

20c
WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS DETECTIVE
THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE
MAR 1939

The PHANTOM DETECTIVE

20c MAR.



A THRILLING PUBLICATION

Servant OF SATAN

A Full-Length Mystery Novel

By ROBERT WALLACE

Joseph
Kovarski

To the Person who is

DEAF

and is Tired of
Straining to

HEAR



● Do you miss music, the voices of loved ones, all the sounds that make up life?

Sounds long lost—even low-voiced conversation, church sermons and business conferences with many voices taking part, are all brought back with Beltone, the new amazing One-Unit Hearing Aid.

This tiny device, which weighs only a few ounces, is all you wear. No more heavy, clumsy separate battery packs or dangling battery wires. The Beltone reproduces faithfully the sounds you want to hear without discomfort or inconvenience. No button need show in the ear.

FREE!

Learn how much better and more clearly Beltone uncovers precious sounds you, perhaps, thought lost forever. Just mail coupon for valuable free book. No cost or obligation.



FREE BOOKLET - MAIL COUPON

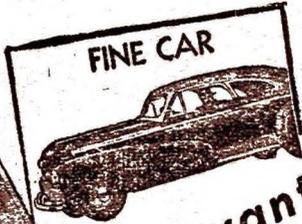
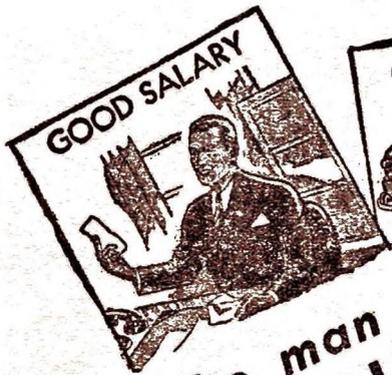
**BELTONE HEARING AID CO., Dept. TFG-3
1450 W. 19th Street, Chicago 8, Illinois**

Please send me, without cost or obligation, the new FREE booklet of interesting facts about **DEAFNESS** and **HOW TO OVERCOME IT**.

Name.....

Address.....

Town.....State.....



To the man who wants to enjoy
an ACCOUNTANT'S CAREER



IF you're that man, here's something that will interest you.

Not a magic formula—not a get-rich-quick scheme—but something more substantial, more practical

Of course, you need something more than just the desire to be an accountant. You've got to pay the price—be willing to study earnestly, thoroughly.

Still, wouldn't it be worth your while to sacrifice some of your leisure in favor of interesting home study—over a comparatively brief period? Always provided that the rewards were good—a salary of \$3,000 to \$10,000?

An accountant's duties are interesting, varied and of real worth to his employers. He has *standing!*

Do you feel that such things aren't for you? Well, don't be too sure. Very possibly they *can* be!

Why not, like so many before you, investigate LaSalle's modern Problem Method of training for an accountancy position?

Just suppose you were permitted to work in a large accounting house under the personal supervision of an expert accountant. Suppose, with his aid, you studied accounting principles and solved problems day by day—easy ones at first—then more difficult ones. If you could do this—and could turn to him for advice as the problems became complex—soon you'd master them all.

That's the training you follow in principle under the LaSalle Problem Method.

Over 2800 Certified
 Public Accountants among
 LaSalle alumni

You cover accountancy from the basic Principles right up through Accountancy Systems and Income Tax Procedure. Then you add C. P. A. Training and prepare for the C. P. A. examinations.

As you go along, you absorb the principles of Auditing, Cost Accounting, Business Law, Statistical Control, Organization, Management and Finance.

Your progress is as speedy as you care to make it—depending on your own eagerness to learn and the time you spend in study.

Will recognition come? The only answer, as you know, is that success *does* come to the man who is really *trained*. It's possible your employers will notice your improvement in a very few weeks or months. Indeed, many LaSalle graduates have paid for their training—with increased earnings—before they have completed it! For accountants, who are trained in organization and management, are the executives of the future.

Write For This Free Book

For your own good, don't put off investigation of *all* the facts. Write for our free 48-page book, "Accountancy, The Profession That Pays." It'll prove that accountancy offers brilliant futures to those who aren't afraid of serious home study. We'll also include "Ten Years' Promotion in One"—a book which has helped many men. Send us the coupon *now*.

**LASALLE EXTENSION
 CHICAGO 5, ILL.**

Other LaSalle Opportunities

- Higher Accountancy
- C.P.A. Coaching
- Bookkeeping
- Law: LL.B. Degree
- Business Management
- Salesmanship
- Traffic Management
- Foremanship
- Industrial Management
- Stenotypy
 (Machine Shorthand)

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY A CORRESPONDENCE INSTITUTION

417 S. Dearborn St. Dept. 3329-HR Chicago 5, Ill.

I want to be an accountant. Send me without obligation, "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays" training program—also "Ten Years' Promotion in One."

Name.....Age.....

Address.....

City, Zone & State.....



The PHANTOM DETECTIVE

Vol. LIII, No. 1

A THRILLING PUBLICATION

March, 1949

A COMPLETE NOVEL



SERVANT OF SATAN

by Robert Wallace

When sudden death pursues the Parish family, the Phantom digs for clues in a mine of mystery and murder! Follow the world's greatest sleuth as he pits himself against a diabolical killer 13

A COMPLETE NOVELET

SET A PLACE FOR DEATH..... Roger Fuller 108

Murder walked in when the candles at the dinner table went out, and then Detective McCreary was plunged into a vortex of grim intrigue!

SHORT STORIES

DEATH RIDES A WINNER..... Leonard Jones 75

Racing reporter Northolt is at the finish line of a track mystery

LINE OF FIRE..... Ray Cummings 91

Geometry upsets a scheming killer's neat formula for a perfect crime

THREE CLUES TO MURDER..... C. K. M. Scanlon 95

A skull, a whiskbroom and a dinner check—and a corpse on the floor

NOTHING TO LOSE..... Anthony Tompkins 99

Being bodyguard to Old Man Wayne was tougher than Trevor expected

FEATURES

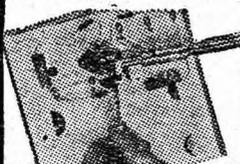
THE PHANTOM SPEAKS (A Department)..... The Phantom 6

MASTER OF CLUES (A True Story)..... Jackson Hite 84

Published every other month and copyright 1949 by Better Publications of Canada, Ltd., 36 Toronto Street, Toronto 1, Ontario, Canada. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office Department, Ottawa. Entered as second-class matter September 11, 1947, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the Act of March 3, 1879 (Sec. 523, P. L., and R.). Subscription (12 issues), \$2.40; single copies, 20c; foreign postage extra. Names of all characters used in stories and semi-fiction articles are fictitious. If the name of any living person or existing institution is used, it is a coincidence. Manuscripts must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes and are submitted at the author's risk. In corresponding with this publication, please include your postal zone number, if any.

March, 1949. PRINTED IN CANADA AT TORONTO

YOU PRACTICE Radio Soldering with Soldering Equipment and Radio Parts I send you. Get practical experience mounting and connecting parts.



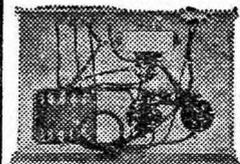
YOU BUILD this Tester with parts N. R. I. sends early in the course. Soon helps you fix neighbors' Radios and **EARN EXTRA MONEY** in spare time.



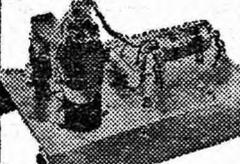
YOU TEST Radio circuits like this built with parts I send. Build special circuits; learn how to locate and repair circuit defects.



YOU BUILD Vacuum Tube Power Pack; make changes which give you experience with packs of many kinds. Learn how to correct Power Pack troubles.



YOU BUILD this A. M. Signal Generator for more valuable experience. It provides amplitude-modulated signals for many tests and experiments.

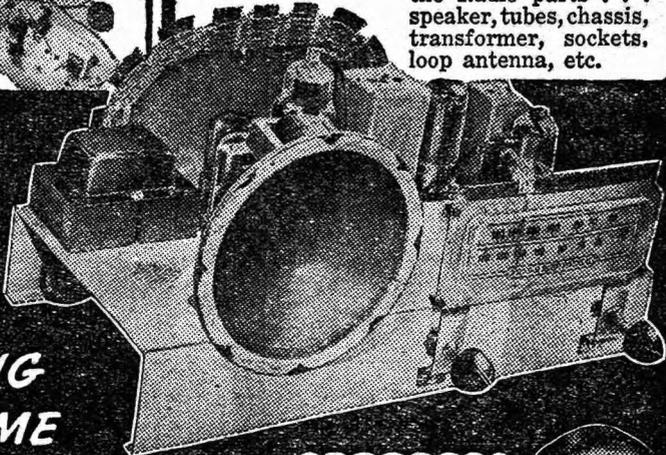


YOU PRACTICE FM (Frequency Modulation) experiments, get more experience with this Superheterodyne Receiver Circuit you build with parts I send.



You Get PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE With This Superheterodyne Receiver

YOU BUILD THIS complete, powerful Radio Receiver that brings in local and distant stations. N. R. I. gives you **ALL** the Radio parts . . . speaker, tubes, chassis, transformer, sockets, loop antenna, etc.



LEARN RADIO

BY PRACTICING IN SPARE TIME

WITH BIG KITS OF PARTS I SEND YOU

Do you want a good-pay job in the fast-growing Radio Industry—or your own Radio Shop? Mail the Coupon for a Sample Lesson and my 64-page book, "How to Be a Success in RADIO—Television, Electronics," both FREE. See how I will train you at home—how you get practical Radio experience building, testing Radio circuits with **BIG KITS OF PARTS I SEND!**

Many Beginners Soon Make Extra Money in Spare Time While Learning

The day you enroll I start sending **EXTRA MONEY** manuals that show how to make **EXTRA** money fixing neighbors' Radios in spare time while still learning! Now's the time to get

into Radio Repair. Trained Radio Technicians also find profitable opportunities in Police, Aviation, Marine Radio, Broadcasting, Radio Manufacturing, Public Address work. Think of even **GREAT** opportunities as demand for Television, FM and Electronic devices grows.

Find Out What NRI Can Do For You - Mail Coupon for Sample Lesson and my **FREE** 64-page book. Read the details about the Course, letters from men I trained; see how quickly, easily you can get started. No obligation! **MAIL COUPON NOW.** J. E. SMITH, President Dept. 9C09, National Radio Institute, Pioneer Home Study Radio School, Washington 9, D. C.

I WILL TRAIN YOU AT HOME MY COURSE INCLUDES TELEVISION ELECTRONICS



I TRAINED THESE MEN

Has Own Radio Service
 "I have my own Radio and Television sales and servicing business. I get enough repair jobs to keep me going right along."—ALEXANDER KISH 34 Pershing Avenue, Carteret, N. J.

Good Spare Time Business
 "I have been getting receivers to repair right along, and with NRI methods I don't have to spend much time on them."—S. N. STRICKLAND, 191 Dale Homes, Portsmouth, Va.

VETERANS

you get this training in your own home under G. I. Bill. Mail coupon.

GET BOTH 64-PAGE BOOK FREE
SAMPLE LESSON

MR. J. E. SMITH, President, Dept. 9C09 NATIONAL RADIO INSTITUTE, Washington 9, D. C. Mail me FREE Sample Lesson and 64-page book about how to win success in Radio and Television—Electronics. (No salesman will call. Please write plainly.)

Name..... Age.....
 Address.....
 City.....Zone.....State.....
 Check if Veteran

APPROVED FOR TRAINING UNDER GI BILL



ROBERT COVERT was just an average young fellow, who thought he was entitled to a good time. Bob's father was a hard working man, and yet the youth didn't think much of the fifteen-year-old family automobile, which didn't give young Bob much of a chance to strut his stuff with the young ladies he met at school and in the corner soda shops.

Perhaps that was why Bob was so receptive to the suggestion that they "borrow" a powder-blue Lincoln at the Blue Moon roadhouse when his two friends Wally and Mark made the suggestion. They might have got away with it if the borrowing hadn't wound up in a brush with the police. But things became especially bad when Mark Tormay decided to throw a car seat in front of the pursuing motorcycle cop. The policeman didn't have a chance. He sailed through the air for about thirty feet and when he struck the pavement he was dead.

At first glance this might have seemed like a tragic accident that was bound to blight the lives of three boys who had made a single slip, but it was something much more sinister than that. I had been invited to the Middle Western city on the outskirts of which this episode occurred to look into a pattern of juvenile delinquency that was far above anything in the way of youthful crime to be found in any other city in the United States of comparable size.

A Wave of Car Thefts

The little trip of Bob, Mark and Wally was not an isolated instance by any means; there had been a wave of stolen car cases during the past few months, and mixed in with these were other crimes which pointed to a ring that was capitalizing upon the waywardness of boys in their teens.

I have little respect for any grown man

who will use mere boys for committing crimes to fatten his bank account and lift his ego. That was one of the chief reasons why I became interested in this case. Bob Covert particularly interested me. I didn't think he was a "bad" boy, and I felt sure that with the proper guidance he could be made an honest and worthwhile citizen. I was hopeful of doing this because of several elements that cropped up.

One was the discovery that while Bob Covert and Wally Walsh were a couple of headstrong youngsters, Mark Tormay had a criminal record. Even so I wasn't so anxious to bring the full force of the law down upon Mark himself alone, I was more anxious to have him lead me to the men who were behind this grim conspiracy against the homes and families of the youths they used as their criminal pawns.

But I never had a chance to talk to Mark Tormay after his arrest for the killing of the motorcycle policeman and the stealing of the car. For, before I reached him in his cell, Mark Tormay had died of poison!

An Exciting Crime Chase

This sequence of events carried me into one of the most exciting crime chases in which I have ever participated, and one that I followed through to its climax with the greatest amount of satisfaction, because I knew distinctively that I was striking a blow for a future generation of American citizens, and making this nation of ours stronger as a result.

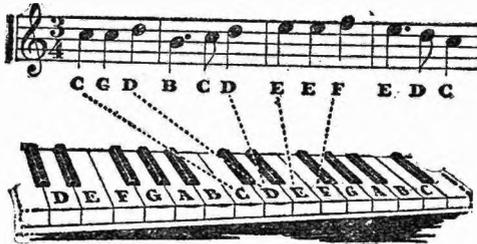
The things that were going on in this Mid-Western community were being duplicated to a lesser degree in many other towns and cities of the country, and it appeared that the crime chieftains who were battering upon the work of misguided boys and girls were

(Continued on page 8)

Over 850,000 people have studied music this easy way

SEE HOW SIMPLE IT IS!

"My country 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty"



The first note on the music above is "a." Follow the dotted line to the keyboard and locate "c" on the piano. Find the other notes the same way. As you strike them you'll be playing the melody

of "America." Easy, isn't it? And it's easy to play other tunes, too. For a remarkable invention, the "Note-Finder," tells you just where each note is located on the piano keyboard.



You, too, can learn to play your favorite instrument, quickly, easily, right in your own home!

YES, OVER 850,000 delighted people have studied music this quick, easy, inexpensive way. Some are now on the stage, others on the radio, and thousands more are enjoying the new pleasure and popularity of being able to play. Isn't this convincing proof of the success of the new U. S. School of Music method? Many students didn't know one note from another. Yet in a short time they learned to play their favorite instrument. And they found learning this modern way amazingly easy and loads of fun. What countless others have done, YOU, too, can do!

Right from the start you learn real tunes by note. First you are told how to do a thing. Then a picture shows you how to do it. Finally you do it yourself and hear how it goes. Almost before you realize it, you are playing your favorite pieces. No private teacher could make it clearer.

LAWRENCE WELK
famous band leader



Lawrence Welk's achievements should be an inspiration to all students of music. His rise to fame was rapid. He has played for leading theatres, hotels, and radio networks. And he did it all without a professional music teacher. Here's what he says: "I studied the accordion with the U. S. School and was surprised at how simple their method made learning music. I can highly recommend this school to anyone interested in learning music quickly without a private teacher, at such a low cost."

WIN FRIENDS—ENJOY NEW POPULARITY

Best of all it costs only a few cents a day. That includes everything . . . no extras of any kind. Don't miss any more fun. Learn to play your favorite instrument and surprise your friends. Music, you know, makes most any party a success. Those who can play are invited everywhere. So get started on the way to musical good times NOW!

If you want to be a "hit" at every party . . . if you really do want to play your favorite instrument . . . fill out and mail the coupon below, asking for our Free Illustrated Booklet and Print and Picture Sample. These show you how quickly and easily you can learn music in your own home at little cost. (Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit.)

U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC
2943 Brunswick Bldg., N. Y. 10, N. Y.



FREE PRINT AND PICTURE SAMPLE

U. S. School of Music, 2943 Brunswick Bldg., N. Y. 10, N. Y.
Please send me Free Booklet and Print and Picture Sample. I would like to play instrument checked below.

(Do you have instrument _____)

Piano	Accordion	Trumpet	Ukulele
Violin	Mandolin	Trombone	Clarinet
Guitar	Saxophone	Tenor Banjo	Other Instrument

Mr. }
Mrs. }
Miss } (PLEASE PRINT)

Street _____

City _____ State _____

Notes: If you are under 16 yrs. of age parents must sign coupon

Save 2c—Stick Coupon on penny postcard.

\$100⁰⁰ A WEEK!

Big money? It certainly is, but that's what electricians are pulling down these days! In fact, many of them are making considerably more than that. Now you too can learn how to plan, install, repair and maintain any house wiring system — and do the work in accordance with the highest standards.

PRACTICAL RESIDENTIAL WIRING

By John F. Nowak

Here at last is a complete practical book on house wiring, which you can use to do complete electrical jobs — from the smallest repairs to the wiring of an entire home. It begins by showing you how to draw electrical diagrams, and proceeds, step by step, through every type of present-day installation. Then the author shows you exactly how to do the actual work, and furnishes hundreds of hands-at-work photographs. The National Electrical Code is clearly applied at each crucial point, insuring that everything you do fulfills Code requirements. Throughout this great handbook every step is explained in plain English which requires no previous knowledge of electricity or experience in electrical work. See for yourself how completely this book covers every detail of planning, installation, repair, and maintenance. Mail the coupon now for a FREE 10-day examination of this complete, brand-new handbook.



MAIL THIS COUPON

D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc.
250 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. 3, N. Y.

Please send me "Practical Residential Wiring" on approval. Within 10 days I will either return the book without obligation or send you \$1.95, plus a few cents postage, and \$2.00 per month for 2 months thereafter. (If you send the entire amount of \$5.95 with this coupon, we will pay the postage. Same return privilege and refund guarantee.)

Name

Address

City Zone State

TFG-Mar. '49

New
MIRACLE
WALL
CLEANER

QUICK **Saves Costly Redecorating**

EASY **AMAZING INVENTION.** Banishes old-style housecleaning mess and muss. No mess—no sticky "dough"—no red, swollen hands. No more dangerous stapadders. Literally erases dirt like magic from Wallpaper, Painted Walls, Ceilings, Window Shades. Take orders from friends! Earn money! Acknowl-
SAMPLES FOR TRIAL Sample offer sent immediately to all who send name at once. A penny postal will do. **SEND NO MONEY**—
Send your name. **KRISTEE CO., 1486 Bar Street, AKRON, OHIO**

MIND POWER

A FREE BOOK

Develop your personal, creative power! Awaken the silent, sleeping forces in your own consciousness. Become Master of your own life. Push aside all obstacles with a new energy you have overlooked. The Rosicrucians know how, and will help you apply the greatest of all powers in man's control. Create health and abundance for yourself. Write for Free book, "The Secret Heritage." It tells how you may receive these teachings for study and use. It means the dawn of a new day for you. Address: Scribe J. D. J.

The Rosicrucians

SAN JOSE —AMORC— CALIFORNIA

"The Rosicrucians are NOT a religious organization"

THE PHANTOM SPEAKS

(Continued from page 6)

gradually extending their tentacles to all parts of the nation like a giant octopus.

Steve Huston and Muriel Havens did excellent work on this case, too. Bob Covert's mother was dead. I felt that he needed the guiding hand of a good woman, and at the same time a person who could stand up against any threats that might be leveled against the boy by the underworld overlords who had ensnared him in their web. For this reason Muriel Havens assumed the role of Bob's Aunt Janis, and ran into a number of factors in the case that might never have been uncovered by a mere male.

I got a big kick out of the way Steve Huston adopted the role I assigned to him. Working in New York City with the Police Department and its Police Athletic League set-up, I knew something of the success of the theory that a beat cop can be a boy's best friend if the relationship is developed. Steve Huston donned the blue cloth and brass buttons of a beat cop, and set about to win the affection of the youngsters on his beat so that they realized the meaning of a true friend. Since the youthful population was a mixture of good and bad in this Mid-Western city as it is everywhere, it was inevitable that Steve should also run into the tentacles of crime that were being extended down into all parts of the city.

Emotional Dynamite

The juvenile crime situation and its adult cohort was shot through with emotional dynamite, and before it was solved it worked through a number of challenging situations that led right to the crime castles of Manhattan. You'll probably recognize a good many of the facets of this dynamic case as you read the story that Robert Wallace has made of the case in *The City of Dreadful Night*. It's appearing in the next issue.

Robert Wallace is young enough to understand the problems of boys and girls, and to appreciate their enthusiasm and desire to do the right thing when they are given the opportunity. He has put a lot of this enthusiasm into his description of the background of the colorful case that wound through the mazes of murder and robbery and brought out of this melee of madness a clean and

(Continued on page 10)

"I love to teach dancing

The New Arthur Murray Way

My pupils learn so much faster!



Lola Arnaux,
typical Arthur
Murray teacher



"The Rumba's a great favorite," says Madeleine Murphy. "It's such fun to see a beginner do this gay dance after just one lesson. Teaching really is fun this new way."



"The Samba's such fun and looks so tricky that everybody loves to do it," says Joyce Lyons. "And, you can learn it in an hour thanks to 'The New Arthur Murray Way.'"

**Even beginners become popular partners
in a fraction of the usual time!**

"I'm so excited about 'The New Arthur Murray Way' of teaching dancing. It seems like magic the way the Fox Trot, Waltz, Samba, Rumba, all develop out of his new discovery, 'The First Step To Popularity'.

"Beginners are thrilled to find they go dancing after only one hour . . . and amazed how little it costs to learn. And right now we have a special half-off price that saves you even more. But why don't you come in to the Studio for a FREE dance analysis and see for yourself what 'The New Arthur Murray Way' can do for you."

PROOF You Can Dance After One Lesson!

See how quickly you can learn to dance "The New Arthur Murray Way." Send for the "Murray-Go-Round" now! It contains fascinating, entertaining instructions on all dances. Clip coupon below.



Copyright, 1949—Arthur Murray Inc.

ARTHUR MURRAY

DANCE STUDIOS FROM COAST TO COAST

Visit the one nearest you
for a FREE dance analysis

ONLY 25c

ARTHUR MURRAY STUDIOS, Dept. 19B (Consult telephone directory for address of nearest studio, or write Arthur Murray Studios, 11 East 43rd St., New York 17, N.Y.) Please send me your magazine, "Murray-Go-Round", 44 pages of pictures, dance news, instructions. I enclose 25c.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

Thrill. Fict.—March 1949

AUDELS Carpenters and Builders Guides 4 vols. \$6



Inside Trade Information for Carpenters, Builders, Joiners, Building Mechanics and all Woodworkers. These Guides give you the short-cut instructions that you want—including new methods, ideas, solutions, plans, systems and money saving suggestions. An easy progressive course for the apprentice and student. A practical daily helper and Quick Reference for the master worker. Carpenters everywhere are using these Guides as a Helping Hand to Better Work, Better Work and Better Pay. To get this assistance for yourself, simply fill in the **FREE COUPON** below.

Inside Trade Information On:

How to use the steel square—How to file and set saws—How to build furniture—How to use a mitre box—How to use the chalk line—How to use rules and scales—How to make joints—Carpenters arithmetic—Solving measurement problems—Estimating strength of timbers—How to set girders and sills—How to frame houses and roofs—How to estimate costs—How to build houses, barns, garages, bungalows, etc.—How to read and draw plans—Drawing up specifications—How to excavate—How to use settings 12, 13 and 17 on the steel square—How to build hoists and scaffolds—skylights—How to build stairs—How to put on interior trim—How to hang doors—How to lath—lay floors—How to paint.



AUDELS, Publishers, 49 W. 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y. Mail Audels Carpenters and Builders Guides, 4 vols., on 7 days' free trial. If OK I will return \$1.75 and \$1 monthly until \$6 is paid. Otherwise I will return them. No obligation unless I am satisfied.

