accept matters as they stood, despite my suspicions.

"It's hunky with me," I announced. "Let's go."

In a room in a dirty, squalid rooming-house, I drew up a full confession, having brought the materials with me for that purpose. Turning the paper over to Iwanami, as agreed upon, I took my leave. Later over the phone I told Mr. Simmons of my success and he made an appointment for the next day to give me the money for Ross.

Neither of us were comfortable about the proceedings. We realized that an explanation would be demanded from us by the District Attorney for allowing a confessed murderer to escape. However, we

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weren't crossing bridges until we came to them. Right then, proving the innocence of Buddy Worster was the issue. Better to have Ross escape than have Buddy go to the chair.

The next night, with one hundred thousand dollars in bills of high denominations pressing against my breast and a gat resting handy in my outside coat pocket, I retraced my steps to Ross's "slab-joint." Iwanami was to be there also, Ross having included it in his stipulations that the Jap stay with him until the deal was consummated.

The two were waiting for me. In my presence, and witnessed by Iwanami and me, Ross signed the confession, giving it to Iwanami to hold. I passed Ross the money. His eyes glittered greedily and his fingers trembled as he counted it over and over again. The Japanese stood by watching stolidly, though I thought I detected a look of contempt in his cold, black eyes. He motioned me to go, and as my work was finished, I left them there together.

THE following afternoon Mr. Simmons and I were conferring in his office when Iwanami walked in, bowed respectfully, then reached into his pocket and laid a neatly folded paper on the desk before the lawyer. I started with surprise. It was the confession Ross had signed. I recognized it by my handwriting on the brief.

"Mr. Buddy can now return home," announced the Japanese casually. "This confession of Ross will free him."

"The confession!" exclaimed Simmons. "I thought it was understood that Ross should have three days' start? What caused him to alter his plans?"

"Mr. Ross is dead," answered Iwanami, with a shrug.

"Dead?" we both ejaculated.

"Yes, I killed him." Iwanami's voice was so matter of fact that the lawyer and I stared at him.

"Though I killed him," continued the Japanese evenly, "I was unable to secure the hundred thousand dollars. After you left us, Mr. Belcher, two acquaintances of Mr. Ross came into the room, pretending they had dropped in by accident, but Iwanami was too clever for them. I knew they were there to steal the paper from me. It was a frame-up. I started for the door. Mr. Ross reached for his pistol. He was too slow. I was quicker. I shot him through the head and made my escape."

"The confession can be submitted to the District Attorney without trouble for us now. We did not have to help a murderer escape. Iwanami is clever," stated the Oriental, coolly.

Without answering, Mr. Simmons got police headquarters on the wire to verify the death of John Ross. Then he hung up and turned to me.

"It's as Iwanami stated," he said gravely. "The body was discovered early this afternoon lying on the floor of the room, a bullet hole in the forehead. Ross was robbed; nothing was found in his pockets. I'll see the District Attorney. This confession should free Mr. Worster, but I'm afraid a nasty mess will result when the police investigate the death of Ross. However, it can't be helped, and Iwanami is to be congratulated for his loyalty and prompt action."

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"Iwanami loves Mr. Buddy," said the Japanese simply, "and did only his duty." Mr. Simmons was right. The confession convinced the District Attorney of Buddy's innocence and his freedom was promised for the following morning.

MR. SIMMONS and I were on hand at the Tombs early. Buddy rushed to greet us, hands outstretched. Tears of joy were in his eyes. His voice quivered with emotion. "Thank you! Thank you!" he said over and over.

By a roundabout route we reached the car waiting for us, thwarting the mob of news-hungry reporters besieging the Tombs. On the way to his Park Avenue home Buddy kept up a running fire of talk, pointing out the window at familiar landmarks as if he had never expected to see them again.

Arriving at the mansion we found the sidewalk crowded with staring people. We pushed our way through to the door. Several bluecoats were on guard. Inside a plain-clothes man drew Mr. Simmons and me aside.

"Mr. Worster's Japanese valet's been knocked off," he whispered. "An East Side gunman got him. He's up-stairs in the front room. He wants to see you two pretty bad. We phoned the Tombs and they said you were on your way here."

Mr. Simmons told Buddy what had happened.

"Iwanami shot?" he gasped. "Is he dead?"

"I reckon he's passed out by this time," replied the detective. "The shot got him in the left lung and—"

Buddy waited to hear no more. He raced up the broad staircase, Mr. Simmons and I close behind him. We found Iwanami in the front room propped up in bed, a detective-sergeant sitting beside him while two other detectives stooped over a still form on the floor.

The Japanese was a dirty, brownish white color, a smile parted his bluing lips, and his black eyes seemed to catch fire at our entrance. Buddy stood transfixed, staring at the man in bed, his countenance registering acute anxiety.

"Mr. Simmons," said Iwanami in a rasping whisper, "the pitcher went to the well once too often. Mr. Buddy knows what I mean—"

Buddy Worster stepped forward suddenly.

"No! No, Iwanami!" he begged. "Not that—no—Iwanami, please. Let it die with you—it can't matter now."

"I must tell, Mr. Buddy," whispered the dying Oriental. "I have read the writing on the sky. It commands me to speak, and Iwanami hastens to obey—"

A HEADQUARTERS man came over and caught the unsteady Worster by the arm and held him back.

"No! No! Iwanami," cried Buddy desperately. "For God's sake, Iwanami, don't!"

"I must speak," declared the Japanese in tones that were surprisingly strong.

With a sudden jerk, Buddy Worster freed himself from the policeman's grip. Like a tiger he sprang upon Iwanami, clutching him about the throat with his sinewy hands. We stood, stunned at his unexpected act. He shook the dying man violently.

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"Speak then, damn you," he cried insanelly. "Tell all you know and be damned to you! Speak—speak—why don't you speak?"

I brought the butt of my gun down heavily upon his head. His grip relaxed, his knees wobbled, and he tottered back, the headquarters man saving him from falling by catching him in his arms.

I looked into the still face of the Japanese. Blood was trickling from the corners of his mouth. His black eyes, now dull and fishy, stared up at me, unseeing.

Just then a doctor, previously summoned by the police, came in, black bag in hand. I motioned to Iwanami. At once the medical man began to administer restoratives. Finally a flickering light showed in the dead eyes. Buddy Worster, recovering consciousness, commenced to moan aloud. Iwanami's lips moved.

"Hear him squeal," he said faintly. "Like a pig caught in a fence. Yes, Mr. Buddy, Iwanami shall talk—"

Worster, conscious now, struggled madly to reach the dying valet's side. The headquarters man holding him thrust an automatic against his stomach.

"Keep still," he ordered, "or I'll blow this into you." Worster went limp at the threat. He was through.

"Mr. Simmons," went on Iwanami, in weak, jerky sentences, "listen close. I killed John Ross, and stole the money. It was a frame-up. Ross wasn't—Mrs. Worster's other husband. He never saw her. Mr. Buddy killed her—in the library. He threw the pistol from the window. We framed the defense. We needed a detective—to witness the confession. Then Ross and I—framed Mr. Buddy—for the hundred thousand. I had no intention of turning in the fake confession before I killed Ross—" His voice got thinner and thinner. "It was—only a stall—"

"YOU lie!" shouted Worster. The detective clapped a hand over his mouth for silence.

"—Ross and I were to split—the money between us—and pull out. But Ross tried to—double-cross me. He and two more. But I got him—first. Then one of them—came here to get the money. I had taken it from Ross—he shot me—in the chest—"

Then followed a fit of coughing. I thought it was the end, but he finally quieted, though his voice was failing fast when he resumed his confession.

"Mr. Daddy Worster—Mr. Buddy's father—also—was murdered."

An ejaculation of horror escaped from Mr. Simmons, and Buddy Worster groaned.

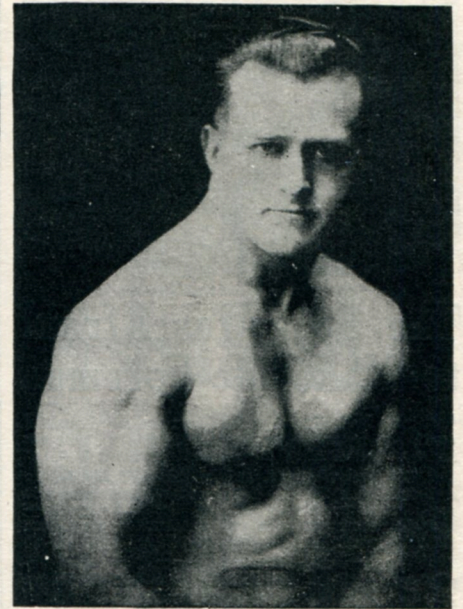
"Mr. Buddy and I—by putting typhoid germs—into his food. But Mr. Worster—had made a new will—leaving all—to his wife. Upon her death—the estate went to—Mr. Buddy. That's why he killed her—"

"It's all a lie!" declared Worster from under the detective's hand.

"I could have—made a fortune—black-mailing Mr. Buddy. But it was not so written—"

Iwanami's head rolled to one side and we heard the death-rattle in his throat. He was gone.

Buddy Worster finally broke down and confessed after some grilling. He paid for his crime in the chair. Never have I been so completely deceived by a man.



EARLE E. LIEDERMAN
The Muscle Builder
Author of "Muscle Building," "Science of Wrestling," "Secrets of Strength," "Here's Health," etc.

If You Were Dying To-Night

and I offered something that would give you ten years more to live, would you take it. You'd grab it. Well, fellows, I've got it, but don't wait till you're dying or it won't do you a bit of good. It will then be too late. Right now is the time. To-morrow or any day, some disease will get you and if you have not equipped yourself to fight it off, you're gone. I don't claim to cure disease. I am not a medical doctor, but I'll put you in such condition that the doctor will starve to death waiting for you to take sick. Can you imagine a mosquito trying to bite a brick wall? A fine chance.

A RE-BUILT MAN

I like to get the weak ones. I delight in getting hold of a man who has been turned down as hopeless by others. It's easy enough to finish a task that's more than half done. But give me the weak, sickly chap and watch him grow stronger. That's what I like. It's fun to me because I know I can do it and I like to give the other fellow the laugh. I don't just give you a veneer of muscle that looks good to others. I work on you both inside and out. I build up those inner muscles that surround your vital organs. The kind that give you real pep and energy, the kind that fire you with ambition and the courage to tackle anything set before you.

ALL I ASK IS NINETY DAYS

Who says it takes years to get in shape? Show me the man who makes any such claims and I'll make him eat his words. I'll put one full inch on your arm in just 30 days. Yes, and two full inches on your chest in the same length of time. Meanwhile, I'm putting life and pep into your old back-bone. And from then on, just watch 'em grow. At the end of thirty days you won't know yourself. Your whole body will take on an entirely different appearance. But you've only started. Now comes the real work. I've only built my foundation. I want just 60 days more (90 in all) and you'll make those friends of yours who think they're strong look like something the cat dragged in.

A REAL MAN

When I'm through with you you're a real man. The kind that can prove it. You will be able to do things you had thought impossible. And the beauty of it is you keep on going. Your deep full chest breathes in rich, pure air, stimulating your blood and making you just bubble over with vim and vitality. Your huge square shoulders and your massive muscular arms have that craving for the exercise of a regular he man. You have the flash to your eye and the pep to your step that will make you admired and sought after in both the business and social world. This is no idle prattle, fellows. If you doubt me, make me prove it. Go ahead, I like it. I have already done this for thousands of others and my records are unchanged. What I have done for them, I will do for you. Come then, for time flies and every day counts. Let this very day be the beginning of new life to you.

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"HE SAID he had always liked me and he thought I could handle men, but he was afraid to make me foreman until I knew more about the work.

"Tell you what I'll do," he said. "You take up a course with the I. C. S.—let me see that you really want to prepare yourself for advancement—and I'll promise to keep you in mind the next time there's a good job open."

"That sounded like a good proposition, so I began studying with the International Correspondence Schools. It changed my whole life.

"In three months the Boss called me in and said he was ready to make me foreman. Just fourteen months after that he went before the Board of Directors to urge my appointment as Superintendent because he said I knew more about the business than anybody else in the plant.

"I'm making five times as much as I did before the Boss woke me up and advised me to take up an I. C. S. course and prepare to earn more money."

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Why don't you take up a home-study course with the International Correspondence Schools and get ready for a real job at a salary that will enable you to give your family the comforts you would like them to have?

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The Nurse Who Played Detective

(Continued from page 23)

The thing now was to get out. Jane was hardly well enough to make a getaway, and I knew if I managed to escape and leave her it would only hurry things. He would be desperate now that he knew I suspected something. He might forge her signature and then murder her. I stood by one of the windows looking out. All I could see was green—the tops of trees. I could hardly believe that out of a monotonous workaday world I had been thrown into this incredible experience.

I DARED not scream for help. I might let myself down through the window by means of the bedclothes tied together, but I doubted if I could get away. I might be discovered; or probably, once down, would find myself within garden walls and unable to reach the street. Besides, I hated leaving Jane alone in the house, even for an hour.

I tiptoed out into the hall. Though the house on both sides was separated from its neighbors by a large yard and tall trees, the front of it, as I have said, gave directly upon the street. I might drop a note from one of the windows, or make signs to a passer-by. There were two rooms facing the front, both opening into the hall. I tried each knob, cautiously, then using all my strength. Both doors were locked!

That night Mr. Paul came into the room. He was pleasant and civil; there was no trace of evil intention in looks or voice as he inquired as to his niece's condition. "She is getting along fairly well," I said. Jane and I had agreed that she must play the invalid as long as possible, for I thought he would not let her die until she was strong enough to sign. That is why, without doubt, he had summoned a doctor and nurse in such haste when she had been accidentally shot.

And yet, why not let her die? If he were her uncle and next of kin, would he not have inherited from her, even without a will? Did he know of some other heir, and was he so insistent on that account?

I was alarmed when, after looking critically over at his niece, he said, "Will you kindly leave us for a few minutes? I wish to see my niece alone."

What was I to do? If I refused to leave, he would doubtless take measures to remove me.

As I shut the door behind me, I saw on a pedestal in the hall a bronze vase. My hands closed on this. A powerful weapon, even in the hands of a woman. One blow with this might kill a man. I resolved if any harm came to Jane that night, her uncle would not leave her room alive. Even if I were murdered by the man Crew later.

A long time after, it seemed, I tried the knob softly. The door was locked from the inside, and neither an eye to the keyhole nor an ear to the panel told me anything. I sat down on the topmost step of the stairway, clutching the bronze ornament. It was almost pitch-dark in the hall, and the house was silent as the grave.

It was late when he came out. I hurried back, fearing what I should find,

Fat Men!

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my usually calm body a mass of nerves. The girl was lying back, exhausted, her face white, her eyes black-circled, her lips open. I felt her pulse, and, alarmed at its feebleness, hastened to give her a stimulant.

"What has he been doing to you, honey?" I asked.

"Talking—and I'm so tired."

"You didn't give in?"

"No! I'll hold out as long as I can. But he says he's coming every night. And now that I'm stronger, I'm afraid—" She held up a weak arm, and on it I saw great bruises along its entire length.

"The cur! The scoundrel! The old devil!" I cried. Evidently he meant to torture her into signing that will. His need must be both pressing and desperate.

"Don't do it, honey; we'll find some way out. Don't you worry. Go to sleep, and to-morrow we'll be able to plan something."

I wasn't sure of this, but I was alarmed at her condition, and I wanted her to have a rest.

I didn't sleep much that night. A terrible wind-storm came up, and I could hear the limbs of the great trees swishing outside and the rain beating on the pane all night. Toward morning I heard a crash outside, but the night was too black for me to see anything.

Next morning it was clear and fine, with the sun coming in, and as I went to the window my heart leaped. During the night the wind had broken a limb of one of the trees, and a great space yawned in the sea of green. Through it I could see the next house. My low cry startled Jane.