Name _____
 Address _____
 Occupation _____
 Employed by _____ PAL

LAW STUDY AT HOME for Business Success and LARGER PERSONAL EARNINGS. 40 years expert instruction — over 114,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All texts furnished. Easy payment plan. Send for FREE BOOK NOW — "Law and Executive Guidance."
AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
 Dept. 12-T, 646 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

GET EYE-GLASSES by MAIL NEW LOW PRICES
 Send No Money!
16-DAY TRIAL Offer
 NEWEST STYLES
 Send for FREE Scientific Sight Test Chart and Catalog. Write today.
U.S. EYE-GLASSES CO. 1557 MILWAUKEE AVENUE
 Dept. 3-62, CHICAGO 22, ILL.

Thousands Deaf Now Hear

News of an astonishing new radionic hearing device is sweeping the country as thousands experience the miracle of a return to the joy and thrill of hearing. Perfected in the great Zenith Radio laboratories, it needs no fitting. You can order by mail on ten days' free trial* with absolute money-back guarantee. Ready to wear the day you get it. Send postcard today for full particulars to Zenith Radio Corp., Hearing Aid Division, Dept. TZ-39, 5801 Dickens Ave., Chicago 39, Illinois. Made by the makers of world-famous Zenith Radios.

*Trial offer available on direct sales by Zenith Radio Corporation or its subsidiaries. 169

THE PHANTOM SPEAKS

(Continued from page 8)

wholesome life for hundreds of boys.

I think you're going to like *The City of Dreadful Night*. It was one of my most interesting cases. It posed an important problem. It revealed a sinister menace and it stirred the entire populace into action, something that many crimes seldom do. With this firm public opinion behind the law enforcement officers who worked with me on the case, it is no wonder that the final success was so gratifying and the breaking-up of the gang behind the boy criminals was so complete. Look forward to *The City of Dreadful Night* in our next issue!

Be a FRIEND OF THE PHANTOM

THERE is a constant flow of membership cards going out of the office to new members of FRIENDS OF THE PHANTOM Club. Naturally it gives me a real thrill to know that you folks who read THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE issue after issue are a cross-section of the finest law-abiding citizens in the country. You can be a moral force that will be an example and a guide to other people throughout the nation.

If you are not already a member of the club and would like to join send along a letter of application. Give us your name, address, age and sex. This information should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope, so we can send along your membership card.

Some people like to have an insignia to indicate their membership. For these we have prepared an attractive Phantom Detective pin. This may be secured upon request at the time of your application, or at any time after you have joined the club. There is a charge of fifteen cents to cover the cost of mailing and handling this attractive bronzed emblem. This insignia is not required for membership. Your free membership card is sufficient identification.

A membership in FRIENDS OF THE PHANTOM is an active indication of your interest in aiding the local, State and Federal Law enforcement officers in their duties. We would like to point out, however, that membership in our Club does not confer upon you

(Continued on page 128)



Learn RADIO

TELEVISION, ELECTRONICS

SHOP METHOD HOME TRAINING

Let NATIONAL SCHOOLS, of Los Angeles, a practical Technical Resident Trade School for almost 50 years, train you for today's unlimited opportunities in Radio

You receive all parts including tubes for building this modern Superheterodyne Receiver and other standard equipment to use and keep

these two FREE books will tell you how

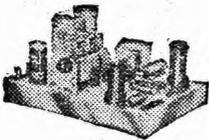


Good Jobs Await the Trained Radio Technician

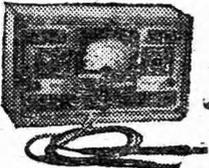
You are needed in the great, modern Radio, Television and Electronics industry! Trained Radio technicians are in constant and growing demand at excellent pay—in Broadcasting, Communications, Television, Radar, Research Laboratories, Home Radio Service, etc. National Schools Master Shop Method Home Study course, with newly added lessons and equipment, can train you in your spare time, *right in your own home*, for these exciting opportunities. Our method has been proved by the remarkable success of National Schools-trained men all over the world.

You Learn by Building Equipment with Standard Radio Parts We Send You

Your National Schools Course includes not only basic theory, but practical training as well—you learn by doing. We send you complete standard equipment of professional quality for building various experimental and test units. You advance step by step until you are able to build the modern superheterodyne receiver shown above, which is yours to keep and enjoy. You perform more than 100 experiments—build many types of circuits, signal generator, low power radio transmitter, audio oscillator, and other units. The Free Books shown above tell you more about it—send for them today!



Now! NEW PROFESSIONAL MULTITESTER INCLUDED!



This versatile testing instrument is portable and complete with test leads and batteries. Simple to operate, accurate and dependable. You will be able to quickly locate trouble and adjust the most delicate circuits. You can use the Multitester at home or on service calls. It is designed to measure AC and DC volts, current, resistance and decibels. You will be proud to own and use this valuable professional instrument.

GET THE DETAILS—SEND THE COUPON →

Lessons and Instruction Material Are Up-to-date, Practical, Interesting.

National Schools Master Shop Method Home Training gives you basic and advanced instruction in all phases of Radio, Television and Electronics. Each lesson is made easy to understand by numerous illustrations and diagrams. All instruction material has been developed and tested in our own shops and laboratories, under the supervision of our own engineers and instructors. A free sample lesson is yours upon request—use the coupon below.

You Get This and Other Valuable Information in the Free Sample Lessons:

1. Basic Receiver Circuits and How They are Used.
2. Construction of the Antenna Circuit.
3. How Energy is Picked Up by the Aerial.
4. How Signal Currents are Converted into Sound.
5. How the Tuning Condenser Operates.
6. How the R-F Transformer Handles the Signal, and other data, with diagrams and illustrations.

Both Home Study and Resident Training Offered

APPROVED FOR VETERANS
Check Coupon Below

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

LOS ANGELES 37, CALIF. • EST. 1905



FIND OUT NOW. MAIL COUPON TODAY

National Schools, Dept. PFG-3 Paste on a postcard
4000 S. Figueroa, Los Angeles 37, Calif.

Mail me FREE the books mentioned in your ad including a sample lesson of your course. I understand no salesman will call on me.

NAME AGE.....

ADDRESS

CITY ZONE..... STATE.....

Check here if Veteran of World War II

FLOODS BRING TROUBLE TO TOWN BUT THEN...

CALLING KWX, FERNCLIFF/ EMERGENCY MESSAGE FOR CITY HOSPITAL/ PLEASE FLY IN 200 AMPULES TYPHOID VACCINE. URGENT/ DOCTOR G. EVERTS, RIVERDALE. REPEAT...

KWX, FERNCLIFF. OKAY, WILL HANDLE!



THEIR LAND COMMUNICATIONS CUT AND WATER SUPPLY CONTAMINATED BY FLOODS, RIVERDALE'S CITIZENS ARE UNDERGOING MASS INOCULATION, BUT YOUNG DOCTOR EVERTS'S SERUM SUPPLY IS RUNNING LOW AND...

RIVERDALE AIRPORT TO PIPER 237: RUNWAYS FLOODED. LAND ON HIGH GROUND BETWEEN FLARES, OVER



HERE'S THE SERUM, DOC. THIS YOUNG LADY...

GOOD! WE CAN USE HER! HELP THE SERGEANT LINE 'EM UP, MISS!



ONLY FIFTEEN MORE, DOCTOR

THANK HEAVENS THAT PILOT BROUGHT FIFTY EXTRA AMPULES



ME ON YOUR NEWSCAST? GOSH, I WAS JUST GOING HOME AND CLEAN UP

DO IT AT THE STUDIO. NOW TO FIND THAT SERUM PILOT

WAIT 'TILL THE DOCTOR FINDS OUT IT'S ME!



HERE'S A RAZOR, DOCTOR



REMARKABLE BLADE! I'VE NEVER HAD A MORE REFRESHING SHAVE!

IT'S A THIN GILLETTE... PLENTY KEEN AND EASY SHAVING



YOU FLEW THE SERUM! WHY...

BUT YOU NEEDED HELP...

QUIET! TEN SECONDS TO GO



WHEN IT COMES TO FAST, SLICK SHAVES AT A SAVING, THIN GILLETTES ARE TOPS. THEY ARE THE MOST POPULAR LOW-PRICED BLADES ON THE MARKET BECAUSE THEY'RE KEENER AND LAST LONGER. THIN GILLETTES ARE MADE TO FIT YOUR GILLETTE RAZOR EXACTLY... PROTECT YOU FROM NICKS AND IRRITATION. ALWAYS ASK FOR THIN GILLETTES



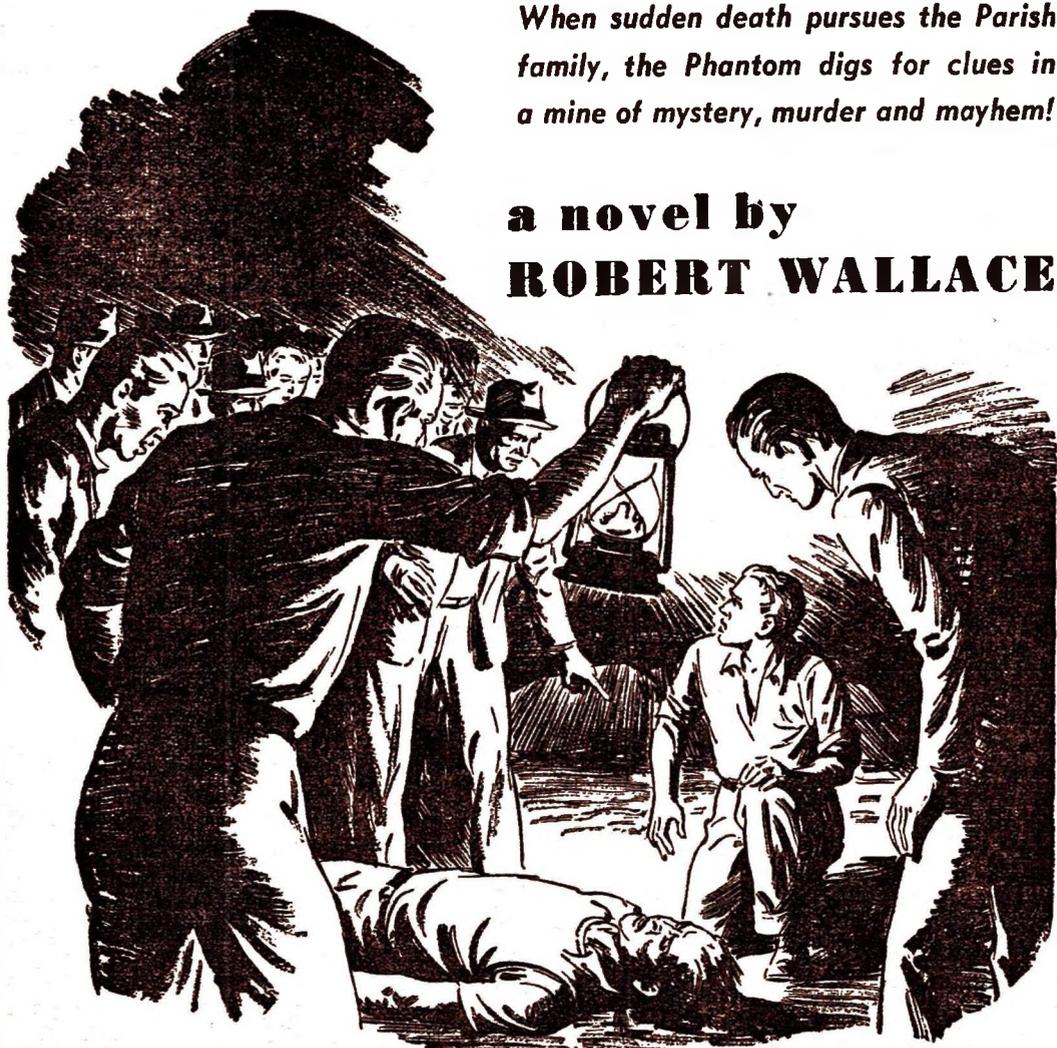
10-25¢
4-10¢



NEW TEN-BLADE PACKAGE HAS COMPARTMENT FOR USED BLADES

When sudden death pursues the Parish family, the Phantom digs for clues in a mine of mystery, murder and mayhem!

**a novel by
ROBERT WALLACE**



Servant of Satan

CHAPTER I

YELLOW FACE

BEHIND Professor Parish's small white cottage beyond the campus, the old, ivy-covered buildings of Treadwell University sprawled peaceful and serene in the sunset. The town of Poma, Michigan, surrounding them had grown quiet. The college shops had closed, it was too early for the eating places to open and the natives had gone on home.

This was the time of day Professor Kurt Parish liked best. In the small white cottage that had been his home since he had come to Treadwell the year previous, Parish pushed aside the schedule of his next day's classes. He got up, looked at his watch and went to the window.

Outside, where the square of lawn fronting the cottage ended, the Professor

The World's Greatest Sleuth Pitted Against

noticed a man standing near the end of the drive that led to the one car garage that went with his dwelling. He glanced at the man curiously. Sometimes students dropped in for a chat with him or advice on some knotty problem in economics. But this man was too old to be a student. The Professor couldn't remember having seen him before.

He was short and stockily built. In the sunset's glow his face had a curious yellow tinge that made his heavy brows look like horizontal charcoal smears. He wore a rough tweed suit, a pulled down felt hat. As Parish glanced at him curiously, the man turned abruptly and hurried off.

The yellow face seemed to linger in the Professor's mind when he got his hat and topcoat and locked the front door behind him. An evil face, sinister and strange. A face that wasn't easily forgotten. Parish shrugged as he went on to the driveway and his garage.

There was no sign of the man now, the road as far as he could see was empty.

He never kept his garage locked. Nobody, he was sure, had the slightest interest in stealing his old car. It was a dark green 1936 Lincoln-Zephyr coupe that he had picked up second-hand six months previous. It served his purpose and that was all that Professor Kurt Parish expected and wanted.

He smiled reflectively when he opened the garage doors and hooked them back. If he had wanted, he could have driven a new, expensive Cadillac.

He had the means, plenty of money at his disposal.

ELEGANCE was the last thing he desired. His tastes were simple, as became a Professor of Economics. He left ostentation and the show of wealth to his brother William and his sister Lyda.

Parish backed the car out of the garage. He didn't notice that the right side front fender wasn't as dusty as the left. It was as if someone had wiped it clean and forgotten to do the same to the hood and the other fender.

Out on the road, he turned north and drove three miles. That brought him to a small wayside inn called the Lone Pine. Parish had discovered the place recently and liked its food. He found it a change

from the usual coffee shop cuisine where he breakfasted daily.

Parking the car in the space beside the inn, he went up the porch steps and entered the building. Oddly, when he ordered and the meal came, he found he had lost his appetite.

He couldn't give himself any reason for it. He had skipped lunch that day, because of a faculty meeting at noon, and knew that he should be hungry.

But, somehow, even the tang of the dishes set before him failed to arouse his interest.

He found himself remembering the short, stocky man with the saffron face. Again he wondered who he was, what he had been doing at the edge of his property.

Slowly, while the thought took shape, he began to feel a vague, unnatural apprehension.

It was as if the man were an omen of something disastrous—something nameless but terrifying.

Professor Parish tried to dismiss the disquieting mood. It was not like him to entertain depressing thoughts. His orderly, scholarly mind had no place for the somber shadows of any unknown menace.

Yet, though he half succeeded in getting rid of the intangible foreboding that had crept over him, the memory of the man with the yellow face still stayed in the back of his mind.

The waitress brought his check when he signaled her. She looked at his hardly tasted meal and raised her brows.

"Anything wrong, sir?"

"No, I guess I'm just not as hungry as I thought I was." Parish forced a smile and got up from the table.

The girl stared after him as he paid his check and went out. Then she shook her head and set to work to clear the table.

Outside, the sun had gone down and deep blue twilight hung over the countryside.

Back in his car, Parish snapped on the lights and headed for the campus.

Nearly every night he made a practice of parking at the edge of the lake here to watch the moon rise.

There was something restful and pleasant in the quiet of the evening hour that appealed to him. Something about the silver shine of the moon that had a soothing

the World's Most Diabolical Murder Master!

effect. And to-night, he told himself, he needed just that.

The spot where he usually parked was at the south end of the campus. An arm of the lake made a small cove. Opposite was a wooded shore.

The trees laid a dark pattern on the water with the moon behind them.

With the motor left idling, the Professor filled his pipe and struck a match.

He wound up the window beside him. A cool, damp chill stirred by a freshening breeze made the night cold. He puffed on the pipe, as the moon climbed higher, suddenly realizing the serenity of the scene



RICHARD CURTIS VAN LOAN

before him had dissolved the last of his unpleasant thoughts.

After awhile he turned the knob on the dash that controlled the car's heater.

Warm air blew around his ankles. He settled back more comfortably on the seat, his mind focusing on tomorrow's early classes. The faculty meeting that day had had to do with a change in classroom procedure.

He brooded, puffing slowly on the pipe.

THEN, abruptly, the yellow face of the man he had seen in the sunset seemed to peer out at him from some remote space in his brain.

Once more the nameless, clutching hand of dread reached out to grip him. He felt

a lethargy creeping over him that he couldn't shake off. A queer, soporific coma seemed to encompass him.

The pipe dropped out of his hand. He made an effort to pick it up but he was unable to move his arm or fingers.

Dreamily he succumbed to the somniferous tide that washed over him.

It was not unpleasant. He seemed to have a buoyancy never experienced before. A floating sensation restful to the nerves. That lasted only a few seconds.

Through it, like a zigzag of lightning, understanding flashed through the Professor's numbing brain. This, he told himself, wasn't anything that would last.

The paralysis fettering him with soft, invisible chains, was lowering the black curtain of Death around him!

His heart pounded wildly. He made one last, desperate attempt to sweep away the thing robbing him of his consciousness. The glow of the moon before his strained eyes made fantastic shapes.

One by one they merged into a face—a yellow face that wore a mocking, hideous smile.

The yellow face and the smile were the last things Professor Kurt Parish saw as his head lolled forward and his memory faded out like a puff of smoke. . . .

CHAPTER II

AFTER THE GAME

THE GONG ending the last chukker of the polo game between the South American four from the Argentine and the Westbury team from Long Island sounded through the cheers of the spectators at the Rumson Turf Club, in New Jersey.

Out of the cavalcade of sweaty ponies and their damp riders, Muriel Havens, the pretty daughter of the publisher of the *Clarion*, one of New York's leading newspapers, watched Richard Curtis Van Loan grin at the plaudits of the crowd.

Muriel's heart pounded excitedly. It was Van whose superb horsemanship and playing had finally chalked up a decisive victory for the Westbury team.

As she watched him ride over to the blanketed line of re-mounts, slip from the saddle and head toward the clubhouse and

the showers, Muriel found herself wishing that Van's socialite friends could have been there that afternoon to have witnessed the game.

Some of those who believed he was an indolent, over-rich idler incapable of anything but a life of ease and comfort. Maybe, Muriel thought to herself, this afternoon would have changed their opinions.

It was true that Dick Van Loan didn't



As McClintock went crashing to the floor, the other gunman nudged Van in the back warningly (CHAPTER XIV)

work. But that wasn't necessary. He had more than enough money to maintain himself in his lofty Park Avenue apartment without the need of toil. Van's father had left him sufficient to go through life without the worry of where a next meal was coming from.

Frank Havens, her father, had known Van's father before him. Muriel was sure her dad wouldn't have been so friendly with Dick if he weren't worthy of his regard. The publisher had watched him grow up, had helped advise him in the financial matters concerning his inheritance. Their friendship had strengthened over the years until now Van was almost like a son to the newspaperman.

Muriel liked Van better than anyone she knew. She was sure that the feeling was mutual. Yet, strangely enough, he was always careful to avoid anything that might lead to a romantic situation. Time and again Van's attitude, where sentiment was concerned, puzzled and perplexed Muriel. She was confident there was no woman in his life. He seemed to make sure there would be none.

But she wasn't thinking about romance when Van, out of the shower and immaculate as always in perfectly tailored gray flannels, hunted up the Havens' big blue Cadillac and climbed in.

"Nice going, Dick!" Muriel slipped her little hand into his. "That last goal was



was an exultant note in Muriel's vibrant voice. "So they don't think Dick Van Loan can do anything except sprawl in a club chair and look attractive!"

"My pal and best defender!" Van let her fingers slip from his. "It just happens that I like horses and competitive sports."

"Where now?" Muriel glanced at the electric clock on the dash. "Back to mad and merry Manhattan?"

Van stretched his long legs, relaxing on the whipcord upholstery. His handsome face mirrored a thoughtful look.

"How about a bit of dinner before we go back? Seems to me that someone recommended a place called the Purple Lantern. It's down in this neck of the woods."

"Let's. I love lanterns, purple or otherwise," Muriel Havens exclaimed.

She started the car, the gateman at the Turf Club supplied directions and some thirty minutes later they were on the parking cinders of a small inn on the

a honey!"

"Thanks." Van's smile was amused as well as appreciative. "Coming from you that rings bells."

"Look what else you won." Muriel snapped open her expensive alligator bag. Glancing in, Van saw it was jammed with money.

"What have you been doing, picking pockets?"

"Betting on you! I showed 'em!" There

banks of the Shrewsbury River. Van seemed to recall the town was Point Avon.

Inside, a waitress led them to the main dining room and seated them at a corner table.

TWO men, at a table behind them, caught Van's eye as he sat down opposite Muriel. One, an elderly, weathered old man with a shock of snow white hair, a wrinkled face and tattooing on his wrists, looked like something that had stepped out of a Joseph Conrad sea story. He would have made a fine subject for an artist looking for a nautical character. Van saw Muriel had noticed the elderly man, too.

"Picturesque old sea dog," she whis-

pered, when Van inched his chair closer to the table.

After awhile Van caught fragments of the conversation behind him. He listened idly.

"Drifted right up to my front door," the old man was saying. "Tight and trim. Real Cape Cod dory."

"Don't know who owns it?" his companion asked.

"Nope. I asked around, nobody claims it. Never seen her on the river, either."

The other man discoursed on the seaworthiness of dories. Van, centering his attention on Muriel, didn't pay particular attention to the remarks behind him until he heard the old man speaking again.

"Yes, sir, the stains certainly looked like blood to me. All over the middle seat. Could have been from a fish, sure. But why pick out the middle seat when you sit there to row—"

More people drifted into the Purple Lantern. It grew crowded and stuffy. Van was glad when the meal was over and they were out in the foyer. There, while he was paying the check, Muriel caught sight of several tiny ship models in bottles that decorated a glass-fronted cabinet. She wandered over to examine them while Van Loan spoke to the cashier.

"By the way," he said casually, "that old man at the table behind us is quite a character. Looks like a real salt. Is he from around here?"

"He's Jeremy McClintock," the cashier explained. "Has a place down the river. Lives there with his housekeeper. Used to be a sea captain. Incidentally, he made those ship models the young lady is looking at."

Van pocketed his change and joined Muriel. "All set?"

"How do they ever get them in bottles?" Muriel indicated a fully rigged clipper inside a green wine bottle.

"It's done with mirrors," Van told her, taking her arm and heading her toward the door.

The moon was up and the river was painted with its bright shine. As they started toward the cinder parking space, Van was suddenly conscious of voices on the other side of the building that backed up on it. Then he heard the siren of a police car and, in the dusk, was aware that people were streaming down from the road to the bank of the river.

"Something's up." He opened the door of the Cadillac. "Hop in and wait for me.

I'll see what it's all about."

Muriel stared. It wasn't like Dick Van Loan to express any interest in crowds, accidents or excitement that didn't concern him. Before she could say anything Van had slipped away.

He went around the building. The moonlight fell fully on a dozen or more people grouped where the water slapped against some rocks along the shore. It was bright enough for him to see a big man in a slouch hat who, having gotten out of the car with the siren, pushed an authoritative way through the throng.

Van mentally placed him as a local police officer as he went in closer and spoke to one of the bystanders.

"What happened?"

"Toby Jones just pulled a guy out of the river. Dead—drowned. He's over there."

If Muriel had been with him, her wonder would have grown. Instead of turning away, Van Loan began to edge his way closer to the figure that had been dragged out of the water and now lay face up on the damp, lush grass at the river's edge.

The big man in the slouch hat had taken charge. Somebody had brought a couple of lighted lanterns. Their rays fell on what Van saw was the chalk white face of a good looking, ruggedly-built man with black hair and patrician features.