"What is it?"

"Honey, a window! Just opposite, in the house next door." The girl, excited, struggled up into a sitting position to try and see, but I made her lie down. I pulled the shade and drew the curtains together until the old woman came with our breakfast, "shushing" her as she came in with the tray, as if for fear she would awaken Jane. But later, when she had taken the trays away, I took my stand near the window. I determined not to let the neighboring window get out of my sight all day. There was little enough chance of being able to signal, or of making myself understood if I should be able to signal. And at any time the rift in the green might be discovered. It was not visible from the ground, but if Crew should find the fallen branch he would investigate.

The neighboring window remained curtained and blank all day. When the old woman brought lunch, again my fears were aroused lest she might catch a glimpse of the opposite window, which, to my acutely strained consciousness, seemed horribly conspicuous. But I managed to keep myself between it and her, and the closely drawn curtains of our own window did the rest. And I resumed my vigil.

Did you ever sit and watch something steadily for hours at a time? It was an almost unbearable strain. My eyes felt as if they were pulling out of my head, and my neck began to grow stiff. Every now and then Jane would say, "Do you see anything?" like the old story of Sister Anne, who could see only the blue sky and the waving grass. Well, all I saw was net and silk curtains—until about

I'd Be Bald Today -but a sleepy telephone girl saved me

Sixty days ago I hardly had a handful of hair left. Then one night I tried to get a number from a drowsy telephone operator. I didn't get the number—But I Did Get a Wonderful New Growth of Hair in the Most Unexpected Way!

"There's another combful of hair gone," I said to Mary.

"Oh, you're worrying yourself bald," Mary replied.

"Worry or no worry," I exploded, "I'm actually ashamed to take my hat off."

"Oh, forget it, and get Alice on the 'phone. She wants us to dinner tomorrow."

I picked up the receiver. "Hello," said a man's voice. "Howdy, Jack," another gruff voice replied.

Some sleepy operator had put me on a busy wire! I started to hang up when Jack whoever he was, called out, "How's your old bald head?"

This was good and I decided to listen. "It isn't bald," came the answer.

"What's happened—have you bought a wig?"

"No, I haven't bought a wig. I've got a brand new growth of real, honest-to-goodness hair."

And while I listened he explained how he had been using a wonderful new treatment perfected by Alois Merke—founder of the famous Merke Institute, Fifth Avenue, New York. This treatment, he said, got right down to the cause of baldness—the dormant roots themselves. In 30 days he could see new hair coming in, and in 60 days every bald spot was being rapidly covered.

That was enough for me. I remembered having seen an ad on the Merke Treatment in one of the magazines. So I immediately dug it up and mailed the coupon.

The first two or three times I used the treatment I began to notice that my hair didn't fall out as much as it used to. But a little later I got the biggest surprise of my life. For I looked in the mirror—and there sprouting right up from my once scantily-covered scalp was a fine, downy growth of healthy young hair.

Each evening I devoted 15 minutes to the treatment at home. And day after day I could see this new hair getting thicker and thicker. In a month's time there was the most surprising difference. And at the end of sixty days I had regained a wonderful new, healthy growth of hair.

READ THIS!

"My hair was coming out at an alarming rate, but after four or five treatments I noticed this was checked. My hair is coming in thicker and looks and feels full of life and vigor."—W. C., Great Neck, N. Y.

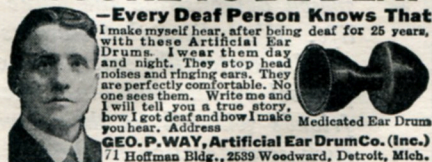
"I used the Cap for 60 days, when to my great surprise I could see a new coat of hair coming and now my hair is very near as good as it was when it first started to come out."—J. C. R., Englewood, N. J.

(Original of above letters on file at the Institute.)

NO JOKE TO BE DEAF

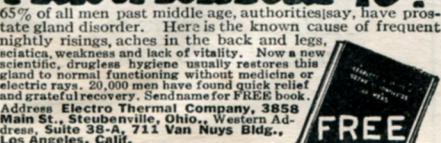
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Here's The Secret

According to Merke in most baldness the hair roots are not dead, but merely dormant—temporarily asleep. Now to make a sickly tree grow you would not think of rubbing growing fluid on the leaves. Yet that is what I had been doing when I used to douse my head with tonics, salves, etc. To make a tree grow you must nourish the roots. And it's exactly the same with the hair.

This new treatment which Merke perfected after 17 years' experience in treating baldness, is the first and only practical method of getting right down to the hair roots and nourishing them.

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four o'clock, when someone came to the window and opened it.

I raised the sash and screen of our window, and stood there, not daring to lean out nor to call lest I should be seen or heard from below. And I waved a towel desperately, eventually catching the person's eye.

From her cap and apron I knew she was a maid. She looked stupidly at me, finally decided I was trying to be friendly, and waved back. I did everything I could to hold her attention, but I despaired of being able to convey anything to her. She probably thought I was crazy.

As she stood there stupidly watching me, I got an idea like a beam of light falling into a dark cellar. I remembered the old sign language we used to use at school. It's the same with children all over the country, and I banked on her being able to understand it. It was pretty far away to be able to read a person's fingers, but I tried it, holding my hands up so that she could see them.

There is no doubt she thought I was a maniac. But by and by I could see that she was beginning to grasp the fact that I was trying to talk to her. I placed a finger on my lips to prevent her calling to me, then I spelt out, slowly and exaggeratedly, "Get pencil and write what I tell you."

After I repeated this several times, she nodded, and disappeared. I waited in an agony of doubt, to see if she would come

back. Jane, on the bed, lay rigid with hope and fear. I could hear her breathing where I stood. Finally, when I had begun to despair, the maid appeared again, holding up a pencil and paper.

I SPELT out "Get word immediately to Bevis Cole, 1949-a Ralston Street. Jane is in danger. Serious." I spelt this over and over, while the girl wrote laboriously. She was a foolish thing, quite young, and evidently thought it was all a joke, and was afraid her mistress would catch her and scold her.

Jane's relief was pathetic. "Now we will be all right," she kept saying. "Bevis will come and get us out." I felt restless and excited, but there was nothing to do but to wait. To our relief, Mr. Paul didn't come to the room that evening. As it grew later, our anxiety became greater. By now the maid could have gotten the message to Bevis, and he had had time to do something. If he understood about Jane being in danger, surely he would get assistance and penetrate to his fiancée in spite of anything that Mr. Paul or Crew could say or do. There was nothing to be done but wait until to-morrow, and then signal the girl again, trying in some way to impress her with the seriousness of the situation.

I was tired from the strain of the past twenty-four hours, and slept early and heavily that night. I awoke dazed and heavy-headed; as I moved, a ghastly feel-

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ing of nausea assailed me, and for a while I lay blinking and trying to collect my wits. Then I suddenly perceived that instead of being in Jane's room I was lying on a mattress in a dim, cobwebby space. Springing up, I staggered around for a moment as I struggled to get a grip on myself. Too well I knew what had happened. I had been drugged, apparently with my supper, and while I slept Jane had been removed. Where was she? Would I reach her in time to save her life?

I was in the attic of the house, well out of the way, so that no sound of the moving might penetrate to my drugged consciousness. I knew, even before I ran down-stairs and into Jane's room, that the girl was gone. The house was empty. Empty, silent, sinister. Sick and sluggish as I was, I dared not even make myself a cup of coffee. I feared to touch any food in this house of terror. Going to the back, I found the garage open, and the car gone.

I stopped long enough to put on my hat and coat, lest I should appear too wild, and ran out to look for a public phone, where I might get a message to Bevis. I found a drug-store in the next block, and, as I entered the booth, I noticed the clock over the counter said midday. I had had a long, though involuntary, sleep. I got Bevis' boarding-house at last, but the landlady who answered the phone said that he was out of town. She added that somebody had rung up for him last night with some kind of a mixed message about a jane, and asked if I was the one.