HE WORE well cut tan slacks, a white, open throated shirt with a camel's hair sweater over it. River water oozed in a pool around him. Working his way in still closer, Van noticed there were dark stains on the collar of the white shirt and along the neck of the sweater. Stains, he observed, the man in the slouch hat was paying particular attention to.

"Turn him over, Toby," he directed.

A lanky youth, who seemed spellbound by his discovery, obeyed.

"I was goin' to get my bait can, Sheriff," he mumbled, "when I happened to notice somethin' bobbin' around out there by the rocks. Couldn't have been more than a half hour ago."

"Tell me about it later," the sheriff interrupted. "Get him over on his side. I want to see where that blood came from."

Watching, Van bent down. In the glow of the lanterns his interested gaze focused on the head wound from which the blood had obviously come. It was above the man's left ear at a point where the black

hair seemed thickly matted.

"Probably hit his head on the rocks," the sheriff said. "Looks like he's been in the water quite awhile. River was sort of rough last night. Any of you ever seen him before?"

Several men pressed in to take a look. But nobody apparently was able to recognize the dead man. Two more police officers arrived and a few minutes later Van saw the sheriff take a sodden pigskin wallet out of the rear pocket of the tan slacks.

"This ought to do it."—He straightened up, opening the wallet and examining its contents. "Yep. Here it is—driver's license. His name's William Parish and he lives in New York—"

The familiar horn of the blue Cadillac turned Van Loan around. With a final glance at the group in the lantern light, he went back to the inn's parking space and an impatient Muriel.

"Where on earth have you been, Dick? I thought you'd forgotten you left me here. What happened?"

Van shrugged as he climbed in beside her. "Somebody got drowned."

"Drowned?" Muriel's dark eyes looked puzzled as they fastened on him. "And you found that interesting?"

"Unusual," Van murmured.

Muriel laughed, started the car and took the highway that led to the Holland Tunnel and the skyscrapers of Manhattan.

As she drove, Dick Van Loan lapsed into a thoughtful silence. The name "William Parish" seemed to stick like a burr in his mind. Oddly, he recalled having read something in yesterday's *Clarion* about another Parish.

A Professor Kurt Parish, who had been found dead in his parked car near the campus of some small town college in Michigan.

CHAPTER III

MURDERERS MEET



ABOUT the same time Muriel Havens was driving Richard Curtis Van Loan back to New York, a tall, well built man sat glancing through the evening edition of the *Clarion* in the lounge room of a house in lower Manhattan.

It was a beautifully appointed room,

furnished in rich but quiet elegance. Heavily shaded lamps mellowed the Oriental rugs on the waxed floor. At one end, double doors opened on a tiled terrace, giving a view of the green square of a park below.

The tall man tossed the newspaper aside as, somewhere in the house, he heard the distant ring of a bell. Quickly he reached for a pair of dark glasses that were on a table beside him. He slipped them on, got up and walked toward the closed door at the east end of the room.

Opening it, he listened. From the foyer downstairs he heard voices—that of his servant speaking to two men he had just admitted.

"Who is it, Yancey?" The big man in the dark glasses stepped out into the hall.

"Gentlemen to see you, Mr. Sartain. A Mr. Leland and a Mr. King."

"Send them up."

The two who entered the room a minute later were oddly different in type and yet curiously the same. The one who called himself Leland was short, stockily built. He had a bad, yellowish complexion. Brows that looked like two horizontal charcoal smears were over heavy-lidded, moody eyes. He wore a rough tweed suit with the grace of a ground hog.

King, Leland's companion, was nearly six feet in height. He was a bony individual, with a sunken, cadaverous face. He had stiff, ginger colored hair and a perpetual smirk that gave the lower part of his angular face the look of a skull-and-crossbones on a bottle of poison.

His suit was a chalk striped blue job. He walked slowly, as if his feet hurt.

Sartain's dark glasses moved from one to the other in a slow, searching stare before he waved them to chairs and reached for a cigarette.

When he unbuttoned his jacket to dip into his vest pocket for a lighter, a thin length of platinum watch chain was visible. On it, dangling like a charm from a woman's bangle bracelet, the light glittered on a tiny jeweled elephant. A ring in its back allowed it to slide freely along the chain.

The stocky Leland glanced at it with his moody eyes. Sartain had told him once the elephant was a luck piece, a talisman.

"Drink, boys?" Sartain pressed a button in the wall and a moment later Yancey, his servant, wheeled in a portable bar. The bony King smacked his lips as

the big man waved a hospitable hand toward the liquor set-up.

"Help yourselves—before I talk to you."

Leland poured first. It was fine old bourbon, not the kind he got in Broadway bars. This, he knew, was the good old bonded stuff, smooth as oil and too good to dilute with fizz. He measured out a generous three fingers and took the glass back to his chair.

King followed suit and both waited for



RICHARD CURTIS VAN LOAN
as THE PHANTOM

Sartain to continue. They didn't have to wait long. The big man said:

"The Michigan job was okay, Leland. Did you read the *Clarion* yesterday?"

The one he addressed grinned. His yellow face seemed even more sinister as the smile cracked it. "Yes. The police put the Professor's death down as an accident."

"How about you?" Sartain turned to King.

THE bony man reluctantly came up out of his glass. He smacked his lips before he wiped them on the back of a hair-covered hand.

"You'll read about William Parish tomorrow." His smirk was full of meaning. "No trouble at all. I was in the boat when he shoved off. He didn't see me until we were out on the river. I let him have it with the sap, dumped him overboard, pad-

dled in to shore and turned the scow loose."

Sartain nodded. "You made it clean?"

"Look, didn't I throw in a bath?" King's cackling laugh sounded like sandpaper.

The big man who wore the dark glasses let his fingers toy with the jeweled elephant on the platinum watch chain.

"I have another job for you." He spoke slowly, carefully. "One that isn't any reasonable facsimile of anything 'accidental.' This is a gun job in a crowded place. It's dangerous. Dangerous because there's every likelihood those involved will bring the Phantom Detective in on it."

He stopped, waiting to see what effect his words had on his two callers. Leland's yellowish face clouded speculatively. The cadaverous King finished what was in his glass and used his hand for a napkin again.

"I don't like that—much," he muttered.

Leland's moody gaze roamed back to the dark glasses. He had never seen Sartain without them. They made a perfect barricade, behind which their wearer could hide his thoughts and feelings.

"The Phantom?" Leland drew a deep breath. "No, thanks."

Sartain laughed. Sarcasm spiked his deep chuckle.

"So you're scared? You're afraid to take a chance—because of the Phantom? Well, suppose I give you a guarantee that he'll be taken care of—permanently?"

Leland's jaundiced face cleared a trifle. He had a lot of faith in Sartain, in what the big man said and did. During the time he had worked for him he had come to realize this man before him was no small time operator with a lot of money, but nothing else to back up his promises.

Who, or whatever Sartain really was, one point was clear to Leland. The big man was a super-skilful, smart criminal of the type making history in the books of those who sought to circumvent the law. He believed in Sartain, had confidence in him.

"And, naturally," Sartain murmured, "Your payoffs will be entirely suitable."

"That makes it different." Leland's worried expression began to disappear. "If you guarantee the Phantom won't be around, you can count me in."

"Good. How about you?" The eyes behind the dark glasses turned fully on the gangling King.

"Me?" King gulped. "If Leland says it's okay with him, I'll go along with it."

Sartain smiled thinly. "That's being sensible. Now pay attention, both of you. This job's coming up tomorrow. I have a sketch here I want you to look at, and study. When you've gone over it, I'll give you the rest of the story."

Reaching into the drawer of the table beside him he pulled out a sheet of heavy paper. He opened that, spreading it wide on the table's top while King and Leland got up and came over.

"With this diagram as a basis," Sartain continued, his voice soft and affable, "I'll show you how murder is arranged again—successfully!"

He began to explain, still talking in his low-pitched, pleasant tones.

CHAPTER IV

THIRD STRIKE



STEVE HUSTON, the small, redheaded ace reporter on the *Clarion*, was leaving the city desk at ten the following morning when he caught a glimpse of Richard Curtis Van Loan waiting for an elevator. Steve knew that the wealthy young man from Park Avenue was one of his boss's closest friends. The reporter had a nodding acquaintance with Van and grinned as he swung past him.

Secretly, Steve admired the Van Loan sartorial elegance. He wished he could wear clothes with equal distinction. It was a gift—being able to appear so nonchalant and so well groomed at the same time. Even the carnation in Van's lapel was the exact shade to match his haberdashery.

Huston, out on the street, headed for a nearby cafeteria. He had an old-time assignment, the kind that he had handled in his early reporting days. The paper's usual ship reporter was laid up with grippe and Steve had been commissioned to take over.

He looked at his shorthand notes as he went into the cafeteria. The *S.S. Regardia* of the famous Blue Star Line was docking at twelve o'clock that day. She was due in from Cherbourg with an imposing passenger list. For a change, Steve thought, it would be a novelty interviewing celebrities again.

He nodded to himself as he picked up a tray and started down the line of steamtables in the restaurant. . . .

Back in the *Clarion* Building, Van got

out of the elevator he had been waiting for when Steve passed him. He opened the door of Frank Havens' outer office and smiled at the rather grim faced secretary who guarded the publisher's privacy.

Her name was Miss Marsh. She had been Havens' female Cerberus for years. She understood perfectly the machinery of her employer's daily date book. It was part of her job to see that the wheels revolved smoothly and without any friction.

No one without an appointment had the ghost of a chance of getting past her and into the sanctum she guarded so zealously.

However, there was one exception to that unbroken rule. And that exception was walking across to her, the smile on his attractive face deepening as he drew closer. Miss Marsh had orders that Richard Curtis Van Loan was to be admitted at all times, without question or quibbling. She had been told that even if her boss was in conference, he was to be notified immediately of Van Loan's presence.

The secretary thought this strange. But she never expressed any audible opinion. Besides being severe, she was smart. If Frank Havens wanted it that way she saw to it that he got it.

"Good morning." Van slipped the carnation from his lapel and dropped it neatly into the glass on her desk. "Mr. Havens inside?"

Miss Marsh thawed. Flowers did something to her, carnations particularly.

"Thank you, Mr. Van Loan. Go right in."

Frank Havens looked up from the editorials he had been studying when Van quietly closed the door behind him. A solidly built, substantial man with iron-gray hair and a patrician face, Havens had made his string of newspapers an important service to the welfare of the communities in which they were published.

THE *Clarion*, their leader, played an important part in Havens' crusade against crime. It was a weapon that he used on the side of justice. With it he struck at those who strove to defeat law and order, those enemies of society cloaked in the dim shadows of the underworld and, more often than not, the upper world.

To further his unrelenting campaign against the forces of evil, Frank Havens sponsored the fabled Phantom Detective.

It was he who had brought the Phantom into being. He who had been directly responsible for the debut of the most celebrated scientific detective of all time.

Dick Van Loan was well aware of that. He was well aware of other things as he went over and shook hands with the newspaper owner.

"Congratulations. Muriel told me you've kept the Polo Cup safe for another year. She said you played a great game yesterday." Havens nodded approval.

"It wasn't any single-handed victory." Van Loan pulled a chair around and sat down. "Westbury has a top team this season."

Havens looked at him curiously. Ten o'clock in the morning was rather an early hour for Van to be in circulation.

"What's on your mind, Dick?" he asked. "I'm sure this isn't a social call."

If his daughter had been puzzled about Van Loan's behavior the previous night at the Purple Lantern, she would have been startled by his answer.

"William Parish!"

Havens stared. "I don't understand. We had a late flash on his drowning. Some place down in Jersey. Odd, it should have followed so closely the death of his brother out in Michigan. But—"

"There's a daughter." Van spoke swiftly. "A Lyda Parish. Where is she?"

Frank Havens' quizzical stare grew more intent. His head jerked up as he said:

"It's strange you should ask. Steve Huston's on the way over to meet the boat that's bringing her back from abroad. She's been in Switzerland for the past six months. She's due on the *Regardia* at noon, today."

For a brief moment Van returned the publisher's stare. Then, abruptly, he said:

"I think the Phantom Detective—and you—should also meet that ship when it docks!"

Havens half arose from his desk chair. But his face had cleared. It was as if sudden understanding had struck him quickly.

"You mean—"

Van explained in a few rapid words and let himself out of the office.

When he left the *Clarion* Building he went directly to his lofty, Park Avenue apartment. In the luxurious suite where he resided as Manhattan's most eligible bachelor, he hurried through his lounge and living rooms and into the Napoleonic

bedroom, the windows of which looked into the sunny south.

A touch of a hidden button behind his huge, canopied bed folded back a section of the wall. Revealed was a windowless inner room. A room in which an amazing number of things that were hardly likely to be associated with the blasé tenant of the suite were contained.

The small, hidden room was a combined laboratory, arsenal and dressing room. There was a reason for its presence in the sky-high apartment, a reason linked with Van's early call at the *Clarion* Building that morning, with his interest in the deaths of the Parish brothers and the strange look that had appeared in his face and eyes.

This reason was a bond known only to Frank Havens and Van, a secret bond between them. It was almost unbelievable but Van Loan, besides being the popular socialite, was also another character—one so different from the other that the long time success of the combination had been largely due to its incongruity.

No friend of Van, close or otherwise, would have believed for a minute that in addition to being the gilded dilettante he played at, he was also the famous Phantom Detective!

YET, had any doubter been present, he soon would have been convinced. Swiftly, Van went to work to throw off the playboy characterization and step into the role of the world famed scientific detective he was.

Stripping off the flawlessly tailored suit, he selected another from his wardrobe. That was a dark blue, conservative and in keeping with the disguised face he sat down to create. Before the triple mirrors of the makeup table, Van used skin crayons, and shadow pencils with deft and professional ease.

In a matter of minutes the familiar face of Richard Curtis Van Loan had been replaced by that of a middle-aged man with heavy features, dark brows and a shapeless mouth.

Van nodded at his reflection, helped himself from the arsenal to a gun which he fitted smoothly into his shoulder holster. Making sure he had the other necessary tools of his trade distributed about his person, he stepped out of the hidden room and pressed the wall button again.

Dick Van Loan had entered the secret room—the Phantom Detective left it!

The private elevator, for which he paid well, took him down to the rear exit of the apartment house. Five minutes later he was two blocks up Park Avenue, waiting on a corner.

Fifteen minutes ticked away before Frank Havens and the blue Cadillac cut into the curb and stopped to pick him up. As he got into the car Van noticed the expression on the publisher's face. It was a strange, tense look, a kind of tightness and grimness that Havens seldom displayed. A look that drew the Phantom's brows swiftly together.

"Too late?" He clipped the question off brusquely.

Frank Havens nodded somberly. "The *Regardia* broke the world's record for an east to west crossing. She docked early. Steve arrived there when the passengers were coming out of Customs—just in time to witness the tragedy!"

"Tragedy?" The Phantom's tone was like the snap of a whip.

"Lyda Parish," Havens said, "was shot and killed on the pier!"

CHAPTER V

UNDER THE ROBE



AN'S disguised face shadowed. Thoughts flickered through his mind. To his trained, experienced brain, there had been something more than coincidence in the closely spaced deaths of the Parish brothers. Something that hinted of intrigue and mystery.

Something that had struck a warning chord within him when Havens had told him Lyda Parish was aboard the *Regardia*, returning to America.

His mouth tight, his nerves quivering with impatience, the Phantom counted the streets they passed on their way to the Hudson and Pier 800.

When they finally reached it, a glance was enough to show Van the usual hustle and bustle, following the arrival of an ocean liner, was curiously absent. No steady stream of passenger cars and trucks entered or left the long, covered finger of the steel pier that stretched into the river.

Its doors were shut, a cordon of police in front of them. On either side were police cars and in the foreground the official sedan used by Inspector Gregg,

the head of Homicide.

The Phantom was out of the Cadillac, with a hasty word to Havens, before the car had stopped. It took several minutes before he could get through the police guard and onto the pier.

There, escorted by a burly patrolman, the Phantom was led to where the grizzled Inspector stood, taking charge of the proceedings.

"Excuse me, Inspector." The patrolman coughed. "This party said he had to see you right away. Says it's important."

Gregg's harassed gaze shifted around to Van. He looked at him without recognition. Before he could speak the Phantom's fingers dipped into a secret pocket and came out with something he held cupped in his hand.

This was a small jeweled plate in the form of a tiny domino mask. To those who did not know its significance it meant nothing. But to the Law, and others in high positions all over the world, the glittering insignia was the Phantom Detective's personal identification.

The Inspector checked what he was about to say. His expression changed as he looked from the thing in the Phantom's hand to Van's disguised face.

Occasionally the Phantom found it necessary to cooperate and work with the New York police. As most of his cases dealt with crimes of violence, he had been thrown into close contact with the chief of Homicide. Inspector Gregg was one of the Phantom's admirers. He had the deepest respect for the man who, countless times, had stepped in when a case seemed stalled and hopeless, to take over and solve it brilliantly.

There was another reason why Gregg welcomed the Phantom's entrance to any case he was in charge of. The Phantom, working swiftly and silently behind a wall of secrecy, saw to it that the Inspector got full credit when the chips were down and the case cracked.

But Gregg was frankly puzzled. To meet the Phantom on Pier 800, minutes after his own arrival to investigate a murder, was little short of magic. But he never asked questions. He understood that the Phantom worked in devious and mysterious ways of his own. To Gregg it was more than enough that the Phantom was there, his identification badge glinting in his hand.

The Phantom wasted no time. Rapping out a series of questions he attempted to

get the murder picture in one comprehensive flash.

Gregg supplied particulars. The *Regardia* had docked one hour and five minutes early. The Customs inspectors, working with their usual rapidity, had finished with about half of the first class passengers when Lyda Parish, leaving the roped enclosure with its alphabetically arranged sections, had started to go across the pier toward the limousine where her step-mother awaited her.

FOLLOWING the girl, the Parish chauffeur, flanked by a porter, carried Lyda's hand luggage.

"She was just out of the entrance over there," Gregg explained, indicating a break in the roped enclosure, "when she dropped. Nobody heard a shot."

"Nobody would with the confusion on the pier," the Phantom said.

"The chauffeur thought she had had an attack of some kind. Or fainted. Until he, with several others helping him, picked her up. Then he saw the bullet hole. There was blood all over the front of her white blouse."

"She was dead?"

"Yes. A doctor in the crowd said she had been killed instantly—shot through the heart."

The Phantom's narrowed eyes shifted over the crowd. Plainclothes detectives as well as uniformed patrolmen had made a long line of the disembarking passengers off the luxury liner. Those who had come down to meet returning friends or relatives were squared off on the other side of the pier, under police surveillance.

Van's glance moved to the south side of the pier. Through openings in its steel walls he had a glimpse of the *Regardia's* twin, blue-starred stacks. He saw something else. That was a high balcony, or gallery, piled with baggage to be put aboard the ship for her return voyage to Cherbourg.

The Phantom's gaze ranged from the gallery to the entrance to the Customs enclosure which Gregg had pointed out. He moved his head as the Inspector continued:

"I've had the pier doors shut. Nobody gets out of here until they've been questioned thoroughly. Two of my best men are handling them. I hope to get a suspect before too long."

The Phantom didn't reply. Stepping away from Gregg he walked over to

where the body of Lyda Parish lay awaiting the arrival of the medical examiner. A lap robe from somebody's car had been thrown over her. A red-faced patrolman stood guard.

The Inspector gave the cop a nod that told him it was all right and the Phantom dropped to a knee beside the body. Van pulled the robe down. The face of an attractive woman, her eyes wide and staring, looked up at him. Rigor had not yet set in. There was still a faint, almost rosy flush on her smooth cheeks.

The Phantom studied the ominous red stain covering the left side of the crisp white blouse she wore under her smart gabardine jacket. She was younger than he had thought. Her hair was chestnut brown, the glazed eyes the same shade. She wasn't tall or short, stout or thin. A well proportioned woman in the early thirties.

He drew the robe back over her and climbed to his feet. The steel doors at the end of the pier rolled up to admit the Medical Examiner's car. It came in and the steel barricade was lowered again.

Almost at that same minute the Phantom caught a glimpse of a small, red-headed young man weaving a way through the crowd. It was the same Steve Huston Dick Van Loan had nodded to in the lobby of the Clarion Building earlier that morning.

Van cut across to him. He dropped a hand to Steve's shoulder. The reporter, startled by the grip of someone he couldn't remember having seen before, tried to twist himself free.

"What's the idea? I've got a press card!"

"I know it. Handy things to get you around, Steve—"

Huston stopped wriggling and stared into the unfamiliar face. The Phantom reached up and touched the lobe of his left ear. That was the old time identification signal that Steve knew so well.

"Phantom!"

Van led him out of earshot of several people who were watching curiously.

"I'm glad I found you. You can be a bigger help than the Inspector and his entire Homicide detail."

Huston swallowed. He didn't quite get the mechanics of how the Phantom happened to be on the scene so short a time after Lyda Parish had been fatally shot. Like Gregg, the reporter took the Phantom's presence there in his stride. But Steve was experienced enough to know



The Phantom hung on to the beam as the flood waters rushed through the mine (CHAPTER XXI)

a couple of things. One, that the murder had some grave importance, some significance that didn't appear on the surface. And, two, that this hidden import had been sufficient to enlist the services of the man who stood beside him.

"You mean," Steve said throatily, "you're on this case already?"

"I took it last night," the Phantom answered.

CHAPTER VI

LEAD

JUST by chance Steve Huston had been an eye-witness to the shooting. Standing back from the entrance to Customs waiting for the celebrities on his list to emerge and be interviewed by him, the carrot-topped reporter had been no more

than a dozen feet away from Lyda Parish when she had collapsed.

"She was facing the south side of the pier?" Van queried.

"Walking straight toward it." When the Phantom nodded, Steve jerked a thumb at a bulky, old-fashioned limousine parked some distance away from where they stood. "She was heading for that ark when the bullet got her. Her step-mother's over there. Mrs. Parish fainted."

The Phantom didn't seem to be paying much attention.

Once more his gaze shifted to the baggage-piled gallery.

"Let's take a look at that balcony, Steve. Any of Gregg's men been up there yet?"

"I don't know, I didn't see any." Steve caught the meaning behind the Phantom's words. "You think the gunnie might have

been staked out up there—hidden behind the baggage?"

"Could be. Let's have a look."

A flight of iron stairs, some distance down the pier, led up to the steel-plated ledge that overhung the pier below. No one was paying any attention to them when they went up the steps. With each one he mounted, Huston's pulses beat faster.

Innumerable times in the past he had helped the Phantom Detective on some of his most complicated cases. To Steve this slight aid on his part was a privilege and an honor. He felt sure that no one was closer to the Phantom than he. Such association had given Steve an opportunity to see a little of how the master-detective operated. He was always thrilled to be allowed the chance of helping out.

On the gallery, the Phantom moved past the high piled baggage until he was directly opposite the entrance to the Customs enclosure below. He stopped there. Steve saw his brows draw closely together.

Where they stood were several piles of wardrobe trunks, one atop the other. In between them were apertures to permit the baggage handlers space in which to work. These slits were a natural for anyone to aim a gun through. The Phantom, standing in front of one, had a full and perfect view of the spot where Lyda Parish had dropped.

His keen eyes roved over the steel flooring. But they saw nothing that claimed his attention. Inch by inch he examined the sides of the trunks, every nook and cranny where a gun might have been stashed.

He shrugged, turning to meet Steve's regard. Then he indicated a line of windows further down the gallery. They were of the slideback variety, used for both light and ventilation.

"The murder gun is probably in the mud at the bottom of the river. A perfect place to get rid of it," Van said, with a nod at the slightly open windows.

"But where did the killer go?" Steve asked.

"There was a lot of confusion?"

"Like Times Square on New Year's Eve."

"He could have faded back down the stairs and lost himself in the crowd. Or," Van added, "he could have done something else."

"What?"

But the Phantom didn't answer. With

a glance out the windows at the turgid river below he turned and went back down the stairs. The medical examiner was finished and Lyda Parish's body was being removed for the usual autopsy. Van saw that the lined-up passengers had nearly all been questioned and turned loose.

Slowly but surely the pier was being cleared, its functions getting back to normal.

The Inspector, near the steel doors, turned to meet the Phantom as he and Steve came up.

"I've got a suspect." Gregg jerked a thumb at a man in a gray tweed suit and felt hat who stood docilely between a couple of detectives. "Couldn't answer questions and is wearing a gun. A thirty-eight job, Smith and Wesson. I'm sending him downtown. Want to talk to him?"

THE Phantom shook his head. "No, that won't be necessary."

He might have added that Lyda Parish's killer wouldn't be walking around with the gun he had used still on him. He would have to be pretty stupid, Van thought, not to have figured the police would close off the pier and give those on it a going over before they were let out.

"I'll hold him on Sullivan until he does talk," Gregg said. "Any information I can give you?"

"I don't think so—not until the autopsy's in. Meanwhile," Van said casually, "I'll hang around here and watch the proceedings—what's left of them."

Huston noted the time and said, "I'd like to get my story in the next edition. It's front page stuff and I don't want it to cool. If you don't need me further—"

"I don't. But I will later. I'll get you at the office. There are several things I want to go over with you."

The redheaded reporter about to leave, stopped, gave the Phantom a frowning glance and said, "You know how Miss Parish's two brothers died—recently?" When the Phantom said he did, Steve added, "Would there be any connection between those deaths and—hers—today?"

The Phantom knew how Huston's mind worked. Already Steve was threading together a pattern for the story he was about to write for the *Clarion*.

"My guess is that there is a connection. But I wouldn't put that in print at the moment. Without definite and concrete proof—" Van broke off with a shrug.

Steve knew what he meant. The Phantom never dealt in speculations or theories without foundations. The little reporter hurried away and Van, taking up a position where he could watch the last of those in line checked out, let thoughts surge through his active mind.

Random ideas had fallen into place in the Phantom's mind, forming a clear picture. That picture meant someone in the service of Satan had striven successfully to wipe out the three children of Carver Parish! Someone who used subtle methods in the matter of the brothers, a diabolical-

The Phantom grinned. He sized up the other and was careful not to use any official authority to draw him out. McCabe was already belligerent.

"Maybe they didn't ask you the right kind of questions. Or try to help your memory along. All I want to know is who was stationed near the stairs that lead up that gallery overhead."

McCabe registered interest. "I was. But I've told your boys I didn't see any car or taxi duck out after the shooting."

"How about someone who might have come down from the gallery stairs and



Follow the Phantom on his most exciting trail when he combats a wave of juvenile crime in

THE CITY of DREADFUL NIGHT

By ROBERT WALLACE

Next issue's gripping complete mystery novel!

ly daring one where the returning Lyda Parish was concerned.

Some arch-criminal, the Phantom believed, who worked with sinister speed and devilish efficiency!

The steel doors went up—this time to stay. Trucks and passenger cars began to roll again. Stevedores went to work on the cargo in the hold of the *Regardia*. The Inspector's official sedan left for centre Street and the precinct squad cars sired away.

All at once, with the sunshine gilding the vast steel structure of the pier, the grim shadow of Death dissolved in the pulse-beats of returning life.

The Phantom spotted a small office on the street end of the pier. It was a few hundred yards away from the east flight of iron stairs that led to the baggage-filled gallery where he and Steve had stopped. Van went over to the office and opened its door. Two men turned to look at him as he pushed the door shut behind him.

Van showed them the Detective Bureau badge he always carried with him. It was a big help when he needed information. He flashed it briefly and turned to one of the two men.

"I'm Gray, Headquarters. What's your name?"

"McCabe . . . Listen, cop. I was questioned for twenty minutes. I don't know any more now than I did then."

ceased himself out before the steel doors were shut?"

McCABE looked at his companion. He turned back to the Phantom, his interest growing. "Yeah!" Seems like I do remember a guy came down the stairs from the balcony. When they questioned me before they didn't ask me about him."

"So a dame gets gunned," the other man in the office rumbled. "And they tie into us like we knew all about it."

"Shut up, Smitty," McCabe snapped. "This dick's different. He's not trying to strongarm us."

"What did the man look like?" the Phantom asked.

"Well, as I remember he was about as tall as you. Kind of thin and bony. He had his hat pulled down and, while he didn't seem in a hurry, he moved plenty fast."

"What color his suit?"

"Blue."

"Where did he go?"

"He cut across outside there." McCabe nodded toward the north side of the street and a part of it that was reserved for taxis when ships berthed at the pier. "He got in a taxi. That's the last I saw of him, but I know this. He was the last guy that got out before the doors were shut."

"Taxi?" The Phantom knew that on his next question hung the success or failure of the first move he made in the murder

drama. "You wouldn't know whose taxi it was? Private job or owned by a cab company?"

"Sure I know." McCabe cleared his throat. "It was Eddie Nolan's hack. He sticks around over there when one of the big tubs is in."

"Is that his cab?" Van asked, nodding at the single taxi at the stand.

"No." McCabe shook his head. "Chances are you'll find Nolan at the Stuyvesant Theater. He hangs out there most of the time."

The Phantom hopped the cab at the pier stand. He gave 45th and Broadway as his destination and settled back on the worn upholstery. He had a lead. How good it was, he knew, only time would tell. But at least, if McCabe had been right about the tall, bony man, his information was valuable.

In his mind's eye he reconstructed the murder. The tall man knew that Lyda Parish was aboard the *Regardia*. He knew what she looked like. To Van that was significant.

His thoughts roamed on. The bony man had picked the gallery for concealment. When his victim came through the roped enclosure below he had killed her. Then he had probably tossed the gun in the river, hurried along the gallery to the stairs at the street end and left the pier without difficulty or mishap.

As simple as that. The Phantom's mouth tightened.

On Broadway, in the early afternoon parade of pedestrians, sightseers and out-of-town visitors, he walked west toward the Stuyvesant Theater. That was midway down the street, across from a popular night spot known as the Silver Sleigh.

There was one cab at its hack stand. But it wasn't the one he was looking for. The cabby shook his head at Van's inquiry.

"Nolan? He ain't here. Off on a Brooklyn haul. Says he won't be back until around five."

Van scribbled one of Havens' phone numbers on a slip of paper. He folded it in with a five-dollar bill, giving it to the driver as he opened the door and got into the taxi.

"When you see Nolan hand him this. Tell him to call that number as soon as possible."

"I'll do that. You're going somewhere?"

"East River Drive," the Phantom said, supplying an address.



ON East River Drive stood a brownstone house, ornate and costly, and it was there that the Phantom Detective alighted. It was a pretentious home of the type millionaires built in the late Nineties and the early years of the new century. An imposing residence with its glimmering windows and wide English-copied entrance.

As he went up the front steps, Van, who had familiarized himself with the background of the Parish family, checked back mentally.

Professor Kurt Parish, William and Lyda, had been the children of Carver Parish, a millionaire mining operator whose Magnalux Gold Mine, in the Canadian Province of Saskatchewan, had been one of the most famous producers of the precious metal in that part of the world. From the mine had come the Parish fortune.

The Phantom's thoughts clicked as he pressed the front door bell. For some years the Magnalux had been closed and shut down. Shortly before Carver Parish's death the mine had petered out.

Van's thoughts changed. He let his mind dwell on Parish's widow. She had been the mining king's second wife, the step-mother of his three children. And Mrs. Carver Parish, the Phantom knew, had been a widow, herself, a Mrs. Marvin Maxon, when she had met and married Parish in Colorado.

As he recalled it, Van seemed to remember that the former Mrs. Maxon had had one child, a son who had died at an early age in Denver. With care and a real mother's affection she had reared her three step-children.

The door opened. A man in butler's livery looked coldly out at the Phantom. He was a nondescript character, with thinning hair combed carefully over a bald spot and a cast in one eye. His name was Allison and he gave Van a suspicious going over as he peered at him.

"I'd like to see Mrs. Parish."

"I'm sorry, she isn't seeing anyone today."

The butler began to close the door. Van put his foot against it. "She'll see me. Tell her I'm from Headquarters, that I have to

talk with her immediately."

He let the butler see his badge while he spoke. At the sight of it a change came over Allison. He opened the door wider, a muscle twitching in his smug face.

"Come in. I'll see what I can do. Wait here."

Van was ushered into one of the small reception rooms off the entry foyer. It was a charming room in French Provincial decor. But he paid no attention to his surroundings. Impatiently he waited for Allison to come back.

A tomb-like quiet hung over the big house. Faraway he heard a door open, a faint mumble of voices. There was little traffic in the street. The whistle of a tug-boat on the East River, nearby, made an eerie echo.

"Mrs. Parish will see you for a few minutes." The butler loomed up in the doorway. "Follow me."

Van went up a spiral staircase. A tremendous chandelier that looked like a frozen cascade of crystal reflected the ruddy tints of the sun coming through stained-glass windows.

Allison shuffled down a wide, deeply carpeted corridor when they reached the first landing. Paintings in shadow-boxes were along the walls. In an alcove, plants in terra-cotta boxes made a splash of color. The butler stopped at a door that stood slightly ajar.

"The gentleman to see you, Mrs. Parish."

The Phantom stepped past him and entered the room. His first impression was of lofty bookcases, the sweep of rich draperies drawn shut at the windows. The glimmer of golden light made by a pair of stately French lamps at either end of a leather-topped table. Then, as Allison shut the door behind him, his gaze focused on Mrs. Carver Parish.

SHE sat slumped in a carved, upholstered chair. A decanter of sherry was on a silver tray beside her. She hadn't changed much since the last time Dick Van Loan had seen her at some society function. She still remained a slight, good looking woman with bright blue eyes, a youthful skin and a touch of gold to her graying hair.

But no spark of her former vivacity showed in the tense face she turned toward him. She looked crushed, numb from what had happened on Pier 800 that morning.

"Don't take too much time or ask me too many questions." Her voice was as

dispirited as her glance.

"I won't." The Phantom pulled a chair around and sat down opposite her. "You realize how necessary it is that we get information to work on. I'll be as brief as possible, Mrs. Parish."

"What do you want to know?"

"Why did Miss Parish return from Switzerland?"

The woman slowly sipped the sherry in the glass she held. "Lyda had been away for several months. She wanted to come back—to me. She was homesick and lonesome."

The Phantom changed his line of approach abruptly. If he only had a little time in the bookcase-lined room he wanted to make the most of it.

"Do you know of any reason why your step-daughter should be murdered, Mrs. Parish?"

The blue eyes peered at him over the glass between her fingers.

"Of course not."

"Have you any enemies?"

"No, no! I realize what you're thinking. That—that Kurt and William—"

"Were also murdered!" The Phantom's voice was low, but vibrant. "You're surely not satisfied their deaths were accidental! You must know there was a conspiracy against Carver Parish's children!"

She put the glass down and pressed a hand over her eyes. A small, very white, shapely hand. Van heard the sob she swallowed.

"It—it's incredible! Kurt—then William—and now my Lyda!" She drew an unsteady breath. "Why would anyone strike at us?"

"That," Van said, "is what I intend to find out."

Quickly he asked a few other questions. They had to do with the estate left by Parish.

In a few more minutes he had the background he wanted. Carver Parish's millions had been left in trust for his three children. They were to come into it upon the death of the woman the Phantom talked with. If, however, she told him, they died before she did, the provisions of her late husband's will directed that she was to receive the estate in its entirety.

"Together with the Magnalux?" Van said.

"Yes." Her voice sounded tired, strained. "But it means nothing—my husband left me a settlement, more than I can ever use. Money, wealth?" Her voice grew

harsh. "What good is it with my three children gone?"

Again the hand went over her eyes. The Phantom got up. He waited until she rang for the butler. Then he thanked her and let Allison conduct him down the spiral stairs.

In the foyer, the man brought the Phantom's hat. The cast in his eye gave him an owlish expression. The muscle twitched in his face again. He looked surreptitiously over Van's shoulder and lowered his voice:

"If you're from Headquarters, I might be able to give you some information."

The Phantom put on his hat. "What kind of information?"

"About something that maybe you ought to know." Allison coughed, still avoiding Van's direct gaze. "Of course, I'd expect to make a little something out of it for myself."

"You want to be paid for your information?"

"Yes, sir. I've got a wife and family upstate. It's hard to get along these days. Anything I can make on the side—you know how it is."

THE Phantom pegged him quickly. The butler was a chiseler.

Yet, if he really did know something, Van figured he couldn't afford to overlook it.

"You tell me what you know and I'll be the judge of how much it's worth," he said.

Allison shook his head. "I'll have to meet you after hours tonight. Mr. Clyde, Mrs. Parish's lawyer, is due here any minute. Tell me where to come and I'll be there. Make it around eight-thirty or nine this evening."

The Phantom said, "Meet me at the Green Spot. That's a tavern on Times Square."

"I know where it is. I'll be there. Between half past eight and nine."

He opened the door and Van left the house.

In a drug store telephone booth, the Phantom called the *Clarion*. Frank Havens' voice came over the wire:

"The autopsy report's in. Lyda Parish was shot with a soft lead bullet from a thirty-eight caliber gun."

"One shot?" The Phantom asked.

"One was enough. It punctured the left ventricle of her heart, veered off and lodged in her back. She was killed in-

stantly. Gregg hasn't come up with the gun. He has a suspect he's holding, but Steve doesn't think that he's any too sure about him being mixed up in the pier murder."

"I'm expecting a telephone call from a taxi driver named Nolan," Van explained. "It's important. The minute you get it I want Nolan on tap. It should come in after five o'clock. Have Nolan and his cab meet me in front of the *Clarion* Building."

Havens said he would and the Phantom rang off.

He got the call at five-fifteen, at his Park Avenue suite.

There, deep in a copy of Taylor's *Famous Gold Mines*, the Phantom nodded when Havens said:

"Nolan and his cab are here now."

The taxi driver turned out to be a hatchet-faced, metropolitan-wise young man with a quick line of patter and an ability to cope with any situation. He looked the Phantom over quizzically when Van stepped up to his cab.

"Harry Brister said you wanted to see me. What about?"

"You picked up a fare at pier eight hundred shortly after the *Regardia* docked this morning?"

"That's right. Only I didn't pick him up. I took him there—him and some other guy."

The Phantom's mouth tightened. Two men!

He was careful to conceal his sudden flare of interest. In the same casual tone he went on:

"Where did they flag you?"

Eddie Nolan narrowed his eyes. "Look, I don't know what this is all about, but you're taking up a lot of my time. If you're a copper—"

Van thumbed a bill out of his wallet. Nolan's receptive fingers reached for it. He grinned and relaxed.

"They hailed me at Thirty-ninth and Madison. They told me to drive them up to pier eight hundred. When I reached it, one of them got out and went on the pier. The other guy sat in the cab and waited. About twenty minutes later the first one came back. He climbed in and they told me to drive them to Lexington and Fifty-third. I dropped them at the Plymouth Bar Grill on the corner there."

"Describe both men."

"The party who went out on the pier," Nolan said, "was a thin guy. Looked like

CHAPTER VIII

DEATH AGAIN

he needed a square meal. The other one was a big lug, well dressed. He wore a pair of dark glasses."

"Did you overhear any of their conversation?"

NOLAN shook his head. "They didn't talk much. In fact they didn't say anything."

"You'd know them if you saw them again?"

"I sure would. I don't forget faces."

"A little later," the Phantom said, "I want you to go down to Police Headquarters and look at the Rogues Gallery. What time will be convenient?"

Eddie Nolan whistled between his teeth. "One of them things, eh?" His hatchet face clouded. "A dame gets bumped off up at that pier. I'm riding a couple of sharpshooters, maybe? I can go down to Centre Street any time. Right now, for instance."

"Get going," Van told him. "I'll phone Inspector Gregg and tell him you're on your way. You look the photographs over and see if you can find any pictures to go with their faces."

A flash of worry showed in Nolan's shrewd eyes, "I don't want no publicity. That pair know my name and address. I don't want them calling on me with their shooting irons."

"No publicity," the Phantom promised.

Nolan shoved a hand in his pocket. The worried look had gone out of his eyes, another expression replaced it.

"Look," he said. "I wasn't going to say nothing about this. But I don't want to get into trouble. After those two got out at the Plymouth, I had to brush cigarette ashes off the rear cushions. I found this in the corner of the seat. I know one of them dropped it because it wasn't there before they got in. I always give the cab a gander after each passenger leaves."

He handed the Phantom something that glistened in the sun. Van found he was looking at a small, beautifully fashioned elephant encrusted with diamonds. It was the sort of trinket that might have come off a woman's bracelet.

He saw instantly it was worth a good deal of money.

A ring in the elephant's back had broken which explained why it had been left on the taxi's seat. The Phantom slipped it in his pocket.

"I'll take charge of this," he said to Nolan. "Get started."



IT WAS dusk when he entered the Green Spot.

The Times Square tavern, on the east side of Broadway, was one of the Phantom's meeting places. It had the advantage of being centrally located. Its rear room, with its convenient telephone booth, was seldom crowded. Those who dropped in at the Green Spot wanted a quickie. There wasn't much loitering around.

After he had sent Eddie Nolan, the cabbie, to Headquarters, Van had put in two calls. One to Steve Huston, the other to Chip Dorlan.

Now, entering the Green Spot and going through to its back room, a glance at his watch told him that it was only five minutes away from the time he was to meet them.

The Phantom nodded approval when he saw the room was empty. A juke box in the corner showed no rosy glow of light. The few tables were unused. An empty beer glass decorated the top of one. The Phantom set down the mild lime and selzer concoction he invariably ordered, pulling a chair around so he had a view through the door of the rear room, past the circular bar and to the front entrance.

He was hopeful of results. The meeting with Allison, the Parish butler, promised an interesting angle. What did the man want to see him about? What did Allison have to tell him?

The Phantom mused. Whatever it was, he felt it was important. That it hinged directly on the pier shooting. Van's brows drew together. He had reason to be satisfied with the slight progress made. The foundation had been laid. On it he was prepared to build the case of Lyda Parish's murder.

Chip Dorlan hurried in a few minutes later.

As with Steve Huston, Van gave Dorlan an identifying signal before he shook hands with him. Dorlan looked sharp and ready to go. For some time Dorlan, a former bootblack, had proved himself valuable to the Phantom Detective in previous cases which Van had tackled so successfully.

Chip, a product of sun-kissed Califor-

nia, was a native of San Francisco. Born in the slums there, he had had to fend for himself at an early age. Where most youths of more fortunate circumstances were in public or private schools, Dorlan had gotten his education in the hard university of experience.

But he had never regretted the fact he hadn't been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His early course in the classroom of Life had sharpened his wits to a razor edge. He had learned how to fight for what he wanted. He had developed a ferret-like cunning and leonine courage that he could never have achieved otherwise.

During the late war the Phantom had arranged for him to serve with Army Intelligence. In that branch of the service Dorlan had conducted himself brilliantly. He came back to the Phantom more poised, more mature, more eager than ever to render what aid he could in the Phantom's crusade against crime.

"The pier kill?" Chip said, when he sat down beside Van. "I saw Steve for a few minutes. He said you've taken over."

"I have."

"Any clues?" Dorlan's shrewd eyes brightened.

"This." The Phantom took out the jeweled elephant and dropped it in front of Dorlan.

Chip balanced the jeweled trinket on the palm of his hand. He listened while the Phantom told him the circumstances of how he had come by it.

"This cost plenty of dough. The diamonds aren't chips. They're of fair size and well cut. What do we do with it—use it for bait?"

"You," the Phantom said, "will advertise it in the lost and found column of the *Clarion*. Use your home telephone number, any name you want. You can do that without arousing suspicion. Anyone could have entered Nolan's taxi and found the elephant."

"I'll take care of it right away." Chip looked at his watch. "Too late to get the ad in for the paper's first edition tomorrow. It'll have to run in the later editions."

"You know what to do if anyone communicates with you."

DORLAN handed the elephant back. "Sure. Stall and find out who it is. Full particulars."

"One other thing," the Phantom added. "I want you to check the Plymouth Bar-

Grill. It's on Lexington—"

"I know it," Dorlan interrupted. "What do I do there?"

"Nolan says that's where he dropped the two men he brought down from the pier. Here's his description of them." The Phantom repeated the taxi driver's word picture of the pair. Dorlan let it soak in. "Try the barmen at the Plymouth. See if you can get any identifying line on the two."

"If they told the hackie to drop them off at the Plymouth," Dorlan said, slowly, "it would seem to indicate they're regular customers there. I'll circulate around and see what I can dig up."

He left after he had a beer and Van noted the time.

Steve was fifteen minutes overdue. That wasn't like the little redheaded reporter. Huston prided himself on his punctuality. The Phantom, when ten more minutes dragged by, began to get uneasy.

What was holding Steve up? Why the delay? He didn't like his plans to miscarry. He had purposely made his date with Huston early enough to have Steve briefed and on his way before the hour Allison was due.

One of the barmen stuck his head in the door.

"Phone call for you, Mr. Gray."

The Phantom took it on an open telephone around the end of the bar. Steve's voice came to him through the frosty clatter of a cocktail shaker.

"Sorry I'm late," Huston said rapidly. "Something turned up that I couldn't duck. I'm over on the East Side. Be with you as soon as I can find an empty hack."

"Make it as fast as you can," Van directed. "What held you up?"

"Murder!" Steve replied and clicked off.

He arrived fifteen minutes later. A glance was enough to show Van that Steve was bursting with news. His face was flushed and there was something enigmatic in his expression that made the Phantom look at him closely.

"Let's have it, Steve."

The reporter drew a quick breath. "You're not going to like it. It's about—"

"The Parish butler?" When Steve's head jerked up and an exclamation caught in his throat, Van said grimly, "Murder—on the East Side. It had to be important to keep you from your appointment with me. It was Allison?"

Huston nodded. The wonder in his eyes

faded. After all, he was accustomed to the Phantom's intuitive flashes and uncanny ability to come up with correct conclusions.

"Yes!"

"How did it happen?"

"I was getting ready to leave when the city desk had a jingle on a shooting near East River Drive. I thought I could cover it in a hurry and get down here without being late. When I got over there a couple of precinct cops had the man in the areaway of a private house. He was dead—shot through the throat. They were going through his clothes, looking for identification. I hung around until they got it."

"What else?"

"They found some letters in his pocket addressed to him in care of Parish. That's all I needed. I wanted to get the facts for you. But there weren't many. A girl who was passing said Allison had come around the corner and was halfway down the street when a car drew up beside him. She didn't hear a shot but saw a stab of flame."

"Silenced gun."

"Must have been. The car sped off—Allison lay in the gutter and the gal yelled for help. Took her five minutes to locate a policeman. Cop's name is Wasson and he's on a beat near Sutton Place. He rang for an ambulance from the General Hospital. No good. Allison had been killed instantly. Like—" Huston said, "—Lyda Parish this morning."

"The girl who saw the shooting didn't get the number of the car?"

"No. It was too dark and she was too excited. She couldn't even tell Wasson what make or color it was."

THE Phantom's narrowed eyes were the only indication of the setback to his plans. Behind them his mind worked fast. Someone had beaten him to the butler. Someone had made sure that Allison wasn't to keep his appointment at the Green Spot with the Phantom!

Whoever it was, Van realized, was part of the murder conspiracy that made Allison's death the fourth on their list. That was plain enough. What puzzled Van was how they had known where Allison was going when he had left the Parish mansion.

Had the butler talked? The killer wasn't any mind-reader. He had concrete and definite knowledge the butler was about to divulge something that had to do with



FRANK HAVENS

Lyda Parish's blackout on Pier 800. He had waited until Allison was a block away from the house where he worked. Then he had ended all possible chance of any information being passed.

Steve couldn't tell what the man beside him was thinking. The Phantom's expression remained unchanged. But the reporter understood that a crucial lead had been destroyed.

"I have a couple of things on the books for you," Van said, after a long minute. "I expect to be away from New York for a day or two. This will give you plenty of time to do a complete job."

He went on to explain that he wanted a full report on the closed-down Magnalux Gold Mine. This was to include a financial statement and summary of the assets and liabilities of the mine during the last year of its operation. Particularly, the Phantom pointed out, he wanted to know about the final quantities of ore mined in the Saskatchewan diggings.

Huston made notes in shorthand. Abruptly, the Phantom said:

"When you finish with that you can do some background work on Mrs. Carver Parish. You'd better tackle that first. I'll want it by noon tomorrow—before I leave."

"Mrs. Parish?" Steve whistled, surprised. He made it a rule never to express curiosity or to ask questions. But there was something in the abrupt way the Phantom mentioned the woman that made Steve say, "Do you think she has

anything to do with the string of murders—what happened to her butler to-night?"

"She's an angle," Van said, shortly. "I never overlook any angles, as you know. Mr. Havens can probably give you some data on her. I'm interested in her early life—when she was Mrs. Maxon and lived in Denver."

Huston said he'd get right after it and hurried off for the *Clarion* and his typewriter to put the story of Manhattan's latest murder in print.

The Phantom paid the bar check and stepped out and onto the light drenched pavements of Broadway. His mind was still full of Allison. People buffeted him as he started north, his idea being to walk back to Park Avenue.