I WAS in a dilemma then, but I thought quickly, and finally asked her where he worked. She told me the office of the *Morning Times*, and I rang up there.

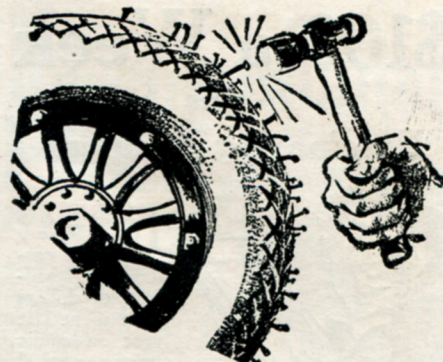
They said that he was over in Glenwood, covering a big riot trial. I asked them to switch over another reporter to the case, as I had to get him home at once, as a member of his family was dying. They gave me the number where he could be reached, and I put in a long-distance call. In about fifteen minutes I got him.

I told him to take the next train home, as Jane was in trouble and needed him. Neither of us wasted any words. "There's no train until five, but I'll get a car."

I had breakfast, and the food and outdoor air began to dispel the effects of the drug. I resolved to do some investigating while I waited. I went back to the old house—I didn't feel any too easy at entering it again—and began to go over it from top to bottom, in the hope of finding some clue.

"Now, stop a minute," I said, "and think systematically. They took her off during the night, when the streets would be deserted. They naturally wanted to keep her quiet, so they doped her, just as they doped me. But—I wonder if they knew that it took almost a double dose of the drug to affect her?"

In the meanwhile I was going all over her room carefully. A coat and shoes were gone. The room was upset, but there wasn't a thing that told me anything more than I knew already. Then I saw Bevis' picture face down on the dressing-table, and I set it up automatically. Then I jumped. There was a reason why it had been laid face down. Across it were some blood smears, and when I looked at it



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closer it seemed as if someone had been trying to write a word. I could make out an *i* and an *e*, and an *s* at the end.

I thought this over, standing there staring at the picture. Slowly I began to figure it out. Jane wasn't as doped as they thought she was, but she concealed the fact from them. Perhaps one of them had dropped some clue as to their destination, and she had tried to leave a message! She thought of the picture as a likely place for me to find it, and turned it down so that they wouldn't notice the smears upon it. Even if they had, they would hardly have thought it meant anything. But where did she get the blood?

THE bell rang just about this time, and I guessed it was Bevis, and went down to let him in. It was he, sure enough, out of breath from running. As soon as I saw him I felt better right away. He had a fine, healthy color and a husky body, and I knew that I couldn't have a better partner in the undertaking that was before me.

We stood in the hall while I told him the story. And then I was sorry I had been so abrupt, though I knew there was no time to lose. I grabbed him by the arm and steadied him. "Get a grip on yourself, son," I said. "You can faint afterward. They've got about fourteen hours' start of us, I figure, and we haven't time to wring our hands and mourn. Now, you know something about that old he-devil; where do you think would be the most likely place he'd take her?"

I never saw a boy change so in five minutes. But he was game.

"I don't know." He thought awhile, and I was glad to see his mouth stop twitching and get firm again. "I never did like him—must have had a hunch he was rotten. I came here over a week ago, but he told me Jane had gone away on a visit, and would be gone for some time. I thought it was queer she didn't write—"

"From what you know of him, do you believe him capable of murdering her?" I saw his face go white at the word, but he answered calmly enough.

"In my reporting experience, I've come to believe that almost anybody could do almost anything. And she's a rich girl in her own right. It may be only a threat he is making, but I wouldn't take a chance on it."

"Then it's true that she has money of her own?"

"Unfortunately, too true. I have often wished she hadn't."

"But her own uncle; you can hardly believe a man would murder one of his own blood."

"He isn't. He's not a relative of hers at all. He's only an in-law. Married her aunt."

I had never thought of that, and it made things look even worse. That was why, of course, he needed a will. He would have no claim on her fortune otherwise.

Then I told Bevis about the marks I had found across the face of his picture. "It looks to me as if she had been trying to write something with a finger dipped in blood," I said. "But I can't make out what it is."

AS he came into her room, I saw his face twitch again. But he was a game young fellow, level-headed and clear-

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thinking. As I had told him, he had no time to feel bad now; he needed energy and some quick brain-work. He took the picture in his hands and studied it, and by and by he rubbed the back of his hand across one eye, and I turned away. But when he spoke his voice was steady and crisp.

"I get an *i* and an *e*, and the first letter looks like an *l*," he announced. "What message did she leave? Look—there's an *es* at the end. And—look here, what do you think of this for a *p*? *li-e p-es*, Little Pines. That's it!"

"What's 'Little Pines'?" I asked.

"A place about ninety miles above here, in the pine forest." He moved abruptly. "Let's go."

"They must have gone in their car. Is it such a car as we could trace easily?"

"A big, blue, seven-passenger sedan, with tan upholstery. Oh, yes, I would know it anywhere."

There were no taxis around, but a call over the druggist's phone got us one in about fifteen minutes. As soon as the taxi came, we rushed to a detective agency. Bevis put the whole affair up to the chief. He rang up his office and the two other daily papers to splash descriptions over their front pages; got a lawyer, and we set out in a hired car, five of us, including two plain-clothes men, for Little Pines.

It was too much to hope for any trace of a car leaving a great city like this, but once near Little Pines the trail would grow clearer, we hoped. On the country road, a big blue car would have been noticed. It was a little before four when we left the city, and we hoped to reach Little Pines around eight.

That was a queer drive we took. Five of us shut into a high-powered car that raced over the roads at a speed that sent us bouncing and jolting back and forth. No time to lose—no time to lose—the wheels kept saying with every turn. The detective agency had telephoned ahead to the authorities at Little Pines to be on the watch for anything suspicious that might appear, but we had to remember that Mr. Paul had been gone just about sixteen hours, and sixteen hours is a long time. My one hope was that the girl had not signed.

"I found out something that has impressed me still further as to the seriousness of the situation," Bevis told us as we rode along. "Her uncle has been speculating heavily in the stock-market, and I don't believe he has a thing of his own left. He's deep in debt, and I understand he has mortgaged some of her property—he's her guardian, you know—and one of the notes is coming due in thirty days. Hence, his hurry. He's got to produce around fifty thousand in a month or get shown up."

IT was dark when we reached Little Pines. It was a small town set deep in the pines, with a Main Street and electric lights, and a general air of prosperity. The local officers told us that no car of that description, nor people such as those we were trailing, had been seen in or near Little Pines.

This was a blow. We had been fairly sure of finding some traces of the car or its occupants, though we might have known that Mr. Paul would manage to cover

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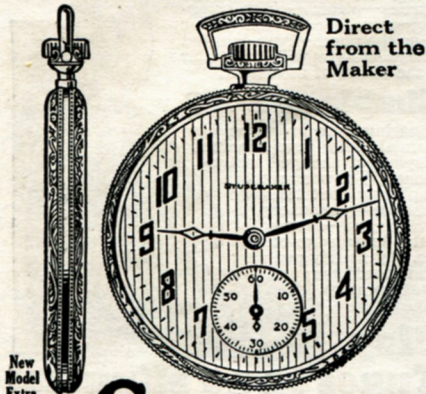
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his tracks in some way. With the aid of the local officers, we went over that town and its environs as if with a vacuum cleaner. But we didn't find a thing. I went to the hotel and to bed. I don't know what Bevis did, but I know he didn't go to the hotel nor did he sleep. We all met at breakfast next morning in the hotel dining-room, and the men looked like they had had a night of it. Bevis needed a shave, and his eyes were red and hollow; but he knew just about as much as he had known the night before.

While we were eating breakfast, a woman showed up with a little girl. They had come into town that morning from their home in the backwoods, to sell vegetables, and had heard some people talking about the affair. So she told us she thought there might be something to what she had seen the morning before.

On rising before day to milk her cows, she had observed, on the road beyond, a flivver pass. She had noticed it, not only because it was barely daylight and cars did not often pass on this lonely cut-off at dawn, but because in the car there were two men and two women and one of the latter was lying in the other's arms. She was either sick or had fainted. It seemed queer to the watcher, carrying a sick woman over these sand roads deeper into the lonely woods.

But the flivver! And they had left the city in a limousine. "I'm all kinds of a fool!" Bevis cried. "I might have known he'd change cars!"

As we left the hotel, a long-distance message from the city told of the finding of a large, blue, fawn-upholstered, seven-passenger sedan in a thinly populated outlying district.

As we were getting into our car, bundling in with us the woman and child as guides, the town marshal came up with a fresh piece of information. A man had remembered renting, a week back, a shack he owned in the woods to a stranger.

Ten miles through loose, sandy roads, and at the end—what? Thirty-four hours had elapsed—thirty-four hours in which much of evil could be accomplished. Would we find them there in that dismal cabin

among the lonely pines? Or would they be gone, and our search have to start anew?

THE house was a mile off the road, and that mile had to be walked. We left the car, and the procession advanced as silently as possible. No one spoke. And now we saw the cabin. Nearer—a window was open—were they there—or—

Even when I think of it now, I can't get what happened clear in my mind. I know there was running, and the men calling to the women to get back, and I was running around dodging shots. There was a sound of popping bullets. I kept thinking, as I ran, that Mr. Paul did not mean to be taken alive. It repeated itself over and over again in my brain, in a blind sort of way, that if I didn't get there in a hurry he'd have time to kill Jane. He wouldn't want her left alive to talk. I remember telling Bevis that, while he kept yelling to me to go back, and shooting between yells. His face was red and great streams of sweat running down. They said afterward that I was the first inside the hut.

There was poor Jane, crouching in a corner, her face white, and terror in her eyes. I thought at first she had been shot, and screamed a warning at Bevis as he gathered her into his arms.

"Look here, nurse, see if you can do something for this one," one of the men said, as he bent over a form stretched on the floor. But I didn't need my professional training to see that Uncle Paul was done for.

It was just a piece of luck that one of our bullets had reached Mr. Paul before he had had time to get to his niece. Otherwise, there mightn't have been such a happy ending to this story.

Jane had run a pair of manicure scissors into a finger-tip to get blood to write the message on the photograph.

We don't talk much of that time when we get together now. And I've had a hundred cases since, but not one that interested me as much as the one when Bevis Junior made his entrance into this world, with the nurse who played detective for a godmother.

Why I Killed My 22 Wives

(Continued from page 43)

I demanded. "If you ever take advantage of my absence to spy upon my actions, or open the black bag, then you'll carry its secrets with you down into hell!"

"Do I understand that you are threatening me?" she queried.

Elizabeth must have seen a strange glimmer in my eyes. She turned pale as I spoke.

"Scarcely that, my dear. I am not quite the obvious sort of Bluebeard you imagine. I am just giving you words of warning. I'm different from other men. I'm not used to being crossed. When I'm crossed I'm exceedingly dangerous. Now mind your own affairs, my dear, and let me warn you again. If you show one particle of curiosity as to my affairs; if you interfere in matters which concern me only; you are in danger. And bear in mind that you are encircled by a power that is absolutely ruthless if you are caught spying."

She looked at me, incredulous, surprised. There was a silence of some minutes. Then she rose and, crossing the room, twined her arm about me. "Forgive me, Walter. Let us be happy."

I welcomed her returning confidence as a sign of relaxation of her curiosity, and at the same time I planned her early departure.

"I know you have been lonesome, dear," I observed sympathetically, "but your life will soon be pleasant and happy."

A few days later Elizabeth Hess left Oakland for Los Angeles, while I once more descended from the train at Santa Barbara, to see Nina Deloney and arrange to move to Santa Monica with her.

Nina threw her arms about me, feverishly hugging me. I could feel her tremble.

"Oh, Charles, I'm so glad you have come! I have been living in shadows."

She sank into a chair, wringing her

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hands, and went on: "Oh, it is terrible. I have a presentiment of a horrible death!"

"My dear girl," I protested, "why such foreboding thoughts? I feel sure that any bodily harm to you is the most unlikely thing in the world."

Two days later I had Nina comfortably installed in apartments in Santa Monica. I told her that I was compelled to take a week's trip, and that on my return we would take an auto trip of several weeks' duration, visiting my sheep-ranch, and take a trip into Mexico. I hastened to Los Angeles, paid my respects to Mrs. S—, and then visited the café where Claudia Vincent was employed.

I took a seat at a small table with rose-shaded lights and beckoned Miss Vincent. She was pleased to see me, and praised my thoughtfulness, thanking me for so many kind remembrances.

"Claudia," I whispered, losing no time, "I have just returned from a very dangerous mission. What if I should not have come back? Would you have cared?"

"Why, how you talk!" she murmured reproachfully. "Of course, I would have cared. You have been so good to me, and I was so rude to you."

"But, Claudia," I persisted, anguish in my voice, "don't you know I love you?"

"Why, of course I do," she answered with a silvery laugh. "You have told me so every time we have met."

Claudia's long lashes dropped, and a radiant smile deepened the dimples in her rosy cheeks as she hastily arranged my place and handed me the menu card.

"You know," she went on, "I'll be fired for talking so long with you."

That evening we took an auto trip to see my "properties," and I persuaded Claudia to become my wife.

Two days later, as we were crossing the border line, Miss Vincent thrust out her hand suddenly and gripped my arm.

"Please turn back, I'm frightened!" she cried. "Why are you going into Mexico?"

I stared at her for a moment, her attitude was so unexpected, her questioning so fierce.

"My dear Claudia," I began.

She suddenly tightened her grip on both of my arms. "You must take me back. You—"

"No, my dear," I interrupted, "we are going to be married in old Mexico. I have a big ranch here and I'm interested in large holdings. What has come over you? Why this sudden fright?"

"LISTEN," she answered, "I've been told these Mexicans are bad, and that they kill and steal white women. There are so many inaccessible places where white people seldom go, and where the arm of the law cannot reach. Suppose they should kill you, what would become of me? A fate worse than death."

"Nonsense, my dear," I replied. "I am well known and highly esteemed by the Mexicans. Presently you will see the beautiful place where we are going. To-night we will be married by the Padre. Lull your fears."

She relaxed her grip on my arm, and a gleam of hopefulness shone in her pretty eyes.

The setting sun had caught the top of "Señor Manuel's" fortress and played on

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it till it seemed like a sheet of silver. When we arrived at the bordering stone wall, Claudia turned around and looked back along the narrow, serpentine road.

"We have come a long distance, and not a house to be seen," she remarked.

Señor Manuel came strolling down the terrace to greet us. Several Mexicans were lounging and smoking in the garden. There was a tropical atmosphere around the shelter of the house. There were beds of rare flowers, fragrant roses of all varieties and colors, masses of violets—a little oasis of beautiful colors and perfume.

Señor Manuel, with a low bow, said: "My dear distinguished guests, accept my sincere apologies for appearances."

The rooms indicated a wild time—wine bottles strewn everywhere, and other evidences of a several days' carouse.

The color left Claudia's face; her eyes were asking questions.

"Please," she begged, "take me away from here. These men frighten me. Oh, please, Mr. Newton, you have said such wonderful, beautiful things to me I want to believe in you."

At that moment she looked divinely beautiful, with her lithe, slender body, her pleading parted lips, and soft, tremulous eyes.

"My dear girl," I said, "you remember the day you played with me in Hollywood? A prank you called it. You have felt my power since. I have made you obey my every wish. Now I am playing a prank on you!"

A look of horror crept into her eyes. "What do you mean?" she screamed.

The Mexicans enjoyed this little drama. "These gentlemen are all suitors for your hand in marriage. The highest bidder wins you."

"GOD have pity!" she wailed, with the madness of despair. "You inhuman monster. You are the vilest, blackest specimen of sin living. Surely a just God will make you suffer for this abominable deed." Turning to the Mexicans, with outstretched arms, she exclaimed: "Gentlemen, in the name of God, I beg of you, I implore you, to save me from this monster. I am an American. My country will reward you."