The huge advertising pageant in multi-colored electricity fizzed and foamed like champagne against the dark curtains of night. The roar of the great thoroughfare made a throbbing symphony that wove traffic and pedestrians into its raucous theme. But the Phantom Detective hardly heard it and paid little attention to the fluorescent bonfire about him.

Suddenly he felt his nerves grow tight as some sixth sense, whetted on the sharp stone of long experience, telegraphed a rapid warning that he was being followed!

CHAPTER IX

PLANS



HE ANALYZED the certainty as he continued to walk along in the crowd. There wasn't too much mystery as to how his trail had been picked up. If those who had taken care of Lyda Parish, and Allison, knew the butler had an appointment with him, it was more than likely their information included the location of the rendezvous.

That brought the Phantom another question to ponder.

How did they know him? Where had they seen him before? How were they able to single him out and know he was the one Allison had left to meet? Van couldn't answer that—then.

At the same uninterrupted pace he went as far as the corner beyond before making an effort to determine who was doggedly tailing him. Whoever it was, the person was clever. He hung in Van's rear, following along with plenty of space be-

tween him and his quarry. If it hadn't been for the Phantom's unflinching ability to sense the presence of a shag, he would have been oblivious to him.

He wanted a look at the one drifting along behind him. His pulses quickened. He would never know now what Allison had wanted to tell him. That lead was gone forever. But in its place came a new possibility, a fresh hope. Nerves tightened, Van saw the flashing sign of the Eureka Bowling Alleys a street away.

He headed for them, walking faster. From the corner of his eye he noticed a stockily built man who wore a light tan felt hat, increase his speed. The man roughly pushed a way through the throng in such a manner that the Phantom's grim face darkened quickly.

The lobby-ramp to the alleys had a number of people going in or coming out. Without a backward glance, Van hurried up the cement, dodged sharply left, and drew in beside the high bank of spectator seats.

The dozen alleys were all in use. Duck-pins and the big wood thundered to the crash of bowling balls. A haze of tobacco smoke hung like a pall over the place.

The Phantom's head turned. His eyes fastened on the wide main entrance. The man who followed him had come in. Van was just able to see the light tan hat as it moved in an opposite direction.

Its wearer was looking for him.

For a minute or two more the Phantom stood motionless. Then, when he saw the hat at the far end of the first alley, he changed his position. Quickly he mounted a short flight of steps that led to the half moon of a shallow balcony used when tournament play was in progress.

Only a few people were in its seats. Van picked out a rear spot where the smoke-smear lights didn't center and let his gaze dart over those below him.

His tail was puzzled. The Phantom could see the stocky man circulating around, searching for a glimpse of him. He came into fuller view when he slowly perambulated back, behind the line of bowlers, score tables and standees.

The Phantom, eyes narrowed, studied the man. He didn't fit in with Eddie Nolan's description of the two taxi passengers. This man, in addition to being heavily built, had a bad, yellowish complexion. That was apparent to Van even from the distance separating them. He saw black, charcoal-like eyebrows under the hat's

brim. He wore a loosely fitting tweed suit, black shoes that needed polishing.

He evidently didn't know about the balcony. Or didn't think about it. The Phantom had a flash of the man's facial expression. Its look was more than puzzled. He was obviously trying to figure out where the one he had so carefully followed had vanished.

Finally, when he checked the onlookers



CHIP DORLAN

at the other end of the place, he had a new idea. He started off toward the north side of the building. Over there was the washroom, a couple of telephone booths. He entered the washroom, bobbing in and out without any waste of time. Then, after a glance into the booths, he entered one and pulled the door shut after him.

The Phantom knew what that meant. His tail was reporting back to someone. Telling him, no doubt, he had lost his quarry. Asking for further directions. The Phantom wished he was in the adjoining booth, listening to the conversation.

SINCE that was impossible, he decided on the next best thing. Waiting until the tan felt hat was in sight again, he descended the balcony stairs. He stopped on the last step, his shoulder against the cement wall. From that vantage point he

had a clear panorama of the lobby-ramp.

Two minutes passed before the stocky man hove into sight again. Now his brisk gait indicated he had given up the tail job and was going somewhere—in a hurry. Where that was, Van determined to find out.

He detached himself from the place where he stood and, skilfully, wove a way toward the pavement outside. He kept his gaze glued to the hat as it bobbed through the passing pedestrians. The stocky man was going straight for a taxi which had pulled in to discharge a sailor and his girl friend.

On the sidewalk, Van saw the taxi door slam shut and the cab pull away, all within the space of what seemed a few brief seconds. He sighted another cab cruising close to the curb and was about to hail it when an unsteady, red-faced man blocked his way.

"Got a match?" Alcoholic fumes blew in the Phantom's face.

The cab was going on. Van tried to get around the bibulous person in front of him, but the drunk had grabbed his arm and was hanging on.

"Didn't you hear me? I said, gotta match? Just one little match?"

The empty taxi was gone. The cab the stocky man had taken was out of sight. Annoyed, Van dug out a paper book of matches and shoved them into the gripping hand.

"Keep them. Burn yourself up!"

He had lost Allison's information as well as the chance to find out where the one who trailed him was going. But the double checkmate didn't discourage the Phantom. Back in his sky high suite, Van dropped down in a deep seated chair in his charming living room, the jeweled elephant in his hand.

He studied it again, moodily. Whoever owned it was in on the Parish murders. Who? The question repeated itself insistently as he watched the diamonds glitter in the mellow glow of the lamplight.

Sitting there, he sketched out his plans. Tomorrow he would have Steve's report on the Magnalux Mine, information on the former Mrs. Maxon, now the ex-social Mrs. Carver Parish. Ahead of him stretched the danger trail, twisting behind the dark curtains of intrigue, mystery and murder. . . .

It was Dick Van Loan, not the Phantom, who was dawdling in the foyer of the Breakfast Club, on one of the higher

floors of the Press Building, toward nine the following morning.

Van, apparently his bored and elegant self, nodded to a number of acquaintances. Then some of his surface boredom vanished when he saw Frank Havens get out of an elevator and check hat and topcoat.

The *Clarion's* owner greeted him with real surprise.

"Dick. What are you doing out so early? Nine o'clock. I didn't think you ever stirred before eleven."

That was for the benefit of anyone who might hear. Havens' gray eyes gave Van Loan a searching stare. He knew that Van could only be there for one reason. He had some news on the case he was involved with.

But if there were news, Van kept it to himself. When he sat down at the small table the publisher had a yearly reservation on, Van Loan's attractive face gave no indication of what was in his mind.

The table was far enough away from the others in the club to make their conversation entirely private. Havens started it with a trite question:

"No developments?"

"Plenty." Van's mouth compressed. "The butler's murder was a blow. He had something to tell me, something vital." He shrugged. "Learning what it was will take time now, valuable time. Any news from the Inspector on Allison's death?"

"Nothing. Steve told you about the young lady who saw the murder car but couldn't describe it."

VAN stirred his coffee thoughtfully. "They knew Allison was keeping a date with me."

"What does it mean?" Havens' voice was low-pitched and vibrant. "Four murders! What is their motive, their reason? What can possibly stand behind them?"

"I don't know—yet. But I intend to find out. The motive? It's only a guess, an intuitive flash—anything you want to call it—but I believe the Magnalux Gold Mine plays a big part in the murder plot."

Frank Havens widened his eyes. He was accustomed to surprises from Van. But mention of the closed Canadian gold mine came as a slight shock.

"How can that be possible? It would be different if the Magnalux were in operation and producing. It's been closed and out of business for some years. How can you fit that into the picture?"

Van shrugged. "It's only an idea." He

looked at the time. "I'm to see Steve and Dorlan at eleven. Later," he went on, "I'm leaving town on a short trip."

"Where to?"

"I'm flying out to Poma, Michigan. There's a chance that I might be able to pick up something there that will be important. I don't know how long I'll be gone."

"It's not like you to let a case cool," Havens pointed out.

"I'm not. In this instance, a temporary Manhattan respite might be beneficial. A criminal brain functions in a peculiar manner. When the pressure's on, it's keyed to a high pitch. It becomes clever, diabolically crafty, through the necessity of self-preservation. When the heat's off it relaxes. And when it does that it becomes careless and makes mistakes."

Havens understood what Van meant and nodded.

"So you're giving them a little rope? Anything I can do while you're away?"

"No. But there's something you can do right now." Dick Van Loan suddenly smiled. "You can order me another pot of coffee and some more toast."

CHAPTER X

FOUR HOLES



OR his morning meeting with his two assistants, the Phantom used one of the unoccupied offices in the *Clarion* Building. It was on the fifth floor and had formerly been the sanctum of the society news editor. He had complained about the lack of space and been moved to more commodious quarters.

Dorlan was waiting when the Phantom went into the office. Chip's sharp-featured, intelligent face wasn't too revealing. The former Californian said:

"The advertisement's in the lost and found column—as directed. That's okay. I wish I had something good for you on my checkup at the Plymouth."

"Draw a blank?" The Phantom sat down.

"Just about. I found a bartender who remembered the party in the dark glasses and his bony companion. But that's as far as it went. He couldn't give me any names or information. He said both stopped in occasionally for a drink. That's all."

The Phantom said, "It was an off chance. Don't feel too concerned about it. I'm hopeful the advertisement will bring better results."

He was still talking to Chip when Steve Huston came in. The redheaded reporter looked slightly weary. Getting the story of the Parish butler's murder on the front page, keeping Headquarters covered and doing the background work Van laid out for him, hadn't given Huston much time for shuteye.

He took a sheaf of typewritten papers from his pocket, holding them while Van asked if there were any new developments on Lyda Parish's murder.

Steve shook his head. "No. The Inspector admits he's up against a stone wall. One of those things. He didn't say it in so many words, but I know he's banking on you to pull his chestnuts out of the fire."

"What have his men been doing?" The Phantom sounded impatient. "Haven't they made any effort to find the car Allison's killer used last night?"

"They've been going around in circles." Huston made a grimace. "You'll have to admit it's pretty tough trying to locate one particular auto in a city full of cars. Especially when you don't even know what make or color it is. They're busy now—trying to get a break."

"Someone other than the girl who saw the shooting must have noticed the car."

"Sure. Gregg's working on that angle. He's got three men up on the East Side now trying to find other witnesses."

"That's my report?" The Phantom let the subject drop and indicated the papers Steve held.

"As much as I could get on the Magnalux—and Mrs. Parish."

"Thanks." Van spread out the typed information he had asked for and settled further back in the chair.

Huston, watching him, saw that he was no longer needed and quietly bowed out, closing the door behind him.

The Phantom was pleased with Steve's analytical reports. He went through them carefully, absorbing their contents. The information on the Magnalux was highly interesting. Out of it he filed two or three things he considered important in the pigeon holes of his keen mind.

Then he studied the research Huston had done on Mrs. Carver Parish.

* * * * *

Cy Silsby, Chief of Police at Poma,

Michigan, weighed close to two hundred and sixty pounds in his bare feet. A guileless looking, flabby man with a cherubic countenance, blue eyes and blond hair, he often found his appearance helpful in his official capacity.

People whose paths crossed his usually misjudged him. They figured Chief Cy Silsby was a lot of back without much brain. They didn't know that beneath his girth and cheerful demeanor was a shrewd, astute mind, as calculating as an adding machine. They found that out, to their dismay and sorrow, after a short session with Silsby.

Late in the afternoon of the day Dick Van Loan had breakfasted with Frank Havens, Silsby sat in his swivel chair in his Poma office, perspiring as he invariably did. It wasn't hot, the temperature had nothing to do with the perennial dew that dampened his brow and the palms of his soft, pudgy hands. For as long as he could remember Silsby had sweated, summer in and winter out.

Crime in the college town hadn't raised its ugly head for a long time. Outside of a freight car break-in at the railroad yards and a caper staged by some of the students at Treadwell, when they had removed the statue of the Civil War hero from in front of the library, to give it a new location, events had been smooth and placid for the Chief and his deputies.

SILSBY yawned, belched quietly and looked at the old-fashioned clock on the wall. He was wondering what Hattie, his good wife, had in the oven for dinner, when Jake Blade, his second in command, opened the office door and looked in.

"Party to see you, Cy. All the way from New York. Says his name is Gray."

Silsby blinked. He didn't have many out-of-town visitors from points as far east as the city Jake mentioned.

"What does he want?"

"To see you. Wouldn't tell me nothing else."

Silsby used a damp handkerchief to mop his brow and frowned. "Send him in. Make it quick. I've got to get home. You know how Hattie is when I'm late for dinner."

"Yeah, and I know how you are," Jake said.

A minute later the door opened again and a man came in. Silsby swung around in his swivel chair. There was nothing

outstanding about his caller. That was, nothing in his appearance or manner to make him register. Yet, as the fat Chief met the man's eyes, he had the feeling that this stranger had some dynamic quality revealed only in his gaze.

It was something that was like a challenge to Silsby, something that quickened his interest and made him alert. Something that made him forget about his approaching dinner hour and the sarcastic tongue of his spouse.

"Gray?" Silsby climbed to his feet. It was like a mountain rising. He gave his caller a clammy hand. "I'm Silsby, Chief of Police. Sit down and tell me what I can do for you."

"First," his visitor said, "I'd better properly identify myself."

Once more the Phantom reached in his secret pocket and produced his jewel-studded domino mask plate. If he had any doubts about Chief Cyrus Silsby, of Poma, Michigan, recognizing its significance, they vanished at the sudden gleam in the mild blue eyes and the flare of interest and surprise in the bland, moon face.

"*The Phantom Detective!*" Silsby's low, taut voice was incredulous.

Van returned the badge to the hidden pocket and dropped into the chair Silsby indicated. Unlike the culprits who were hauled in before the Chief, the Phantom realized that behind the man's soft exterior was a smart mind and a lot of capability.

Reading character at a glance was one of the Phantom's talents. More than once it had proved to be a valuable asset when he was on a case. He met the blue eyes and said:

"My plane got in a half hour ago. You probably have an idea why I'm here."

"Must have something to do with the murder of the Parish girl I've been reading about." Silsby mopped his face again.

"That's right. I'm interested in the death of Professor Kurt Parish."

Silsby shook his head. "Nothing there to give you any leads—if that's what you have in mind. I know what you're thinking. That maybe the Professor's death wasn't an accident."

"You believe that it was?"

"I'm sure it was. I went over the whole thing carefully. Everybody makes mistakes, but I don't think I did when I wrote it down as being an accidental death caused by carbon monoxide poisoning."

The Phantom said, "In any event, I want to probe around a bit." He glanced over at the clock. "This must be close to your dinner hour. I don't want to hold you up. Suppose you tell me where the car is that Parish's body was found in. I'll take a look at that and see you later this evening."

"I guess I can skip dinner—if it means helping you," Silsby said. "Excuse me a minute while I phone Mrs. Silsby. Be with you right away."

HE MADE the call and put a worn felt hat on over his blond hair. Then he spoke to the wide-eyed Jake who, stunned, hardly heard what Silsby said as he watched the Chief and Van go out into the twilight.

"Well, what do you know?" Blade exclaimed, to himself. "First dinner the big porpoise has missed in seven years!"

In the street, Silsby and Van walked three blocks east and one south. That brought them to a rickety, wooden building. A sign over it read, **THOMAS WALKER'S GARAGE AND REPAIR SHOP**. Its doors were open and inside a man sat sleepily in a chair tipped back against a white-washed wall.

Silsby nodded to him. "Where's the Professor's bus, Pop?"

"Outside in the lot." The man looked at Van speculatively. "Customer?"

"Parish kept his car in the garage back of the cottage he lived in on Lake Road," Silsby explained, leading the way around to the south side of the place. "The faculty rented it to the man who took his place and Pop Walker brought the car down here. It's for sale."

"You checked it?"

"Me? Heck, no." The fat Silsby shook his head. "I don't know anything about cars. I had Jed Tucker look it over and make the report. He said the heater was defective, that it leaked exhaust fumes. Here's the car, right here."

He stopped beside a dark green 1936 Lincoln-Zephyr.

The Phantom's pencil flashlight slipped into his hand. He opened the right side front door and let its slender beam rove over the dusty, old fashioned hot-air heater under the cowl. He didn't spend much time with the heater.

Tilting up the hood, Van continued his investigation, down around the engine.

Watching, Silsby couldn't see what he was doing. He got a screwdriver when

the Phantom asked for one, handed it over and waited while Van worked for a few minutes more.

It was too dark to see the expression on the Phantom's face when he finally straightened up. But Silsby jerked to attention when he heard the flat, hard note in the other man's voice.

"Where's the mechanic who checked this car?" Van asked. "I want to see him."

"Something wrong?" Silsby's blond brows shot up.

"Just as I thought," the Phantom said, "this car's been tampered with!"

"Tampered—"

"The carbon monoxide fumes that killed Professor Parish didn't get into it by accident," Van's voice stayed flat and brittle. "Four holes were bored in the heating unit mounted on the manifold—to let the poison fumes seep into the twin pipes that fed the hot air to the heater!"

CHAPTER XI

TUCKER TALKS

POLICE Chief Cy Silsby took a step closer to the car. What the Phantom said rang in his ears. He reached for his handkerchief to mop his face.

"Are you sure about that? Tucker said—"

The Phantom's flash went back to the engine. Silsby leaned over the fender to see better. Van had disconnected the two pipes that curved up from the heating unit he had mentioned to a plate on the partition behind the motor.

Though Silsby didn't understand automotive mechanics, he was able to see the four round holes that had been drilled in

the corrugated top of the unit. The pipes leading to the heater fitted over them. The holes were large enough to let an ordinary lead pencil slide through them.

"I think," Van said, "we'd better see Tucker!"

He lowered the hood while Silsby went back to the garage. In the shadows Van's face was grim. The discovery he had made was not unexpected. As he had suspected Kurt Parish's murder had been the first of four killings, carefully planned, diabolically engineered.

But there was more to it than that. The Phantom walked toward the garage when he saw Silsby come out of it.

"Pop says Tucker took the tow car to bring in a broken axle job down the Benton Highway. He ought to be back in a half hour."

"I'll wait," Van said. "Why don't you go home, get your dinner and come back later?"

Silsby said he'd wait. All at once the stout Chief felt a twinge of worry. It wasn't going to do his reputation any good if the County Attorney found he had slipped in his examination and findings in the matter of the Professor's death.

Silsby thought about the mechanic he had entrusted the job to. Jed Tucker was a local boy who had worked for him before. Pop Walker trusted him, so did everyone else.

Silsby asked himself how Tucker could have made such a mistake. He glanced at the man beside him. What was the Phantom going to do about it?

It didn't take Silsby long to learn.

Ten minutes later the tow car came down the street. Behind it was a jacked-up sedan. It turned into the space where the Lincoln-Zephyr coupe stood. A slender young man in grease-stained khaki

[Turn page]

HEADACHE
UPSET STOMACH
JUMPY NERVES

RELIEF!

THANKS TO FAMOUS
BROMO-SELTZER

Millions turn to Bromo-Seltzer to relieve ordinary headache three ways. It's famous for giving fast, pleasant help. Caution: Use only as directed. Get Bromo-Seltzer at your drugstore fountain or counter today. A product of Emerson Drug Co. since 1887.



pants and flannel work shirt cut the motor and climbed out.

He was halfway around the back of the tow car when he suddenly saw the blurred figures of Silsby and another man in the gloom.

Tucker straightened up as the Chief spoke to him:

"Come over here, Jed. Somebody wants to talk to you."

Tucker wiped his hands on his pants and moved slowly forward. He couldn't see the stranger with the Chief clearly. He peered at him quizzically.

"What are you doing out so late, skipper?" Tucker tried to make his voice pleasant. "Missing your dinner?"

"This gentleman's a New York detective. He wants to ask you a few questions."

"Yeah?" Tucker shifted to the defensive. "What about?"

"This car," the Phantom said.

"What about it?" Tucker's tone tightened.

"The Police Chief gave you the job of looking it over," Van said. "He wanted a report on how the carbon monoxide fumes got into the heater. You told him the exhaust was old and defective—that it leaked."

"That's right."

"The exhaust isn't defective and it didn't leak! Four holes were deliberately drilled in the unit! Why didn't you report that?"

Tucker swallowed. Peering at him, Silsby's worry grew. He waited anxiously for the mechanic's reply.

It came belligerently. "I don't know nothing about any holes!" Tucker rasped. "If you found them, they must have been put in later!"

"Don't lie!" The Phantom's hand moved out and gripped Tucker's shoulder. "You knew they were there! You were probably the one who put them there!"

HELD in a grip of steel, Jed Tucker began to breathe hard and fast. He looked around wildly, as if for an avenue of escape. The Phantom moved in closer.

Silsby said, "You'd better tell the truth, Jed! Aiding murder makes you an accessory! You'd better come clean."

Suddenly the mechanic's resistance melted. The Phantom yanked him forward and pushed him up against the side of the coupe. Tucker choked when Van snapped:

"Lock him up, Silsby!"

"No—wait! I—I'll tell you the truth! I didn't drill those holes—"

"But you know who did!" The Phantom's statement was like the snap of a whip.

"I—I didn't know about them when he—when he first propositioned me. That was the morning after they found the Professor dead."

"Who propositioned you?" Van's grip on his shoulder tightened again.

"The guy staying at the Eagle Inn. It was right after the Chief here gave me the job of examining the coop. I was in the shop. He came in and got me aside. He asked me how I'd like to make a hundred bucks."

Tucker stopped and ran his tongue over his lips.

"For doing what?"

"Telling Silsby the exhaust was defective, that it leaked. He said I shouldn't bother to look the jalopy over. That if I said what he told me to, he'd slip me the cash."

"What did the man look like? What was his name?"

Tucker winced at the fingers clamped on his shoulder. He drew a gusty breath. "I don't know his name. I don't know anything about him! He was kind of stockily built. His face was yellow and he had black eyebrows. They looked like they were painted on, with ink."

Van let his shoulder go. Stockily built, yellowish skin! His mind flashed back to Broadway, to the Eureka Bowling Alleys and the tail who had worn the light tan hat.

"So you took his hundred and followed his instructions," the Phantom continued. "But you were curious, so you looked the heating system over and you found the reason for Professor Kurt Parish's death. You found it *wasn't* accidental!"

Tucker nodded numbly. "Yeah. Then I—I got scared. It was a couple of days later and—and the man had left town. I figured if I told Silsby my goose was cooked! I'm going to get married next month and—"

"You'd better handle this from here on," Van told Silsby. "Where's the Eagle Inn?"

He left the cringing mechanic with the fat Chief of Police and went back to the street.

Poma, he saw, was a typical small college town. Along the way were the usual

assortment of smoke shops, cafeterias, book stores. When he reached the campus of Treadwell University he stopped for a minute to look out over the lake. It lay like a silver mirror in the light of the rising moon.

The same moon, Van remembered, that Kurt Parish had liked to watch as it came up over the rim of the eastern world.

Three more streets and he entered the Eagle Inn. That was a small, white, wooden edifice that stood well back from the sidewalk. At commencement and prom times it did its largest business. Now, as the Phantom entered its lobby, he saw only a few guests at its bar.

An elderly clerk listened to what he had to say and consulted the records.

"I recall the person you speak of," he said. "He was here for only two days." He found a date in the register and let his finger stop beside a scrawled signature. "This is it—Arthur Conway, Oklahoma City."

THE Phantom nodded. "He was alone?"
"Yes."

"Do you remember if he had any telegrams or long distance telephone calls?"

"I couldn't say."

"If he made calls," the Phantom said, "you'd have a record of them."

"Yes, we should."

"Look them up. I'll wait." Van stepped away from the desk and picked up a Detroit newspaper.

While he glanced through it he caught a glimpse of the clerk sorting through a batch of memoranda and bills taken out of a large letter file. Now and again the man shot a glance over at him. The Phantom knew what he was thinking. That it was nervy of a stranger to walk into the hotel and order him around.

Yet, there was something in the visitor's attitude that told the clerk he'd better comply with the request. He didn't know what it was but it was there—something authoritative, that commanded respect.

"I have it!"

The Phantom discarded the paper and went back to the desk. "What did you find?"

"Conway made one long distance call. To New York. Here's the number and time."

He handed the slip over and Van, studying it for a minute, copied the figures in his own memo book. The exchange was Endicott; the number would be easy

enough to trace.

"I'll take a room for tonight," he told the clerk.

It was on the second floor, spacious and comfortable. The Phantom sat down on the bed and reached for the telephone.

A few minutes later the familiar far-off voice of Frank Havens drifted across the wire.