Manuel, with a smile, spoke up: "The Señorita is excited. A beautiful home with servants awaits you; a nobleman to worship you."

Suddenly her eyes blazed fire. Without a word of warning she seized a blade lying on the table and with the fury of a wild animal threw herself upon me. There was a brief and breathless struggle; then I bent her by the wrists to the floor. With a moan she fainted. She was sold for \$800 to a wealthy Mexican from Agua Nueva.

While on this visit to Manuel's I made arrangements for the disposal of Nina Deloney. The market was weak for middle-aged women. However, I had taken several who found homes.

On my return I planned my trip with Nina to take her to Mexico. I sent out a number of letters under her signature to throw her relatives and friends off the trail. (The reader will please bear in mind that I was keeping up an extensive correspondence with relatives of departed wives all this time.)

On my way returning I mailed Nina a short letter, as follows:

My darling Nina: I am on my way home to you, sweetheart. I had marvelous success on this trip. Landed a desperate smuggler, and with this catch a reward of \$2,500. I'll rest a few days on my return, and then for our pleasure jaunt.

I will lift the cloud of sorrow from your brow, for your day is coming.

Dear, you would beautify a desert place for me. All things sing of you, my dear. Your name is in the breeze and your face in the flowers. Within a few days, darling, we start on our journey through paradise.

Lovingly yours,
 CHARLES.

I returned to Nina's home in Santa Monica, weary and travel-stained. Nina met me at the door. Her eyes were bright, and a rosy color glowed in her cheeks.

"Charles, thank Heaven that you have returned safe and are here." She threw her arms about me and held me for a moment. "I suppose I'm foolish to worry, and yet I cannot help fancying that I am in danger; a subconscious feeling overwhelms me."

"Oh, that is ridiculous, Nina!" I answered. "You got my letter?"

"Yes, dear, I received your loving note. I was delighted."

I was tired and nervous, and the restraint in my manner was obvious. I sank into a chair.

She came up to me; her hands fell on my shoulders, her face looking into mine.

"Charles, dear," she whispered softly, "won't you for my sake resign from the Secret Service? Surely we have enough of this world's goods to enjoy life and be happy without the worry of such a desperate game."

She laid her hands upon my burning forehead, her cheek against mine—cool and smooth, exquisitely refreshing to my worn nerves.

"Yes, dear," I answered, "the Secret-Service life is getting too strenuous. On our return I promise you I'll resign."

"And Charles," she murmured, "you'll not carry that mysterious black bag any more then, will you?"

"No, dear. After my resignation from the Secret Service the black bag will be an open book."

"Oh, Charles!" she exclaimed. "You have made me so happy. To hear you speak that way makes everything seem different."

I rose, held out my arms, and clasped her to me with a sigh of satisfaction.

"Nina dear, the day has come when your life of anxiety and imagined terrors is over. In the next few days we will arrange our camping outfit and get things in order for a long auto trip."

DURING the next few days we busied ourselves making ready for our trip. I found time to call on Mrs. S—, also to spend a day at my apartments at the Seaside Terrace. This was about five blocks from where Nina lived. I had two wives in Los Angeles, two ladies that I was engaged to marry, one wife in Santa Monica, and one engagement. I had one automobile in a garage in Santa Monica under the name of Harry Lewis and one in Los Angeles under the name of Harvey Newton.

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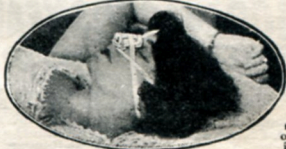
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camping; and had planned on leisurely driving into Mexico and enjoying sight-seeing on the way. I had no thought of anything happening on the way. My intentions were to leave Nina in Mexico where I knew she would be safe.

A beautiful morning broke over Southern California, and the sea shimmered in a vast radiance of blue, with silvery ripples playing on the surface, fanned by a light breeze as delicate as a baby's kiss.

I was loading the last of the paraphernalia on the car when Nina remarked: "Charles, you are a man, strong in muscular sinew."

"Yes, dear," I laughed, little dreaming the use I would make of this strength shortly. "And now all is ready for our journey through this glorious country, where there is always spring, mellowed by a gentle summer's breeze, and we'll journey through these gardens of love and roses."

"Oh, Charles," she cried, "the air seems full of messages to-day—winged postmen in black on some momentous errand! Something tells me not to go."

"Nina," I said tenderly, "dear Nina, no harm can come to you. Come, let us get started."

I had forgotten my tire hammer and returned to get it. As I came back to the car with the hammer in my hand, she uttered a smothered shriek; a pale horror blanched her features.

"Oh, God! Charles, that hammer frightens me. In a dream I saw you raise your arm to strike me with a hammer."

She put out her hands with the instinctive gesture of warding off a blow.

I went to her side and, taking her out-stretched arms, put them about my neck.

"Hush, dear, you are nervous." I soothed her with tender caresses, and in a few moments she was quieted and we sped away.

It was a pleasant day's trip, without incident. I drove leisurely during the day toward Signal Hill, near Long Beach. The rim of the sun was disappearing when I suggested to Nina to keep a lookout for a good camping spot. We found a wondrous place of strange silence, a wide spreading country, overcanopied by a red-gold sky, and walled in by the mountains. A deep and solemn solitude reigned. Our camp was in sight of the Alamitos sugar factory and near an artesian well.

In a very short time we had our camp in good order, and Nina prepared an excellent supper, which we enjoyed. After supper I began fussing around the car, taking off my coat, when some letters dropped out of my pocket, that escaped my notice. Presently turning about, I saw Nina reading a letter.

"What have you, dear, that is interesting you?"

Her eyes met mine coldly—with curiosity. "So you have another wife!" she exclaimed.

"And you have been reading my letters, have you?"

The color had fled her face. She was pale and rigid.

"I think," she answered, "I know now why you always carry the mysterious black bag."

I laughed. Her dark eyes blazed with a world of scorn.

"Come," I spoke up, "don't glare at me as if I were a wild animal."

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Dorothy Ray, 646 N. Michigan Blvd., Suite 5A, Chicago

"You are a monster!" she exclaimed. "You have a man's form but would put to shame the brute that roamed the world at its dawn."

I moved a little closer. Suddenly my fingers gripped her wrist.

"I am going to report you to the authorities of the law!" she cried.

"No you're not. You are at the end of your journey now. . . ."

I carefully stripped the body of the clothes. A surprise awaited me. In a pocket sewed in her camisole were seven one-thousand and two five-hundred-dollar Liberty Bonds. There were several diamond rings, and jewels that I did not know she possessed. Among other things I found the will I had drawn naming her my sole beneficiary, of which the following is a copy:

I think it is my duty to provide for those that depend upon me; should I pass away before my beloved wife, I appoint my beloved wife, Nina Harvey, to take complete charge of my estate, appointing her without bond.

First, all my just and lawful debts are to be paid. I give and bequeath to my beloved wife, Nina L. Harvey, all of my estate, both personal and real that I now have or may acquire. This is my last will and testament.

Dated this 19th day of January, 1920.
CHARLES N. HARVEY.
Santa Monica, California.

THIS is the stunt that I pulled on all my wealthier wives.

I wrapped Nina in a small piece of canvas and a blanket; then I placed the body in the rear of the car, covering it with a heavy canvas. I coolly packed up everything, looked over the car, and then started for San Diego, stopping at the first service station to fill up the car with gasoline. I drove during the entire night. Arriving at San Diego, I rested a few hours and enjoyed a hearty meal, and then proceeded on my journey, taking what is known as the North Road across the mountains toward El Centro.

I drove during the afternoon till I came to a gulch known as the Devil's Cañon that opened a way around the mountain five miles west of Coyote Wells, a wild country of granite rocks. Here I found a good place to park the car out of sight of anyone. There was open country to the left, and a bridge from which the mountains extended to the right. This was thirty miles from El Centro.