"Any news from Centre Street?" Van asked. "What happened with Nolan, the taxi driver? Did he recognize any pictures in the gallery?"

"No. Likewise there are no new developments," Havens said. "When do you expect to return?"

"From here," the Phantom told the publisher, "I'm making a quick trip to Denver." He added, succinctly, "I should be back in town by Wednesday."

"Denver?" Havens sounded surprised. "What do you expect to do there?"

"Study ancient history," Van replied, and a minute later rang off.

CHAPTER XII

TWO CALLERS



PON leaving the airline's sedan that had brought him from La Guardia Field to the Forty-second Street Terminal, he headed straight for the *Clarion* Building.

There, in Havens' sumptuous office, Van said, "The Denver stop was purely review. That is Mrs. Carver Parish's home town. Steve got me a lot of background information on her when she was Mrs. Maxon. I sifted through it and checked on the salient features."

Havens looked interested. "What did you learn?"

"Mrs. Parish was formerly a Cynthia Brackett. Her mother was a music teacher in Denver. She was eighteen when she married Marvin Maxon. He was a prospector, or claimed to be. They had one child, a son. People I interviewed said the boy died a year after Maxon passed away somewhere in Wyoming."

"Where did she meet Carver Parish?"

"In Colorado. That was before Parish opened up the Magnalux in Canada. He had silver mine holdings out West. The Silver Queen and the Bison Basin Mines. Parish made his first strike in silver. But that was only a drop in the bucket com-

pared with the Magnalux's profits."

Frank Havens settled further back in his desk chair. "Why did you check Mrs. Parish's early life so carefully?"

"I'm sure," the Phantom said, "the murder of Carver Parish's children is the result of roots planted a long time ago. I have to have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the family's background, and particularly Mrs. Parish's. I'm confident my visit to Denver will pay off before the case ends."

"Still nothing from the Inspector." The newspaperman shrugged. "Gregg's completely stalled."

"So am I," Van admitted frankly. "The trip out to Poma brought merely a verification of what I suspected. I did get a line on a telephone call made by Kurt Parish's killer. You might ask Steve to check it for me."

He scribbled the number in the Endicott exchange on a sheet of pad paper and gave it to Havens. Then, getting out of his chair, the Phantom called Chip Dorlan on one of the desk phones.

Chip presented himself at the office some fifteen minutes later. But with no definite leads.

"Not a whisper on the ad about the jeweled elephant," he said. "Nothing so far."

"Keep the advertisement running," Van told him. "I have a feeling you will get a call on it. These people are smart. They're letting the pier shooting, and the butler's murder, cool before resuming operations."

Dorlan left and a few minutes later the Phantom went on back to Park Avenue.

There had to be a break in the unwinding mechanics of the quartet of murders. He had told Havens that he, like the Inspector, was stalled. But that was a condition the Phantom intended to alter without delay.

Frequently, in the cases that engaged his attention, he had found himself temporarily stymied. It was at such times that the test of the real criminologist had to be met. Openings had to be created, trails found, a wedge hammered into the blank wall, an aperture made.

Van's plan was to drive that wedge.

A few short blocks distant was the garage where he kept his cars. They stood on the main floor, ready for immediate use at any time of the day or night. The Phantom paid well for this service and also for the absence of curiosity on the

part of the garage owner.

That individual believed that the one who stored his cars in the building was some sort of Government agent, connected with the Secret Service or FBI. Which, he was sure, explained the various disguises his client affected. But that was none of his business. And he made sure that his employees kept their mouths shut.

QUICKLY the Phantom got in under the wheel. He rolled out into the street. A few minutes later he was headed for the Holland Tunnel.

The car he drove was deceptive. It looked like an expensive foreign job, but every part of it had been manufactured in the United States to conform with his plans and specifications. The motor was multi-cylindrical with a cast aluminum block and a compression rating higher than any other engine of its size and horsepower. The body was bullet proof, so was its glass. The controls of a compact, two-way radio were at his fingertips.

In addition, the rear of the car was designed for the Phantom's purpose. The back of the front seat contained a built-in makeup table, lights. Under the rear seat were several changes of clothing. Another compartment held guns and ammunition.

In the heavy traffic of Route 1, when the sleek, purring car emerged from the under river tube and came out on the Pulaski Skyway. Van drove carefully but swiftly south. He was pondering deeply. Ideas, plans that were nebulous at first began to take shape. In his mind's eye he tried to visualize the motive behind the string of Parish deaths.

He had told Havens he was convinced the murder plot was deep rooted in the past. The killers must have waited a long time to get their victims. Were there more on the list? Van's face hardened to stone.

It was mid afternoon when he reached Point Avon. He smiled faintly as he remembered the last time he had been there with Muriel beside him and a yellow moon painting the lazy river. This errand was different. As on his trip to Poma, he hoped to find something, no matter how slight, useful in the work that lay ahead of him.

At the post office he got Jeremy McClintock's rural free delivery address. The place to which the old sea captain had retired was some three miles down

the river. A neat, freshly painted picket fence fronted a small white cottage. A giant larch on the front lawn shaded its porch and, stretching away on one side, was the most complete small truck garden the Phantom had ever seen.

He parked the car near a covered well and got out. A shaggy brown and white dog roused itself and came over to sniff at him. The larch made shadows on the lawn. In the distance a red barn nestled in the lee of a hill.

Van used the knocker on the half-open front door. While he waited for someone to come and answer it he had a glimpse of the living room inside. Of a brass ship's clock ticking on a mantel, flanked on either side by beautifully made models of full rigged four-masted schooners.

The nautical touch was furthered by the prints of old sailing ships on the walls, the framed route chart of the Indies and various souvenirs McClintock had brought home from his trips.

An elderly, sour-looking woman came through the day gloom from a rear room. Her hair was arranged in a knot at the back of her head, her sharp featured face wore an annoyed expression. She carried a tablecloth she had evidently been mending.

Van's sharp eyes noticed the thimble on one finger.

"I'm looking for Jeremy McClintock," he said.

"He's around somewhere. Probably up in the barn. Spends most of his time puttering there."

"You're Mrs. McCintock?"

"I should say not!" The woman sniffed. "I'm Miss Macy, his housekeeper."

The man the Phantom had first seen at the Purple Lantern the night after the polo match was at his workshop bench in the barn. McClintock, his snowy head bent over a jig-saw, was doing some wood working when Van went into the red barn in the lee of the shop.

A dirt road ran past it, twisting around some stone walls where lush meadows spread. A few chickens wandered apathetically about and another dog, black this time, dozed under a mulberry bush.

MCCLINTOCK stopped the saw and turned around when he saw Van come in. His weathered old face lighted with a smile.

"Noticed you coming up from the



STEVE HUSTON

house. Angie tell you I was here?"

"Miss Macy directed me."

"That's Angie—sourest female the Trade Winds ever blew on." He chuckled. "Want to see me about something?"

"My name's Gray. I'm a detective, Homicide, New York." The Phantom slid his badge into view as he clipped his words off short.

"About time somebody outside of the local dumbheads down here looked in." The old man's blue eyes turned speculative. "You want to talk to me about that feller they found in the river—and the boat?"

"The boat, principally. I understand you have it."

"That's correct. Seiter—he's our sheriff, as maybe you know, didn't want it. Said I found it—it was mine, that I had it trucked up here. Sort of had an idea sometime somebody might believe that that Parish feller *didn't* tumble overboard and get drowned."

"I'd like to see the boat," the Phantom said.

"Happy to show it to you. I don't know how you heard about me having it, but I reckon that's part of your business. This way."

Leaving the workshop, the old man led the Phantom across the barn and down a narrow flight of stairs. At one time the lower portion of the building had been a series of stalls. These had been removed. A sliding door opened on a grassy expanse close to the curb of the dirt road.

It was gloomy down there. McClintock

pulled the wooden pin out of the door's fastening and pushed the door back to let in some light.

"There she is. Just like she was when I found her drifting off the Point."

The Phantom turned to look at the Cape Cod dory McClintock had on blocks beside one wall of the barn. It was the kind of boat used up Gloucester way. A soundly built, sturdy craft, able to withstand a heavy sea and a stiff wind. It was painted white with dark green trim.

The Phantom studied it silently. He walked around it slowly. "What made you suspicious? Why do you think that Parish was murdered?"

Jeremy McClintock pointed to the middle seat. He lighted a match and cupped it in one leathery hand. On the seat Van saw faded, almost obliterated marks that might have been stains.

"When I found her," McClintock said, "those marks were red. They looked like blood to me. When I told Seiter, he said they were paint."

The Phantom nodded. It was impossible to take a specimen now. He looked at the middle seat. The edge of that had been broken recently. The raw wood, showing through the paint, had not yet weathered.

The old man noticed what Van was staring at.

"There was a piece of woolen material caught on the splinters there. And Parish," he observed dryly, "was wearing cotton slacks when they fished him out."

"What did the sheriff say about the wounds on Parish's head?"

"Seiter said he got them from rocks while he was floating around. But," McClintock added, "they could have been made by a blackjack."

He was adding more details, when the Phantom raised his head. Outside a car had stopped. He was conscious of it because the countryside had grown quiet after the whirr of the motor he had heard.

The sliding door went back, making a space large enough to admit two men who, abruptly and suddenly, stepped into the barn.

Both, the Phantom saw as he swung around, were armed and one was familiar.

"Stand still and don't make a move!" the short, stockily built man in the light tan hat ordered curtly.

The automatic in his hand covered Van while the gun his companion held pointed menacingly at McClintock!

CAPTURE



NOTIONLESS, nerves tightening, the Phantom's glance shifted from the yellowish face of the stocky man to the sunken, cadaverous features of the tall, bony individual a step behind him.

The second man had ginger colored hair, a sneer on his misshapen mouth. A single glance at him was enough for Van to tie him in with Eddie Nolan's description of the passenger he had waited for at Pier 800.

"What's the meaning of this?" McClintock demanded, angrily. "Who are you two fellers and what do you want?"

"Take it easy, pop," the thin man advised. "You'll last longer."

The other man let his gaze roam over the Phantom. A glint of venomous satisfaction was in his hooded eyes. The Phantom's brows drew together. How had they pegged him? How had they known he was coming to Point Avon?

He was sure no one had followed him from the garage in New York. The traffic had been heavy coming down, but he hadn't been aware of any suspicious car hanging in his wake. He had his answer when the stocky man spoke again:

"Looks like we got ourselves a bonus, King. We come down to have a chat with Barnacle Bill and look what we stumble into!"

King's gaze shifted from McClintock to Van.

"Meaning?"

"The party who shook me the other night at the bowling alley! The one the boss is so interested in! The same gumshoe he promised wouldn't bother us!"

The sneer faded from King's lips. A look of wonder replaced it. The gun in his hand moved unsteadily for an instant. As if, the Phantom knew, strained nerves had vibrated under the impact of what his pal told him.

"You're telling me he's the—"

"Yeah! In person!"

McClintock said, "You can't get away with this! I'll have the law on you both!"

Still without moving, Van sized up the situation swiftly. It was not his custom to stand idly by and play clay pigeon for his enemies. The guns on display didn't worry him much. He could out-think and

out-shoot them at any given time.

For purposes of his own, the Phantom elected to stand docilely by and await developments. At last there was a faint crack in the blank wall. The entering wedge had made an indentation. But it had to be driven deeper. More light on their plans had to be admitted.

For that reason he made no move to test his skill against theirs. Often in the past a waiting game paid off in the end where sudden and quick action would have failed.

"Let's see what you're wearing in the line of sudden death."

The man with the yellow face dipped a hand in under the Phantom's coat and came out with Van's automatic. He pocketed that while Jeremy McClintock watched with wide eyes.

The bony King said, "Pop's clean. He couldn't hide a water pistol in that scenery. What do we do now, Leland?"

The blaze of triumph in Leland's eyes was like a fire. He answered, "I'm just deciding. I think we'll run these two down the line away. Hold them until we find out what Sartain wants done."

"That means easing them out to the car." King sounded worried. "How about the dame in the house?"

"She can't see the road from there." He included both Van and the old sea captain in his next remark, "Look, you two! We're going to give you a jaunt in our car. My friend here drives and I'll sit in front, facing you with this heater. Don't get any notions or think I wouldn't use this gun if you tried anything! A dead cop," he added, for the Phantom's benefit, "is the only kind I like!"

"I'll take a squint around outside," King volunteered.

Leland's automatic moved in a slow arc from Van to McClintock and back while King stepped out of the day gloom and into the sun.

"Isn't there anything we can do about this?" the old man fumed.

"Apparently not." The Phantom's voice was nonchalant.

"Outrage! You're not safe on your own property! Give me the sea every time! On a ship a man—"

"Shut up or you'll get more sea than you ever saw!" Leland snarled.

KING came back. "Nobody around, not a car in sight anywhere! Let's go!"

"You chaperone the old guy," Leland

directed. "I'll take charge of this party." He moved closer to the Phantom, edging around behind Van. "All right—start walking."

The car was a two year old sedan with a New York license. Still compliant the Phantom sank down on plastic seat covers. Breathing brimstone, Jeremy McClintock dropped beside him. The old man's complexion had turned from an angry red to a violent purple.

King crawled under the wheel and Leland, turned around on the right front seat, rested his gun on the top edge of the slipcover.

He pulled the door shut with his free hand. "Keep to the back roads. Not too fast. I wouldn't want any of these Jersey gendarmes stopping us."

The Phantom relaxed as the car moved off. Sartain? The name Leland had let slip echoed in his mind. He must be the chief conspirator, the murder master who had plotted and given the orders for the four deaths!

Now, apparently, his own fate was to be decided by this Sartain. Van's disguised face shadowed. He hoped this "trap" which he had allowed to close about him would give him an opportunity to meet Sartain face to face.

While the car rolled along the lonely back road his principal concern was for the white-haired old man beside him. He knew how characters like the two in the car reacted when annoyed. And McClintock was the type who would continue to speak his mind until, to silence him, Leland might use the gun as a permanent muffler.

McClintock started again, when the barn was about a mile behind them.

"A couple of smart alecks! Working a land Shanghai! You'll pay for this—"

He stopped when the Phantom's shoe struck his ankle.

"I wouldn't argue," Van cautioned. "These men deal in murder. They're the ones who took care of William Parish!"

McClintock's mouth opened. Startled, he looked from Van to Leland's yellow face and jet brows. He tried to say something, but choked and coughed.

"We took care of Parish and we'll take care of him if he don't turn off that line of chatter!" Leland growled. "I'm sick of listening to him!"

The Phantom answered nothing and, as if realizing the peril of his predicament, the former sea captain lapsed into moody

silence. But, Van was able to see, McClintock wasn't frightened. The gun almost in his face, and the knowledge that he had fallen in with men who wouldn't hesitate to kill him, didn't intimidate him or diminish his belligerence.

Two more miles and the car turned off the back road. It went between trees, following a rutted, overgrown roadway that ended at the dilapidated, wooden pile of what, in a happier day, must have been a summer hotel.

The Phantom appraised it with interest. The place was literally caving in at the seams. The shingled roof, sun scorched and curling, had holes in it. Most of the windows were minus glass, the porch sagged disconsolately at one end and had collapsed entirely at the other. Its three

been made to the one they called Sartain. Van waited for their next move.

It was a long time coming.

The afternoon waned. The sun dropped down behind the trees. Bird calls sounded through the lengthening shadows.

King took over while Leland left the lobby and busied himself somewhere in the back of the dilapidated building. To the Phantom's relief, Jeremy McClintock had subsided. The peppery old sea dog, in a broken chair, dozed with folded arms. The smell of dank decay and dry rot was sharp on the stirless air.

Leland came back with three kerosene lamps. He placed them on the remains of the desk.

"No trouble?" he said to King.

The tall man's perpetual sneer turned

The Man Behind The Padlocked Door

A complete crime novelet by **PETER REID** coming next issue!

stories, hemmed in by the trees, presented a melancholy picture of desuetude.

McClintock evidently knew the place. "Woodland Villa!" He sat up straighter.

King stopped the car when a fallen tree blocked further progress. Leland said, with an attempt at sardonic humor, "Let's go in and register. Then we'll try the bar," before he ordered his two passengers out. To King, he added, "You'd better drive into town and get a call on the wire. Make it fast."

King backed the sedan while Leland, forcing the Phantom and McClintock on ahead of him, crossed the space to the remains of the porch steps. Decaying boards creaked and swayed under Van's feet. He followed McClintock into the clammy wilderness of what had once been the hotel's lobby.

MOLDY furniture still remained. Lounges with gangrenous growths. A patternless carpet that oozed moisture. Broken lighting fixtures hung drunkenly from the cracked walls and bulging ceiling. It was a perfect setting for an Alfred Hitchcock nerve shaker.

"Sit down." Leland gestured with the automatic. "Make yourselves to home. King'll be back soon and then we'll all have tea."

The cadaverous King returned about twenty minutes later. He nodded to Leland when he came in. The Phantom took that to mean that the telephone call had

to an ironic smile. "Like a couple of sheep."

The Phantom could have finished the statement with a "ready for slaughter." But there was no expression in his face. He sat relaxed, watchful and thoughtful.

The darkness came after a short twilight. Leland lighted the lamps. He did sentry duty while King went out to the car. The bony man came back with two bottles of beer and a bag of sandwiches.

They had finished their snack, tossing the bottles and bread crusts back of the desk when Leland's head jerked up.

"Listen!"

The Phantom had heard a noise a full minute before the stocky man's exclamation. It was the sound of tires on the rutted road and the low throbbing of an automobile engine. King gripped his gun firmly. He exchanged a look with Leland.

"I'd better take a gander."

He slid out. McClintock's eyes opened. He stirred restlessly, as if sensing the long wait was about over. Still the Phantom remained outwardly indifferent. But his nerves were keyed to a high pitch. Expectancy gripped him.

The car stopped outside. King's voice drifted in, mingling with that of the new arrival. A minute passed before Leland's pal came back.

A man walked in behind him.

The Phantom's gaze darted to the newcomer, riveting on him.

Sartain?

CHAPTER XIV

TINDER



GLANCING swiftly at the man who followed King into the lobby of the crumbling Woodland Villa, the Phantom saw he was tall, well built. Rippling gray hair showed under the brim of the smart hat he wore. Dark glasses covered his eyes and, the Phantom saw, his thin-lipped mouth was tight.

A neat, well tailored gabardine suit fit his tall figure without a wrinkle. Polished shoes reflected the lamplight. The white of shirt collar and cuffs stood out in the murk beyond the rays of the two lamps. There was a poise to him, a sureness in his movements.

With a brief nod to Leland, the man's quick gaze shifted from McClintock to the Phantom. Van couldn't see the expression in the eyes behind the dark glasses. But he was aware there was a sudden stiffening of the tall figure, an abrupt tenseness.

The Phantom matched it as his own nerves whipped to attention.

This was the man he wanted! Facing him was the brains of the murder plot! A yard away stood the one whose sinister cunning had struck down the three heirs of Carver Parish!

Adding the name of Allison to the trio of murders, Van didn't have to be dramatic to understand this character, suave and well groomed, was a servant in the employ of the Devil!

"So you found him?" Sartain's tone was velvet-smooth. "Nice work."

Leland said, "I figured we'd catch up with him sooner or later."

Sartain bent forward. The thin lips mirrored a faint smile. The Phantom's glance lingered on the man's mouth. In the lamplight he saw what looked like a small purple dot near the left corner of the lower lip. A broken blood vessel or, Van knew, a hereditary mark handed down from a past generation.

He filed the purple mark away in the back of his memory. Sartain, without raising his voice, said:

"Sometimes it doesn't pay to be clever. You can overplay it—the same as you can a bridge hand. And then, strategy backfires. As in your particular case."

The Phantom shrugged. "Possibly. This case," he said, "hasn't ended—yet."

"It has, so far as you're concerned. It might interest you to know you've never had a chance from the first. I've been perfectly aware that Mrs. Parish knew Frank Havens. And that it wouldn't be long before Havens waved his magic wand and brought you to life. I prepared for that emergency—successfully, as I think you'll agree."

"Allison's murder interests me," the Phantom said, bluntly. "I've left the investigation of it to Headquarters. What did he do—talk out of turn? You must have had a plant in the house on East River Drive."

Sartain's smile disappeared. "Allison was a fool. The butler thought he'd make some quick cash, selling you information. You're right about the 'plant.' Like all fools Allison talked too much."

He moved his gabardine shoulders and turned back to Leland.

"What do we do now?" the stocky man with the yellow face asked.

"I promised you that I'd take care of this individual," Sartain said. "Tie them both up. Then I'll explain further."

King took Leland's place. The stocky man in the light felt hat went out to the car. When he came back he carried a length of thin bowline. A glimpse of it was enough to arouse the old sea captain's slumbering ire.

"You'll pay for this!" he bellowed. "It's your turn now—mine's coming!"

"It's here!" Sartain's voice, for the first time, had a vicious, evil note in it. "Lash them securely, King. This has to be for keeps!"

The bowline cut in half, King went swiftly to work. He fastened the arms and wrists of the fuming McClintock, tying them behind the old man before he gave his attention to Van.

THE Phantom made no resistance. Like McClintock, his own arms were pulled behind him and bound tightly.

"You can do the same thing with their legs after you've walked them upstairs," Sartain told King.

The Phantom realized he was playing it close. Much too close for mental comfort. But he believed that a complete show of surrender represented the best bet.

He had his chance—before the bowline wrapped around his arms and wrists. Normally, the odds against him wouldn't have stopped the Phantom. More than

once he had faced greater danger and overcome it. But then he had been alone, with only himself to consider.

Now he was responsible for McClintock's safety. And, handicapped by the old man, Van had realized the chances of getting himself and the other out of the lobby alive were slim.

Sartain gave King and Leland a nod and the stocky man's gun nudged Van.

"Stretch your legs. We're going upstairs."

Lamp in hand, King led the way. Behind him, McClintock walked heavily. The Phantom followed the old mariner, Leland behind him. The one who wore the dark glasses brought up the rear.

Shaky stairs threatened collapse. But they held while King's lamp scorched the shadows of the landing above. He went down a corridor, stopping before the only door that didn't sag.

"In here!"

Once more Leland's automatic dug into the small of Van's back. A knee gave him a forward shove. King had set the lamp down on a warped chiffonier, the only article of furniture left in the room they entered.

Its glow fell on leprous wallpaper, peeling from cracked plaster. Shutters had been nailed across the broken window. The musty smell of desolation and desertion caught in the Phantom's throat.

King completed the job, again handling McClintock first. Legs and ankles fastened by the line, the bony man put the heel of his hand in McClintock's weathered face. He pushed and the old man crashed to the floor.

King laughed, turning his attention to the Phantom. In the doorway Sartain watched with interest. Van ducked the upsetting hand and dropped to the carpetless floor.

"That looks well folded in and neat enough," the man with the dark glasses commented. "Suppose we lock the door and leave them to their meditation."

King picked up the lamp and the three went out. The door banged shut behind them. A rusty key scraped in a rusty lock. Footsteps died out on the shaky stairs.

Several minutes elapsed before the Phantom heard the cars outside being started. The lapse of the ticked off minutes worried him. What had detained them that long? It was not likely they were walking out of the Woodland Villa with-

out making certain they were closing off all means of escape for the two in the second floor room.

Tugging at his bonds, the Phantom's narrowed eyes tried to pierce the blackness of the shuttered room. Gnawing worry ground through his brain. What Sartain had done so far was too easy. The man with the smoked glasses was too sadistic, too steeped in murder to walk carelessly away and leave his victims to a doom the Phantom could circumvent.

There must be more to Sartain's plan. More, he thought, than this simple situation. *What?*

"Now," Jeremy McClintock said, as the engines of both cars accelerated and then grew rhythmic, "all we've got to do is get loose and send the authorities after those fellers!"

The Phantom didn't answer. Instead, he drew several quick breaths. A significant odor, faint at first but increasing with every passing second, came sharply to his nostrils.

The smell of burning wood!

An electrical thrill sprayed through him. Sartain's pause downstairs hadn't been for nothing! The meaning of it was apparent as a crackling sound struck the Phantom's ears.

SPARTAIN had ordered a match struck to burn down the abandoned hotel!

The building was a tinderbox. A quart of gasoline, or a kerosene lamp spilled on the floor, was all that was needed to start a bonfire which, with the wind as a bel-lows, would burn the place to the ground in a roaring conflagration!

"Fire!" McClintock's exclamation of alarm rose above the crackle and snap of the fire below.

The Phantom swung around to him, clambering from the floor as he heard the ex-sea captain pull himself erect.