I covered the car, and then in the silence and solitude of the night I took the body, weighing one hundred and fifty pounds, up a steep precipice. It was straight up five hundred feet. I bound a rope around the body so that I would have something to hold to firmly. Thus, inch by inch, I worked my way up the hill to a spot where water during the rainy season ran over the sand, leaving a level place. Here I dug the grave and buried the body. It was a wash-over place where the water would wash the sand over the grave, burying it deeper and deeper.

Following the burial of Nina Deloney, I returned to San Diego and went to Tia Juana, Mexico, and mailed numerous postal cards and letters with Mexican postage stamps on them under Nina's signature to her friends and relatives, in which was stated that we were on our way to South

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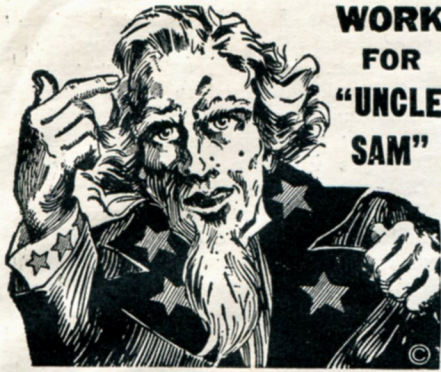
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America and would loiter on the way, and that it would be about three months before we reached our destination.

I NOW returned to Elizabeth Hess and I moved her to Rosewood Avenue, Hollywood, California. This lady was again up in arms and hard to pacify.

"My dear Walter, you surely perplex me. When I look at you and hear you speak, I feel that you are honest, and yet your actions are very mysterious."

"It is just a matter of curiosity with you, my dear," and I smiled. "On the first of the month I am going to resign from the Secret Service. Then we'll take a trip to Catalina and have a good time. I have choice box seats at the Orpheum to-night at Los Angeles, so don't scold."

We were enjoying the show immensely. Elizabeth was happy and showed her gratitude by occasionally squeezing my hand. Just as the second turn came on, one of the attendants ushered two ladies into the box. One of them I immediately recognized as Mrs. S—.

I half arose with my back to them and whispered to Elizabeth: "I see a smuggler that I'm after. You will pardon me. I'll meet you at the door after the show," and hastily departed. Mrs. S— failed to recognize me.

The people were leaving the theater. I stood back in the shadows as much as possible, smiling to myself.

I spied Elizabeth and beckoned her. "Our car is a block from here, dear," I whispered.

"You are becoming more mysterious every hour!" she exclaimed vigorously.

On our return home she was furious. "Your perspicuity," she observed, "as a Secret-Service officer seems to be of more value than your manners."

"Don't talk nonsense, dear," I answered. "Walter," she broke in, "I will tell you frankly that I am going to solve the mystery of the black bag. It is all very nice you being a philanthropist, and in the service for the love of the game, but that black bag is a load of fear. It holds a secret terror for me."

"Very dramatic, my dear, but so inaccurate. Have you by any chance forgotten the warning I gave you?"

"No, I haven't forgotten, but there is a limit—such a thing as drawing the cords to a bursting point."

For a moment we exchanged the fiery glances of anger. Her face was set in firm and determined lines. Her eyes wandered to the black bag, then I felt their scrutiny. I knew the thoughts which stirred in her brain. There was something in her attitude which was threatening; she was becoming dangerous. I felt that in this interview I must gain the upper hand.

"Tell me, dear," I asked softly, "what connection you find between these fancies of yours and this black traveling bag?"

"I want to see what it contains," she answered.

I NOW played my trump card. "My dear, you are making a weak creature of me. I have given my solemn oath to the government of the United States that I would guard its secrets with my life. I am now going to violate that sacred obligation. Here are the keys to the black bag. Open it and learn the mysteries. My love for you is unalterable, and the cost is uncon-



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ditional surrender of all—reason and duty. It seems that no sense of duty can overrule love."

I extended the keys. Her fingers quickly gripped them. There was a startled look in her eyes that slowly changed to softness as I continued. I could see the trick was going to be mine.

"Love has taken kings from their thrones," I went on. "It has broken the beautiful dreams of poets. The pen of the gifted writer has been cast aside. Love has thrown gold to the winds and sent the millionaire into the streets a beggar, and now because you and my love, the cost is the government's secret papers, and oh, God! my honor."

Her lips parted with a smile. Slowly she turned the keys in her hand and walked over to the black bag and rested her hand on it.

My fingers began to tingle. I stepped close to her to clutch her throat so that there would be no sound if she attempted to open the bag.

She turned to me, and I saw a marvelous transformation. Her face was radiant; her eyes shone, brilliant with grand things.

"Walter, dear, please forgive me. Take your keys. I don't want to know. I want the beautiful things you have spoken to remain in my heart undisturbed. And oh!

Walter dear, I know now that you are a philanthropist, studious and unselfish, a noble man. I will never doubt you again."

A hunch whispered to me was to lose her as quickly as possible.

I now took up the matter of Nina Deloney's furniture and personal effects. These goods were shipped from Eureka, Montana, November 6th, and arrived December 1st of the previous year, remaining unclaimed until February 6th. I had written to them prior to this but left before the answer came, so their letter was returned to them. I now sent the original bill of lading signed by Nina Deloney to the Bekins people and told them to place the goods in storage. I had other large quantities of furniture and numerous trunks stored in the Coast cities under various names, and was scheming to dispose of this property before my departure for Australia in July.

Australia seemed the mecca for this arch-criminal. But he did not reckon on the astuteness of a clever force of detectives or—ironic turn of circumstances!—on the overweening curiosity of a woman. In next month's instalment you will read how Bluebeard Watson fell into the toils of the law—through a woman—and the amazing truth of how he escaped the gallows.

The Voice That Came Out of the Night

(Continued from page 31)

"I told him I would do exactly as he said. "Another thing, Miss Dunham; this is absolutely secret work, and I couldn't afford to have anybody know about it just yet. I want your word of honor not to speak of it to anybody."

"WHEN I had promised, he said, 'Very well, Miss Dunham, I'll give you a trial. As I said in my advertisement, the position pays very well. What do you think of \$100 a week?'

"Well, that nearly knocked me off my feet, Mr. Bardgett. Of course I expected more than the usual salary for night work, but \$100 a week—I just didn't know what to say. Mr. Thatcher gave me no time to say anything.

"We'll consider that settled," he said. 'And as long as you don't know anything about me, I'll advance half of your first week's salary right now.'

"I had really intended to ask Ernie's advice before taking the position, but when he counted out five ten-dollar bills, I decided then and there to take the job.

"You'll get the balance Saturday," said Mr. Thatcher, 'and I'll try to have something for you to do to-night. You'll need a key to the place, and you'll find the elevators running all night. I'll explain to the watchman that you're to come and go as you please.'

"He handed me the key, and I thanked him, and went home to think about my good luck."

The girl paused for breath—she had been talking very fast. And Bardgett poured her a glass of mineral water while he and I sampled his Scotch. She went on after a brief pause.

"You can imagine how overjoyed I was, Mr. Bardgett. I called up Ernie right away and he got off from work that after-

noon to talk about it. We were really perfectly happy.

"Late that afternoon a telegram came from Mr. Thatcher. It said to be at the office at nine o'clock that night, and I would find written instructions. He had explained that the radio outfit would always be ready for operation, and that I was not to fool with it or try to change it. Of course I wouldn't have, anyway.

"I reached the office at eight-thirty so as to have plenty of time to get ready. On the table right beside the machine was a letter addressed to me, and two books. One was the Bible, Mr. Bardgett, and the other was 'Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures,' by Mrs. Eddy."

Bardgett evidently had recovered his interest. He plainly was enjoying the girl's story, although to me it seemed simple and unexciting.

"And what was in the letter, Miss Dunham?" he inquired.

"IT just had a list of the pages in the books that I was to read from, and a sort of schedule for sending. I was to start at nine o'clock and read for a half-hour; then rest for fifteen minutes, and read for another half-hour, and so on. There was a Western Union clock on the wall that I was to go by, for Mr. Thatcher said that the exact time was a very important thing in his experiments. I was to go home at two o'clock."

"What part of the Bible did he direct you to read?"

"The Psalms. He had three or four of them marked, and some of them were to be repeated over and over again. He also had marked the first five pages of Mrs. Eddy's book. I read all this just as he had said, and at two o'clock I was in the middle of the Thirty-ninth Psalm. But

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Mr. Thatcher's note had said to stop promptly at two, so I locked the office and went home."

"Nothing interrupted you all the time you were there?"

"Nothing at all. I almost wished somebody would come in, for I couldn't help being a little frightened there all alone."

"And then what happened?"

"The next morning I got a special-delivery letter from Mr. Thatcher. It said my work had been excellent, and to be at the office at the same time that night and repeat the whole test."

"Did you notice the postmark on the letter?"

"Yes; it was Stamford, Connecticut. I've had a great many letters from Mr. Thatcher during the time I've been working, and they're all mailed from the same place. You see, he's busy watching how the tests come out, so he's never at the office."

"I see."

"Well, Mr. Bardgett, he kept me at that same work for a whole week, always at the same hours, and never changing the test one bit. Now I like the Bible as well as anybody, but after you've said some of those Psalms a hundred times you begin to be fed up on them."

She spoke somewhat resentfully, and Bardgett smiled.

"I'll admit that some of them might be taken in milder doses," he remarked. "Did you get your pay promptly?"

"Oh, certainly. The Saturday after I started to work, I found an envelope on the table and inside were five ten-dollar bills. There was also a little note saying my work had been satisfactory. The Monday after that I got a long letter from Mr. Thatcher. He said he was satisfied that I had the right idea and his experiments were coming along fine with my help. But he said they were having difficulty in the air, and the hours would have to be changed a little, and I was to follow the new schedule with great care. I was to begin at twelve midnight and every day he would send me a new list of the exact time to send and when to stop.

"THE letter also said that he was making some minor changes in the test, and that it was most important to get it exactly right, and to send it at exactly the time he had marked on the schedule."

Bardgett leaned forward, and I saw his impassive countenance suddenly become intent.

"Just what was the new test, Miss Dunham?" he asked.

"I'm coming to that, Mr. Bardgett; and it's a little hard to explain. It wasn't really a change in the test, for I had to say the Psalms and all the rest of it over and over again; but between the verses he had put in little sentences that didn't seem to mean anything. I've repeated them so often I've memorized the whole thing. It would go something like this.

"At twelve o'clock I'd begin reading one of the Psalms and continue for five minutes; then at exactly five minutes past twelve I'd stop and send the other test, and keep it up for about five minutes; then go back to the Psalms for a few minutes, and then change off again to the new test. It went on like that for hours, with fifteen or twenty minutes rest every once in a while. The schedule told me when to make each

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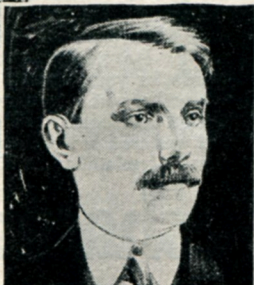


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change, and I had to watch the electric clock to get it just right. Mr. Thatcher always said in his letters how important it was to get the time exactly as it was made out in the schedule."

"And can you repeat the messages that you sent in between the Psalms?" asked Bardgett.

"I should say I could, Mr. Bardgett! I've said them so often that I'm sick and tired of helping George and I'm almost afraid of Bill myself!" The girl shuddered, and Bardgett and I leaned forward expectantly. But her smile returned, and she went on in a half-amused tone.

"Of course it's nonsense for me to feel that way, and Ernie says so, too. There isn't any George or Bill; it's just a test. But sometimes I feel almost afraid, saying those names so much. It goes like this:

"Can you hear me? I've been trying so long, so long to reach you. George knows; he hears me all the time. You must help George; he needs your help. He's working for you and for me, too. I'm helping him and you must help him. Don't let George fail!"

"AND it's all broken up in short sentences like that, Mr. Bardgett, and in between there are long verses from the Bible. That was all there was for more than a week, and then came the part about Bill. It went like this:

"Bill is hurting you; I know he's hurting you. Keep Bill away; don't let him come near me. He's hurting me, too. Make him stop, George. Make him stop. Keep him away. I'm afraid of Bill!"

"This was about five days ago, Mr. Bardgett, and I've been doing this for the fourth week now, and I don't know what it all means. I can't sleep any more for thinking of these things. And it's such a lonesome job! I've never seen Mr. Thatcher once since the day he employed me. It's making me sick. Tell me what it means, Mr. Bardgett, and if you think I'm foolish to worry so. I know your advice will be right."

Miss Dunham gazed at my friend with an imploring look in her blue eyes. Bardgett puffed slowly at his pipe for a few moments.

"Your story has many novel points, Miss Dunham," he declared at last. "It may even indicate some new pathway in human ingenuity. But it's too early to speak with certainty. At any rate you were certainly very wise in bringing this matter to my attention. Are you going to the office again to-night?"

"No; Mr. Thatcher gives me one day off a week, although it's not always the same day. The letter this morning said I would be free to-night."

"Very well. Suppose you meet us at your office at noon to-morrow, and we'll have a look at this unusual place. It will be the best starting point for our investigation."

"You'll really come, Mr. Bardgett?"

"Naturally. And you must promise not to worry any more about it; there's really nothing for you to fear. We'll clear it all up for you in short order."

"But suppose this costs me my job!" cried Miss Dunham with a note of fear. "Mr. Thatcher told me so positively to keep it a secret!"

"If it's all right, Miss Dunham, you're in no danger of losing your position. If

it isn't—well, you wouldn't want to continue, would you?"

"Of course not. I know I did right to come to you, Mr. Bardgett. You've been perfectly wonderful. I don't know what I can ever do—"

"Nonsense, my dear young lady. Run along now and get a good night's sleep. You'll enjoy it."

SHE smiled a parting at both of us, and was gone. Bardgett threw himself back in his reclining chair and blew great clouds of smoke from his pipe. I waited for him to speak.

"An interesting case, Lorimer," he said at last, "and in some respects an interesting girl."

There was a long, sharp ring at the bell, followed by three imperative, shorter ones. Bardgett glanced up in surprise.

"Your busy night," I commented. He pressed the buzzer and threw open the door. A heavy footfall sounded on the stairs, and a youthful but very vigorous young fellow thrust himself in. His brow was glowering, and his mood far from amiable.

"Mr. Bardgett?" he demanded, looking from one to the other of us.

"At your service," said Bardgett. "I just want to give you a fair tip. Leave Miss Dunham and her affairs alone. We don't want any fly dicks butting in. My name is Ernie Clark, and I'm telling you to lay off. Get me?"

Bardgett listened with a vacant stare, the tips of his fingers touching as if in profound meditation.

"Something seems to tell me, Mr. Clark, that the rate of mortality in your family is high, due to apoplexy."

The other stared at him, hardly comprehending. "Something seems to tell me that they'll be playing slow music behind you if you horn in any further where you aren't wanted," he retorted. "Now remember; I've handed you fair warning."

And our visitor stalked out. "Quite an impulsive character," commented Bardgett. "I can imagine him loafing with great satisfaction on Miss Dunham's hundred a week."

"How did she ever get mixed up with him!" I exclaimed.

BARDGETT rose and emptied the ashes from his pipe.

"You have the address of the office on Seventh Avenue. Meet me there at quarter to twelve; we'll look into this thing together."

"Anything you wish me to do?" I asked.

"You might find out if the Art Radio School is registered and licensed. Also if you can dig up anything about this man Thatcher. And, Lorimer," he added as an afterthought, "you might try among your friends to locate a powerful receiving set that will capture unusually low wavelengths."

Who were "Bill" and "George"? What were the meanings of the mysterious warnings broadcast with the Psalms? Why was Miss Dunham paid one hundred dollars a week to read over the radio at midnight? You will read next month's instalment of "The Voice That Came Out of the Night," in the July issue of TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES, with breathless interest.

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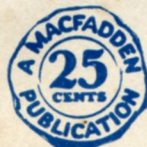
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