"Pay attention!" Van's tone was sharp but quiet. "We've got to get out of here—fast. Back up to me!"

McClintock kept his nerve and head. Now the heat of the inferno below made the floor hot under their feet. But the old sea captain, as self contained as if on the deck of a fire-filled ship, followed out the Phantom's hasty instructions.

He backed up to Van. The Phantom turned his back. Van's fingers touched the sleeve of McClintock's coat. He backed up another few inches. Now his fingers came in contact with the line lashing the

old man's wrists.

The Phantom's fingers were like steel. Playing over the line they found the slip knot King had made. They dug into the bowline at that point like talons. He braced himself while he put all of his superb strength into the task of breaking the line.

Sweat broke out on his grim face. He tugged at the knot relentlessly. The heat of the room increased, but he was hardly aware of it. Every ounce of power at his command flowed into his wrenching fingers.

Finally McClintock's lashings gave. The old man wriggled out of them.

"Got a knife!" he gasped. "Right here in my pocket!"

"Use it quick!" Smoke began to billow into the room. "Hurry!" the Phantom cried. "Get your legs free and then cut me loose!"

Choking, McClintock's knife hacked away the rope that held his legs. Another eternity that passed within a fleeting round of seconds and the Phantom's blood circulated again in his arms and legs.

He grabbed McClintock and made a dash for the door. Getting it open was no problem. It crashed from its hinges at the first powerful thrust of his body. He dragged McClintock out into the corridor, dazzled by the red, leaping glare of the inferno rapidly spreading along the hall.

The corridor ended at the south side of the building. And there, when the Phantom reached a gaping window, he found a corroded fire ladder.

With little time left, he helped McClintock over the sill and got him on the rungs of the ladder.

Then, following, he went down it as a gust of choking smoke and whirling sparks flamed from the window he had left!

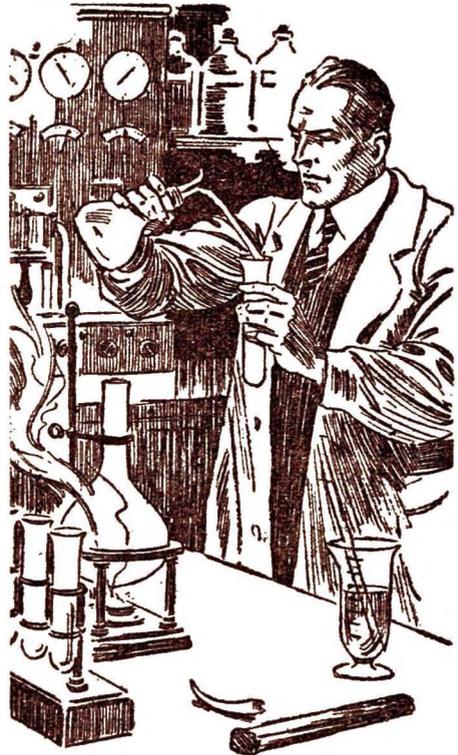
CHAPTER XV

CHIP GOES INTO BUSINESS



LIGHTING the night sky like a giant ruddy torch, the fire was bringing spectators to its scene. Out on the rutted road Van saw the stab of headlights approaching. Further away he heard the wailing siren of fire apparatus.

Holding Jeremy McClintock's arm he moved back into the darkness beyond the



RICHARD CURTIS VAN LOAN
as DR. BENDIX

incandescent glow of the building they had so narrowly escaped from. Van searched the space where the fallen tree lay.

There was no sign of the car he and McClintock had been brought there in. Or that of Sartain. He smiled thinly. The man in the dark glasses hadn't taken any chances of being stopped and questioned. By this time both cars were probably well on their way back to Manhattan.

Van's companion knew a short cut through the woods that led back to the main road. As they went along it the Phantom had a couple of things to explain.

"You've got to keep undercover," he told McClintock. "We were left for dead. We've got to stay that way."

"Huh?"

"This fits in perfectly with my future plans," Van continued. "I risked what we went through for a reason. That reason is the man who wore the dark glasses. He's responsible for the deaths of the three Parish's. He's the murder master—the one I have to get! Reaching him will be that much easier if he thinks his plot worked successfully—that we, like the hotel, are a heap of ashes!"

"I understand." McClintock chuckled under his breath. "I guess you don't want me to set my course for the farm."

"Haven't you any place where you can stay temporarily—out of sight—hidden?"

"Yes. I've got a brother in Pennsylvania. I haven't seen him for quite a spell. I owe him a visit."

"This," the Phantom said, "is the time to pay it."

Cars rushed past them along the road. The breeze in their faces was pungent with the reek of burning wood. The Phantom walked faster, the man beside him taking another short-cut that led back to his farm and the car the Phantom had left there.

"I'm going to take you to town with me. You'll be the guest of Frank Havens, the newspaper publisher, until you're ready to leave for your brother's place in Pennsylvania. Naturally, Miss Macy, your housekeeper, can't know anything about it."

"Joke on Angie." McClintock chuckled again. "She'll think I've gone back to sea, like I've threatened whenever she nags me. She'll probably tell Seiter I've disappeared. But that's all right. The sheriff couldn't find a barnacle on a binnacle if he had it smack before his eyes!"

Twenty minutes more and they reached Jeremy McClintock's farm. There were no lights in any of the windows. The old man said, "Gone to bed without even bothering to leave a light for me! Wimmen!" he snorted. "I'll take a ship any time!"

The Phantom's car was where he'd left it. The engine made little more than a whisper when McClintock was on the seat beside him and he backed cautiously down the driveway.

Still no light showed in any of the windows. Without being stopped by the acidulous voice of the housekeeper, they reached the road.

Just before the Phantom snapped on the headlights he glanced out of the rear window. The red glow in the sky behind them was only a yellowish, sulphurous tint now. . . .

With Jeremy McClintock tucked away safely in Frank Havens' New York house, the Phantom was on the job early the next morning.

His trip down to the Jersey coast had not been entirely wasted. The meeting with Sartain made him understand he was crossing steel with one of the most

astute, intelligent and ruthless killers he had yet encountered.

Sartain believed the Phantom had perished in the Woodland Villa fire. Presuming he had a free field now there would be no limit to his exploitations. That was what the Phantom wanted. He intended to take full advantage of the break.

FIRST, Van altered his disguise a trifle. A clever touch of a skin crayon here and there, a different twist to his mouth, a new slant to his eyes and the face he had created earlier became the countenance of another man.

A complete change of clothing and the Phantom hurried off to meet Chip Dorlan. Their rendezvous was in Bryant Park, on a bench close to the Public Library.

Chip led off with, "Here's the dope on the telephone number Steve checked for you," after the Phantom identified himself.

The piece of paper he handed Van read, *Seagate Restaurant, Broadway, 75th Street.*

The Phantom looked at it with a frown. So that was the Endicott call number Leland had long-distanced from the Eagle Inn at Poma. He glanced up at Chip.

"I dropped in awhile ago," Dorlan said. "The guy that runs it is a Greek. He didn't remember any long distance call. Or," he added, "he couldn't place the two men the hackie described."

The Phantom switched to a new subject. This was a plan that he had been mentally preparing since his return from Michigan.

"I'm going to put you in the brokerage business, Chip."

He went on to explain rapidly. Frank Havens owned the Paragon Building on lower Broadway. There was an empty office on its seventeenth floor, furnished and with a telephone. Chip, under the name of Clinton Gurney, was to open for business there immediately.

Dorlan, puzzled, listened intently.

"What's the angle?" he queried.

The Phantom gave him an advertisement he had composed, mentioning that it was to be inserted in the financial sections of all Manhattan's newspapers.

Chip read what Van had typed. It said:

CLINTON GURNEY
Odd Lot Specialist
Currently Offering:
1200 Atlantic Can
1500 Magnalux Gold

1000 American-Alaska
650 General Oil
Suite 1710 Paragon Bldg.

"Magnalux Gold!" Dorlan nodded. "I get it! That's the bait!"

"If the mine plays as important a part as I think it does," the Phantom said, "you'll get action on that before long. The idea, of course, is to do some top stalling when anyone inquires about the fifteen hundred shares of Magnalux. Communicate with me, through Mr. Havens, the minute you have a nibble."

"Right. What about the elephant ad? Shall I keep it running?"

"Yes. And see Mr. Havens right away about your new office in the Paragon."

Chip hurried away and the Phantom satisfied his plan would soon be working took the subway uptown for a look at the Seagate Restaurant and a word with its Greek proprietor.

But, as it had been with Dorlan, the Greek supplied no information. He was either playing it smart or really didn't know anything.

* * * * *

Richard Curtis Van Loan, tall, handsome and sleekly turned out in dinner clothes that accented his slim physique, sat on the terrace of the Landlubbers Club, a cool lime and seltzer within reach.

Opposite, Muriel Havens, her white evening gown a pale blur in the dusk, tapped time to the rhythm of the band inside. Muriel's starry eyes were full of dreams. She couldn't remember when she had been happier. To-night everything seemed to combine to make her spirits soar and her pulses beat faster.

The Landlubbers Club, whose members were an exclusive group of Blue Book names, was housed in a modernistic, three story building above the turgid crawl of the East River. It was located in a neighborhood not far from the famous Parish mansion.

LISTENING to the music, Van's mind wandered from the awninged terrace, the girl opposite and the moonlight on the river. A restless impatience filled him. He couldn't remember any case the Phantom Detective had taken that was so barren of results as this latest one.

The sinister Sartain, his killings for the moment concluded, had apparently evaporated into thin air. Van believed he knew now how Inspector Gregg felt when a case bogged down and left him sus-

pending in mid air.

Watching Van, Muriel pursed her vivid lips.

"The most peculiar thing has happened, Dick," she began. "Remember the other night when we had dinner at the Purple Lantern?"

Van knew what was coming and braced himself. "Yes, of course."

"You pointed out a quaint old character. Said he looked like something out of one of Joseph Conrad's sea stories."

"I remember. He also made the ship models in the bottles that you looked at. What about him?"

"He's been a guest at *our* house!" Muriel said. "He left this morning—to go to Pennsylvania."

"Really?" Van tried to sound surprised.

"I've been wondering," Muriel continued, "if you knew anything about Captain McClintock."

"Why should I know?"

"I've had the queerest feeling," Muriel said, "that you did. I don't know why. Perhaps because you've been hiding out the last few days. And Dad has been secretive about you whenever I asked what you were doing."

Van looked at her narrowly. Her questions were getting a little too close for comfort. Muriel combined beauty with brains. The one thing that Van Loan had always guarded against was arousing her suspicions that, behind the easy, carefree life he led as Dick Van Loan, might be a queer, puzzling something that would make her delve deeper to find an explanation.

He dissembled quickly. Giving her arm a hug, he said in his most casual tone, "If you must know the truth, your father and I are about to launch a stock-market deal. I'm disposing of certain holdings, under his advisement, to buy something more lucrative. It has to be done with care, so the prices won't be affected. And I'm afraid Wall Street is on to our plans."

"Oh, money!" Muriel wrinkled her tip-tilted nose. To Van's relief her expression lost its suspicion. She laughed. "Isn't anyone ever satisfied with what they have? Why do they always need more—and more?"

"With the price of living as it is," Van said, "the word 'enough' has been erased from the English language!"

They joined the others on the polished floor, Van breathing more freely. But his peace of mind, so far as Muriel was con-

cerned, was not to last too long.

The dance was hardly over and they were on their way back to the terrace when one of the club servants stepped up to Van.

"Telephone, Mr. Van Loan."

Van excused himself, aware of Muriel's glance, and entered the booth in the foyer on the floor above. He pushed the door shut, expectancy beginning to tingle within him.

"Hello?" Van suspected who it was before Havens answered. Only the publisher knew where he and Muriel were.

"Dorlan has some information for you!" Frank Havens spoke tersely. "He wants to see you immediately."

Van's brows went together. "That's going to be difficult, breaking away from Muriel. Something has made her slightly suspicious. I've gotten her over it, but to break away now isn't going to do me any good. Unless," he added, "you handle it."

"You mean—"

"Think of something that will take her home. And you'd better think fast."

A minute passed. Then Havens said, "Ask her to come to the phone."

Van hurried down the stairs and went out to the terrace. "It's your father, Muriel. He wants to speak to you. Says it's important."

Her conversation was brief. When she hung up and emerged from the booth, Van Loan saw her pretty face wore a look of disappointment.

"Isn't that the darnest thing. I've got to leave. And just when I was having such a good time. Do you mind very much, Dick?"

"Orders is orders!" He shrugged. "I'm disappointed, too. But no matter. There are other nights on the calendar. Get your wrap and I'll have the starter bring the car around."

THEY were across Park Avenue when Van, soft-pedaling his real curiosity, carelessly asked the reason for their return trip. Muriel laughed under her breath.

"Dad wants to go through some accounts. They're in a trunk in the attic and he can't find the key. Wouldn't you know he'd have to pick tonight to start rummaging around. And I haven't the faintest idea where the keys are. It'll probably take until morning to dig them up." She sighed, "Oh, well, as you say there will be more nights, I hope."

"A lot more," Van whispered.

At the Havens' home, he said good-night to Muriel who hurried upstairs. The owner of the *Clarion*, seeing him to the door, made sure no one was listening when he spoke quickly:

"Chip's at the Green Spot—waiting. I told him you'd be there as soon as possible."

"Thanks. I'll make it speedy." Van said, "You don't know what it's about?"

"No, but from his tone," Havens said, "it's evidently important."

Twenty minutes slid by before the Phantom was back in disguise, out of his sky-high suite and on his way to Times Square. Hope kindled in him as the taxi took him across town. Two days had gone by since Chip in the role of Clinton Gurney, Odd Lot Specialist, had opened for business in the Paragon Building.

Now, Van told himself, the masquerade was about to bear results. It must be that!

It was the theater-clocking hour along Broadway. Crowds filled the pavements. The traffic was a glittering stream bound north and south. The Phantom paid his cab driver and, dropping off at the corner, hurried to the tavern whose back room he used so frequently.

He found Dorlan, a beer in front of him, watching the door impatiently. Chip relaxed a trifle when the one he had been waiting for joined him and sat down.

"Just got your message through Mr. Havens," the Phantom said. "Somebody's after the stock?"

Chip shook his head. "No, not yet. This is the elephant ad. Believe it or not, I've had a nibble on it from a dame."

The Phantom leaned closer. "Give me the particulars."

Dorlan said that a few minutes before five that afternoon the woman who managed the boarding house where he rented a furnished room had called him to say a Miss Delson had telephoned in reference to his advertisement in the *Clarion*.

"Mrs. Smith—she's my landlady—told me the Delson party had left a telephone number for me to call. It was the Margrave Apartments on West End Avenue."

"What did she say?"

"That the jeweled elephant was hers. She lost it off a bracelet. I'm to see her tonight, between midnight and one o'clock, at a night spot called the Silver Sleigh. Know it?"

The Phantom nodded. The Silver Sleigh,

a popular resort, was across from the Stuyvesant Theater and the cab stand where Eddie Nolan usually parked his taxi.

"Vaguely. I've never been in it. You told her you'd be there?"

"Yes. Her full name is Suwanee Delson. She's one of the entertainers. She wants me to stop around at her dressing room after she finishes the late show."

"Good." The tingle the Phantom had felt on his trip across town grew. "We'll both keep the appointment, at the same time but separately."

"But what about the elephant?"

"Tell her you didn't bring it with you. You wanted to make sure she was really the one who lost it. Ask her to give you an identification—the size and shape, kind of jewels and so forth. If she can identify it, and will pay you a substantial reward, you'll meet her tomorrow and turn it over to her. That's the line."

"Sounds good," Chip said, with a glance at the electric clock. "We'd better stick around here for a half hour longer."

THIRTY minutes later Dorlan entered the Silver Sleigh. He was greeted by the hot licks of a noisy band, a blast of tobacco smoke and a rumbling monotone of voices, clink of crockery and applause that told him the late floor show was still on.

Fortunately, the Silver Sleigh wasn't one of those places where a reservation was necessary. The management had a policy of never turning any patron away. Somehow they were sandwiched in.

A headwaiter who looked like an expugilist, particularly around the ears, gave Chip a crooked smile when he came from behind the smoke screen.

"Single?" When Dorlan nodded, he said, "This way, mister."

Chip followed him down a center aisle, dodging waiters en route. A small table tucked in a corner proved to be his destination. He was seated, a wine list shoved in his hand and left to his own devices.

Dorlan looked at the lighted triangle of dance floor. To do that he had to peer over the heads and shoulders of those at the tables between him and the performers. He caught a glimpse of a line of curvaceous girls hoofing to the beat of the band. Girls, Dorlan saw, whose costumes were intended for tropic climes.

He moved his glance, looking for the Phantom. Van had told him not to bother about him. Dorlan relaxed, remembering his instructions.

Finally a perspiring waiter got around to take his order. Chip made it a fancy drink and said, "Suwanee Delson been on yet?"

"Next number." The waiter shuffled off.

The dancing girls clogged off and the lights turned to deep purple. A small white piano was wheeled out from behind the band's dais. There was a break in the grumble of voices. Then mounting applause as, from behind scarlet curtains, a girl stepped into view.

Dorlan raised himself to see better. He stared with frank and open interest at Suwanee Delson. She was a rather tall, willowy blond dressed in a golden gown that clung to her as if she'd been born in it. Her skin was very white in the purple light, her smile warm but shadowy. She acknowledged the applause and sat down before the piano.

She began to sing in a husky, torchy voice. It was some specially written number with a patter chorus. Chip sampled the contents of the glass the waiter set down beside him and listened.

[Turn page]

THREE GREAT DETECTIVES — IN THREE GREAT NOVELS!



Dr. Gideon Fell in

DEATH-WATCH by JOHN DICKSON CARR

Asey Mayo in

MURDER IN THE ANTIQUE SHOP

by **PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR**

Max Thursday in

FATAL STEP by WADE MILLER

All in the Spring **TRIPLE DETECTIVE** — 25c at all Stands!

She sang two encores and then, with the stamp of feet and beat of hands following her off, disappeared between the scarlet curtains.

Her exit, Dorlan knew, was his cue. She had finished her act.

His was about to begin!

CHAPTER XVI

CALL FOR KING



CHIP subdued his excitement, paid his check and asked how he could get around to the dressing room. The waiter stabbed him with a cold eye. Evidently the question had been asked before.

"Look, bud. If you've got ideas—"

"I've got an appointment with Miss Delson," Dorlan said.

Something in his tone was convincing. The waiter coughed, said that made it different and gave directions.

Chip went back to the foyer. On the way his eyes darted to the right and left. But they didn't see anything of the Phantom. He purposely walked slowly figuring that if the Phantom wanted to follow he'd have little difficulty.

At the right side of the foyer, beyond the bulge of the coat room, a fireproof door opened on a narrow passage. Dorlan started down it.

It took him past the back of the kitchen, into a wide recess with an entrance opening onto an alley. That was for deliveries, also the Silver Sleigh's employees. Chip kept on, mounting a few steps and opening another door that gave on a hall lined with dressing rooms.

The band music was a far off murmur. In Chip's ears sounded the laughter and conversation drifting out from some of the doors that were open. He looked around, trying to determine which was Suwanee Delson's.

He was still hesitating when a small brunette, a lighted cigarette dangling from her lipsticked mouth, loomed up in a doorway across the hall. She spied Chip and spoke around the cigarette:

"Looking for somebody?"

"Miss Delson."

The brunette pointed, Chip thanked her and knocked on the next to last door on the opposite side of the corridor.

The door opened after a minute

Suwanee Delson, the gold gown replaced by a pale blue robe, looked at him quizzically.

"I'm Bennett." Chip gave her the name that went with the telephone number in the lost and found advertisement.

She thawed, opening the door wider. "Come in, Mr. Bennett. Let me clear off a chair so you can sit down."

The dressing room, small and constricted, seemed to overflow with her belongings. Three trunks more than filled it.

There was also a triple-mirrored make-up table, a bench in front of it and the wicker chair from which she began to remove articles of her personal apparel.

Chip sat down. Now that he was actually face to face with her, he instinctively went on guard. The Phantom wanted him to handle this meeting cleverly, with finesse. There couldn't be any mistakes. Dorlan had an idea that the Phantom was counting on what developed from it.

He let her start the conversation. Growing even more affable, Suwanee Delson seated herself on the bench before the dressing table. Her small bare feet were tucked in wooly white slippers. Where the blue robe parted, Dorlan was allowed a glimpse of symmetrical legs.

"You brought the elephant?"

"You said you'd identify it," Chip countered.

"I will. It was my good luck charm. It was given me by someone I think a lot of. I always wore it on my bracelet. Since I lost it in that taxi I—I've had nothing but bad breaks. Maybe I'm superstitious about it. Maybe there's something in it—luck, I mean."

She went on to describe the elephant in such a way that Chip knew she had seen it enough times to know all about it. She mentioned the ring in its back, the way it was carved and its approximate size.

"There are forty-eight diamonds in it. I don't suppose you counted them, but I did."

Dorlan managed a smile. "I guess it's yours all right. How about the reward? On the phone you said you'd make it worth my while."

"How about fifty dollars?"

Chip frowned. "Only fifty bucks?"

Suwanee Delson's violet eyes narrowed behind a hedge of mascaraed lashes. "How much did you have in mind?"

"A couple of hundred."

A COLD, hard smile seemed to freeze the corners of her brick red mouth. She reached for a cigarette, lighted it and inhaled.

"I told you I'd pay for its return. I didn't mean to buy it back. I only lost it—remember?"

"Just the same," Chip murmured, "if it's important to your luck it ought to be worth two C notes."

"All right," she said suddenly, "you give me the elephant and I'll give you what you want."

Dorlan said, "Okay. I'll turn it over to you tomorrow. Any time or place you say."

"You didn't bring it with you?" The girl leaned forward. "What's the idea?"

Chip forced a laugh. "For one thing, I wanted to make sure it really was yours. For another, I didn't want to take any chances on losing it. I didn't know what kind of a set-up I might walk into."

She apparently turned that over in her mind. The cigarette between her mahogany tipped fingers made a mushroom of pearly smoke. The shaded lights on the makeup table caressed her pale gold hair. Watching her, Chip saw she was an attractive dame. But in a hard, wise way.

"Just a minute." Suwanee Delson reached for what Chip saw was a house telephone. She put a rubber circle to her ear and kept her finger over a button until a voice crackled in the receiver. "Joe. This is Suwanee. Is King with you?"

"Yeah, he's here."

"Tell him to come back to my dressing room. Right away." She hung up and turned back to Dorlan. "I'll let you talk to a friend of mine."

Inwardly, Chip stiffened. The name "King" was familiar. The Phantom had mentioned it a couple of times in connection with the case. King, Chip was aware, was the tall, bony man who had done the gun work on Pier 800, one of the two he had checked on at the Plymouth without result.

Without change of expression, he waited. But, the crawl of his nerves as they tightened, filled his mind with speculative questions. Why had she called King in? What was due to happen?

He didn't have to wait too long for his answer.

A minute or more passed and then there was a knock on the door. Suwanee Delson said, "Come on in," and the cada-

verous King, his sneer accentuating the skull-and-crossbones look on his sunken face, entered.

"This is Mr. Bennett." The blond indicated Chip with a move of her cigarette. "He's the one who found my elephant. But he didn't bring it with him."

"Why not?" King's eyes roamed over Dorlan, sizing him up with one appraising glance.

"He thought he might lose it or I might not be the one who lost it. And he wanted to make sure he got two hundred bucks reward."

"That's a lot of dough." King's mouth twisted.

"I'm willing to pay it." Suwanee Delson flicked the ash from her cigarette. "He wants to hand it over tomorrow. But I'm busy tomorrow—got a rehearsal coming up. I want it tonight."

"Sure." King looked at Chip. "Where's the elephant?"

"Home."

"How about you and Mr. King getting it?" Suwanee Delson said. She reached for her alligator bag, draped over one of the posts of the makeup table by a strap. She opened that and counted some money out of it. She tossed that over to King. "Two hundred. Check it to make sure. Give it to him when you get Jumbo."

"Right." King stuck the money in his pocket, nodding to Chip. "Let's go, pal."

Dorlan got up. He said good-night to the girl in the blue robe and let the bony man lead the way out to the hall. With every step, Dorlan's mind blazed with thoughts.

He knew he was in a spot. Whatever he did had to be done fast and without mistakes.

A slip on his part meant another of the soft-nosed lead bullets!

In him!

* * * * *

When Chip had left his table at the Silver Sleigh, the Phantom had also gotten up and moved to a position where he had a glimpse of Dorlan. He saw him go through the fireproof door, paid his own check and followed.

When he reached the dressing rooms, Van was in time to see Chip enter the one Suwanee Delson occupied.

Van knew he had to act fast. At any moment the floor show girls would be coming out again. His presence there might be embarrassing. He didn't want to have to explain to any of the bouncers

what his purpose was.

Swiftly he ran an eye over the sills of the many doors. One, diagonally across from Suwanee Delson's cubicle, had no light showing along it. Its door was closed but opened at a turn of its knob.

The Phantom stepped into it and left the door on a crack. He used his pocket torch to get a glimpse of his surroundings. No trunks or costumes were in view. The room was not in use by any of the performers.

Close to the door, the Phantom kept his gaze trained on the dressing room opposite. Minutes passed. Five—ten. Suddenly he felt the stir of his pulses. A man was coming down the hall—a tall, bony character with a cadaverous face and a leering smirk.

King!

The Phantom's eyes narrowed. For an instant he was tempted to step out of his concealment and take the play away from Dorlan. But he knew better than to risk a premature move that might ruin whatever Dorlan was working on.

VAN had the utmost confidence in Chip's ability to handle the situation. He controlled his impulse and waited.

Another few minutes passed and then the gaunt King, with Dorlan beside him, emerged from the dressing room. Van heard what King was saying as they turned left on the corridor:

"We'll hop a cab and run over to your place—"

Dorlan murmured something in reply and both passed out of view.

The Phantom inched the door open. For a brief interval he hesitated. Fate had rolled the dice again and King had turned up.

Should he follow?

He shook his head. The pattern was still to let Chip Dorlan play it his way. The Phantom's eyes focused on the door of the room Chip and King had left.

The girl behind it knew something. If she were stringing along with Sartain, fronting for him in an effort to get the little jeweled elephant back, she represented a direct link with the master-killer. Which, in the final analysis, the Phantom considered more important than chasing after Dorlan and King.

Time passed.

The girls of the chorus came out and streamed down the hall, putting last minute touches to their costumes en route.

Still Suwanee Delson remained in her room.

It was when Van had almost decided the blond was remaining there indefinitely that he saw a man heave into view in that portion of the corridor Dorlan and King had left by.

There was no mistaking the stocky figure and yellow face. It was Leland!

Nerves tight, the Phantom watched Leland stop in front of the door opposite. He knocked with his knuckles, calling out, "It's me, Suwanee. All right to come in?"

Evidently it was. Leland stepped into the room and the door closed behind him. The Phantom came to a quick decision. Suwanee Delson's door had hardly shut before his was open and he was across the passage.

From the dressing room Van glided up to, he heard voices. Leland's almost jovial tones as he said, "How about a drink somewhere before I take you home?"

Suwanee Delson said, "That's all right with me, after I telephone your friend."

"What about?" Leland queried.

"His elephant. I expect to get it back for him before tomorrow."

"Yeah. He'll like that. He thinks the bad breaks he's had lately are on account of losing it."

Suwanee Delson began to explain how King had gone off to get the trinket as the Phantom's fingers closed over the knob of her door.

It was unlocked. The latch clicked back and the Phantom entered the room.

For an instant neither the blond girl nor the short man saw him. Leland was lighting a cigarette, striking a match on the *No Smoking* sign beside him. Suwanee Delson, dressed for the street, was putting on a short, summer fur jacket and had her back to the door.

Leland, turning as he blew out the match, saw the Phantom and let the cigarette drop.

The gun in Van's hand covered him. The Phantom said:

"All right, Leland. Freeze and keep your hands away from your pockets!"

The yellow face sagged. Leland's moody eyes went completely blank. He obeyed like one in a trance. On the floor his cigarette smoldered until Van put his foot on it.

"Who's this guy?" The blond girl's voice was thin and suddenly harsh.

"A dick!" Leland got the word out stiffly.

"The dick!" the Phantom cut in. "Convenient of you to drop around! We'll—"

Suwanee Delson acted fast. While the Phantom's gaze focused on Leland, the blond girl reached up and snapped off the lights in the dressing room. Then, as blackness came quickly, she kicked a chair in the Phantom's direction and made a dash for the door.

THE chair tangled Van's long legs. He tried to get around it as Leland went into action. The stocky man saw his chance and seized it. Snarling a curse he made a forward lunge at the same instant the Phantom, knocked momentarily off balance by his collision with the chair, dropped his arm slightly.

Leland had his own gun out the next breath-take. He squeezed its trigger as he lunged forward. A flash of flame dazzled the Phantom. Lead whined perilously close to his head. Then Leland collided with him, trying to jam his gun into the Phantom's body for a second, sure shot.

The man's breath, hot and panting, blew in the Phantom's face. Close-locked, Leland's left hand over his gun wrist, Van used his own free hand to tear the automatic from the stocky man's clenched fingers.

For all of his rotund build, the other man was strong, hard as nails. Desperation added to his power. He fought with all the tricks of his criminal trade, using his knees, his body and head in a frenzied effort to hang onto his gun and beat the Phantom off.

They crashed into the dressing table, caromed off and thudded against a wall. In the black, Van, on the defensive, saved his own strength and waited for the moment he knew must come. That was when Leland's first savage onslaught slowed down.

Inch by inch, foot by foot, the Phantom gave ground, waiting.

Battering him, Leland forced him across the small room. Van saw his strategem. Leland was trying to maneuver so he could get to the door. Unfortunate for him, Suwanee Delson had slammed it shut after her. But the stocky man was trying to get close to it—close enough to tear it open and dive through it for a getaway.

Near his objective, Leland began to tire. The Phantom sensed an ebbing of his former ferocity. This was the minute Van had been expecting. In a flash he shifted from the defense to an offensive attack,

ripping into Leland with all the strength at his command.

The gun slipped from Leland's loosening fingers. Getting a throat hold, Van put relentless force into his throttling hands. A minute or two of that was all that was needed.

With a strangled moan Leland reeled back. The Phantom felt him grow limp in his grasp. He let him go and the stocky man with the yellow face collapsed like a punctured balloon.

Outside the corridor was full of activity. Somebody banged the door open and switched on the lights. Two waiters, flanked by some of the floor show girls, peered in. A man, dark and suave, with plenty of authority, pushed the waiters aside and hurried in.

"What's going on here?" His voice was high pitched and indignant. "What's this all about?"

The Phantom dragged Leland to a sitting position and reached for the gun he had dropped.

"Call Headquarters!" he ordered sibilantly. "Get Inspector Gregg for me!"

CHAPTER XVII

MURDER GUN



EXACTLY one hour after the surprise capture he made at the Silver Sleigh, Van got out of a cab in front of Chip Dorlan's boarding house. That was in the middle Fifties, on the West Side. The house stood near the end of the block, dark

from cellar to roof.

The Phantom was reluctant to disturb Chip's landlady but there was nothing he could do about it. He made his ring short, repeating it at intervals until, finally, lights came on in the vestibule and the door opened.

An elderly woman, bundled in a flannel kimono stared at the Phantom uncertainly.

"I'm sorry to bother you, Mrs. Smith. Has Mr. Dorlan come back yet?"

Mrs. Smith shook her head. Her frown disappeared. Chip was a favorite of hers, her star boarder. She knew he had something to do with police investigations but she wasn't quite sure what it was. However, she remembered he had told her that any time a man calling himself "Mr. Gray" presented himself at the house he

was to be admitted at once.

"You're—"

"My name is Gray."

"Mr. Dorlan isn't here. Would you like to come in and wait?"

She ushered the Phantom into the front parlor, turned on a silk-shaded floorlamp and told him to make himself comfortable.

He thanked her and she excused herself and left him to his own devices.

The Phantom wandered impatiently around the room. A half hour passed. Then an hour—with no sign of Chip.

He began to worry. For all of Dorlan's ability to take care of himself there was always a first time when something could go wrong. Van knew King's caliber. The slightest suspicion on his part and Dorlan would be taken care of.

These grinding thoughts pounded through the Phantom's mind while another quarter hour went by. He was almost sure that the worst had happened when, a couple of minutes later, he heard footsteps outside on the pavement. They came up the stoop, ending in the tinkle of keys. The front door opened and closed with careful quiet.

Van was at the parlor door when Chip moved into the hall. He couldn't hide the smile of relief that flashed across his disguised face.

"I've been waiting almost two hours. What happened?"

"Plenty!" Dorlan's tone was tight.

In the parlor, he told his story rapidly. Beginning with King's coming to the dressing room of the Silver Sleigh, Chip didn't leave out a detail.

"King asked me where I lived. I gave him an address in Greenwich Village. The Westover Court Apartments. All the way down there I did some fast thinking. I figured King was a sharp operator, that I had to have plenty on the ball to slip him and put my own plan into play."

He stopped to draw a breath. The Phantom said, "Keep going," and Dorlan continued:

"The taxi pulled in at the Westover Court. I had the door open and stepped out while King was telling the driver to wait. I went across the pavement like Man O' War in his top speed days. Across and into the building. I didn't stop—I kept on going. I used to have a friend who lived there and I knew there was a stairway back of the elevator shaft that went down to the basement and no hall

men to tell King where I'd vanished. Everything self-service."

He laughed under his breath. The Phantom asked, "What else?"

"I went through the basement and came up on the service-delivery entry, off the court. I froze there, keeping an eye on King's waiting taxi. He spent about ten minutes looking for me. Figuring, I guess, I'd popped into one of the apartments. Then he went back to the cab and it drove off—with me following in another heap."

Something in Dorlan's voice made the Phantom give him a quick look. He waited. Chip resumed:

"It was a merry chase. King was evidently looking for somebody. The only barroom he didn't miss between Thirty-fifth and Fifty-ninth hasn't opened yet. I stuck with him all the way and got paid off."

"What do you mean?"

"I know where he lives!" Chip's tone was vibrant. "When he left the last foamery the taxi took him up to Seventy-third, off Columbus. Second house in from the corner, south side of the street. Believe it or not, his name's over a mail box in the vestibule!"

VAN gripped Dorlan's hand. "Nice going, Chip. You've been a big help." He reached for his hat. "Keep me advised on the Magnalux matter. I'm sure something will break soon."

He stopped speaking and Dorlan saw his brows draw together.

"What's the matter?"

"I'm thinking of Miss Delson. She called you here in reference to the ad. That means King can check back and know where you really live. I don't like that. He's sure to follow through."

"What do you suggest?"

"A temporary change of locale, for you. You'd better hole in at some small hotel or another boarding house. And before too long."

Chip nodded. "I will, if you think that's the thing to do."

"Have Steve get in touch with me early tomorrow at the *Clarion*."

With that the Phantom said good-night and let himself out.

A short time later he was approaching the apartment house where Chip had tailed King. Van, with a glance to make sure he wasn't being followed or being watched, stepped into the vestibule. His

pencil flash roamed over the battery of brass mail-boxes. As Dorlan had told him, the name EDWARD KING was in the slot over one, with the apartment number printed after it.

The Phantom turned to the front door. It was unlocked, unlatched. He pushed it open and started up the stairs, toward the second floor and King's rooms. The building was wrapped in quiet. The faint night sounds of the crowded city came as if from a distance. The stairs were wide, carpeted. It was an old fashioned apartment house, not bad, not good. Van reached the second floor and stopped.

An electric light in a translucent ceiling bowl gave faint illumination. But enough for his keen eyes to pick out the door bearing the number corresponding with that on the mail-box in the vestibule.

He moved in close to the door. Behind it was Lyda Parish's killer! One more figure in the complex diagram of the murder conspiracy!

His hand moved out to the knob. The door was locked as he had expected. Van calculated quickly. A half hour, at least, had elapsed since Chip had tailed King to the building—time enough for the sinister, cadaverous killer to have retired.

The Phantom reached for his master-key. He had hardly gotten it out of his pocket when a new sound, abrupt and sudden, came to him.

In King's apartment the telephone began to ring.

Its metallic jingle continued. King didn't answer it. The Phantom's brows drew together. That was significant. Maybe the gaunt, sneering man had come in and gone out.

The master-key slid into the door's lock. A twirl of the mechanism on its shank and the key was ready for use. The Phantom turned it and the lock snapped back. At the same moment he eased the knob over and pushed the door open.

The telephone had stopped ringing, but the room the Phantom glided into seemed full of its brazen echoes. He stood motionless, shrouded in complete blackness, for a full minute, his ears strained, his eyes trying to penetrate the enveloping dark.

Warm air, heavy with the scent of habitation filled his nostrils. He let the sixtieth second tick away before moving. No sound came to him through the shoals

of the gloom. Nothing to indicate that King, a deep sleeper, had not heard the telephone.

The Phantom's flash sliced the black. Its narrow beam, magnified by a special lens, darted inquiringly around. It passed over an accumulation of furniture and fastened on an open doorway opposite where he stood.

That opened onto a short passage. A bathroom was to the left, a kitchenette to the right and King's bedroom beyond.

THE flashlight wandered over the bed. Its flowered counterpane hadn't been disturbed. A suit of clothes, back from the cleaner, was draped on a wire hanger from the footboard of the bed. On a dresser was a pile of laundry and what seemed to be the contents of pockets emptied out there.

Interested, the Phantom went back to the living room. A lamp with a mica shade was faintly warm to his touch. That meant King had come in, stayed a few minutes and gone out again.

Van pulled the lamp's dangling chain. The light came on and brought the room into clear view. It was a typical furnished apartment job. Like the building, not good, not bad.

He started systematically to check on his surroundings. He figured he didn't have too much time. If King were to get any sleep that night he'd have to come back soon. Which meant, the Phantom saw, that he had no time to waste.

The living room yielded nothing of any value to him. But he had better luck when he turned off the lamp there and lit a pink-shaded affair that stood on a maple table in the bedroom.

From the litter on the dresser's top he picked up a folded telegram. Before he smoothed it out he eyed a stack of change, movie theater stubs, a couple of newspaper clippings from the *Clarion* that had to do with the death of Lyda Parish and a crumpled package of cigarettes.

Van held the telegram to the light. It was from someone who signed himself Sam Granby. It said:

LEAVING TODAY FOR NORTH FREELING. WILL GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU LATER. EXPECT COOPERATION IN GIVING ME CLEAR FIELD.

The Phantom's eyes narrowed. He folded the telegram back in its original creases and put it where he had found it

before resuming his examination of the bedroom.

While he took a quick look in the dresser drawers, he kept his ears alert for sounds of King's return. But nothing came to them except the murmur of the metropolis, faint and faraway.

The closet yielded nothing. He thought of the telegram while he continued circling the room. There was a drawer in the table that held the pink shaded lamp. That was close to the bed. As the Phantom pulled the drawer open he felt the tightening of his nerves.

Another instant and he had pushed aside a couple of paper covered novels and uncovered something that caught and held his attention.

In the bottom of the shallow drawer the lamplight shone on the blue steel of a gun.

The Phantom, familiar with all types of lethal weapons, recognized it instantly as a *Smith and Wesson* product, a revolver they called the .38/44 Heavy Duty.

He dropped a handkerchief over it and lifted it out. His eyes took in its details. Chambered for the entire line of .38 Special cartridges, including both the ultra-modern high-velocity and soft-nose type, the Phantom knew that the gun he held had been particularly popular in recent years with leading State Police Departments and Highway Patrols.

The revolver in his hand delivered tremendous power. Its superb balance and "feel" were given by its .44 caliber frame and heavy, reinforced barrel.

Another glance, when he broke it and looked at its ammunition, sent a thrill sweeping through him. There were two empty cartridges in the steel compartments, four still to be used. And these four, Van saw, were the soft-lead type.

Under the handkerchief his fingers tightened over the gun's checkered walnut butt. Lyda Parish had been shot and killed by a soft-lead bullet from a .38 gun. So had Allison, the butler! This gun, the Phantom knew!

King hadn't ditched the revolver in the Hudson before leaving the pier. He had been so sure of slipping away from the scene that he hadn't bothered to get rid of it. He had kept it and used it again, on Allison!

The Phantom stowed the weapon in his pocket, whirling around as, through the deep silence, he heard a warning sound.

It came in the form of a key grating in

the same lock his own master-key had turned so short a time before!

CHAPTER XVIII

BUYERS



ANKING hastily on the lamp's chain, the Phantom instantly blacked out the bedroom. Then Van silently went around the bed and into the passage. He was a foot inside the kitchenette when the apartment's door opened and closed.

A moment and then the mica shaded lamp was lighted. From where he stood the Phantom had a narrow view of the living room. He saw the tall figure of King against the lamplight. The man took off his hat, yawned and sat down in a chair.

After a minute or two he looked up—and into the muzzle of the Phantom's gun!

"Your pal, Leland, is waiting for you at Headquarters!" Van said.

King's cadaverous face was a study in conflicting emotions. Surprise, dismay, fear and shock blended into an expression that made his eyes bulge and his jaw drop.

Facing the Phantom, his resemblance to the skull-and-crossbones was more apparent than ever.

Van frisked him, moving in close. But the man had no gun on him. He peered at the Phantom silently. Then, slowly, something like awe and understanding gathered in his eyes.

"You!" he husked. "The way you use your hands, the way you talk! I was right! You didn't get burned!"

"You'd have found that out if you hadn't been in such a hurry to get away! Come on—get up! We're taking a ride!"

The second prisoner the Phantom turned over to the Inspector that night made Gregg's bluff face brighten further. At last the Inspector was getting plenty of action.

"This man," Van said, "is Lyda Parish's killer. I have the gun he did the job with. I have every reason to believe he shot and killed the Parish butler with it, too. I think Ballistics will bear me out."

"Fine work, Phantom! This will be a big boost for the Department's morale!"

"The motive," the Phantom said, "was money. He was paid by someone else, someone I expect to turn over to you before too long. Keep both his arrest and Leland's out of the papers until I give you

the word to release it."

The Inspector nodded. "I'll do that."

The Phantom added a few more details and left the old building on Centre Street.

Steve, waiting at the *Clarion* the next morning, knew nothing of the two arrests the Phantom had engineered the previous night. The Inspector was following out Van's order to the letter.

"Chip said you had something new on the books for me," Huston said, when Van met him.

"I want you to drop in at the Silver Sleigh. That's a night club—"

"I know it."

"It's a bit early, but you'll probably find some of the office help on hand. I want the home address of a Suwanee Delson. She's one of the featured entertainers there. Tell them you want to do a story about her for the magazine section. You're writing a metropolitan survey of the most popular nighteries. They'll jump at the chance of some free publicity."

"What do I do when I get her address?" Huston queried.

"Stop in and see her. Make an appointment for an interview later this afternoon. Then call me. I'll be upstairs with Mr. Havens."

"I'll get right after it," Steve said.

Van left him and went up to the publisher's private office. While Huston was in the dark concerning King, the publisher, during his early morning conversation with the Inspector, had learned of the arrests Gregg had made.

"He tells me everything fits," Havens said. "The gun you turned over to him—the ammunition in it. Same bullets that were taken out of Lyda Parish and Allison!"

"Did Gregg make the prisoners talk?" The Phantom sat down.

HAVENS shook his head. "He says he can't get a word out of either. He had them on the grill for hours without results. He couldn't break them down."

"Scared but stubborn." Van smiled thinly. "They'll talk and talk plenty when the right moment comes."

Frank Havens selected a cigar from the silver humidor beside him and clipped the end from it. He struck a match and stared across at Van.

"First blood." Havens turned the cigar over in his fingers. "What next?"

The Phantom didn't answer for a minute. Slowly he shifted his gaze from the

sun edging the Venetian blinds.

"Sartain."

The telephone rang a half hour later and Steve reported back. Van listened to what he had to say:

"Miss Delson has been living at the Hotel Riverton for the past two months. I'm calling from a pay booth in the lobby there. She didn't come back last night. The clerk says her room hasn't been occupied."

Van understood. The girl wasn't taking any chances.

"Okay, Steve. That's all for now."

Havens pushed aside an editorial he'd been reading. "No luck?"

Van shrugged as he got up. "I forgot to tell you," he said, as if the thought had just come to him, "I'll probably fly up to Canada."

"Canada?" The publisher stared.

"North Freeling. It depends entirely on how Dorlan makes out in his new office."

"I don't understand."

"From the first," the Phantom said, "I've been reasonably sure the abandoned Magnalux has a direct connection with the Parish murders. I believe I made that clear. However, it's only a theory. You know I never base my deductions on theories. If Chip gets a lead—if someone is after the gold mine stock—that will be definite enough for my next move." . . .

In Suite 1710, Chip Dorlan looked out of the lofty window in the Paragon Building. An attractive young woman named Eva Shaw had been supplied by Frank Havens to act as Dorlan's secretary. Chip's gaze turned back to his desk when she rang his telephone.

"A Mr. Clyde on the other wire, Mr. Gurney," she said, using Chip's assumed name. "It's about your advertisement."

Dorlan picked up the phone.

"Yes, Gurney speaking."

"My name is Irwin Clyde," a well modulated voice stated. "I'm with Armstrong and Clyde, attorneys, Barclay Building. I'm interested in your fifteen hundred shares of Magnalux Gold Mine stock. What are you asking for them?"

A bite! Chip thought fast.

"Suppose you drop in, Mr. Clyde. I'll give you the full particulars then."

"I will. I'm anxious to get that lot of stock."

Chip made an appointment and hung up.

He jotted down Clyde's name and the time of the appointment on his desk memo

pad, and dialed Havens at the *Clarion*. Leaving his message with the publisher to be relayed to the Phantom, Chip had hardly settled back in his chair before the girl in the outer office rang him again.

"There's a gentleman here to see you. His name is Hobson. It's in reference to your advertisement."

Chip rubbed his skin. "Ask him what particular stock he wants to talk about, Miss Shaw."

He waited until the answer came back, "The Magnalux Gold Mine stock," the girl said.

Bite number two! Chip told her to send the caller in and swung his chair around to face the door.

It opened slowly and a man entered.

He was tall, well groomed, but the thing that sent a warning tingle through Dorlan was the pair of dark glasses he wore. That and the fact the man who walked toward his desk fit perfectly with the description of the master-killer the Phantom had given him.

Dorlan's nerves tightened, but no trace of his inner feelings showed in his expression. Forcing what was meant to be a smile, Chip waved the man to a chair.

But his heart was hammering when he asked him what he could do for him.

Unless all signs were wrong, the one who sat down beside his desk was the same Sartain the Phantom Detective was striving to reach!

CHAPTER XIX

CLYDE



ZEALOUS and prompt, Chip phoned the *Clarion*. It got through to Van some twenty minutes after Dorlan had made it. The Phantom hurried down to the Paragon Building. He found Dorlan strangely excited.

"It was your man all right!" Chip said. "A perfect fit for your description even to the tiny blue mark on his lip!"

"What did you tell him?"

"He's to come back at four this afternoon. I stalled him. I told him I had another customer. One who had called before he did. That was Clyde, the lawyer."

"You didn't tell Sartain who the customer was?" Van asked quickly. "You didn't mention names."

"No." Dorlan moved uneasily in his

chair. "I didn't have to. Unfortunately, I had jotted Clyde's name and address on that memo pad. Before I could cover it up I could see the dark glasses looking at it."

The Phantom's brows drew together. Thoughtfully, he said, "I don't like that, but there's nothing to be done about it now. At four o'clock? So far, so good. I'll be here when 'Hobson' returns."

"What do I tell him when he comes back?"

"I'll do the talking," Van said grimly.

Dorlan nodded. "And I tell Clyde, when he calls, the stock's been sold. By the way, who is he?"

"Irwin Clyde," the Phantom said, "is Mrs. Carver Parish's attorney!"

Chip's eyes widened. He waited but Van offered no further explanation.

At ten to four that afternoon the Phantom paid a second visit to Suite 1710. This time he took a seat in the outer office, opened a magazine and settled down to wait. By now Sartain probably was aware that both Leland and King were no longer at his disposal. Time was running out on the wearer of the dark glasses. He had to act and act fast and undoubtedly knew it.

The minutes ticked away. Four o'clock came, but no Sartain. It was nearly half past four when the Phantom went into Chip's office.

"Looks like we've drawn a blank. Something's frightened our man off."

Dorlan shook his head. "I can't figure what it is. There was nothing suspicious around here to flash a red light. He—"

The sudden ring of the telephone chopped off what Chip was about to say. He picked it up, listened and said:

"Send him in, Miss Shaw."

The Phantom's hand slid in under the front of his coat. Dorlan, pronging the telephone, said hastily, "It's not he! It's someone he's sent to pick up the shares!"

The door of the inner office opened and a young man came through it. He wore a plain blue suit, a white shirt and a maroon tie. He had the appearance of a clerk, but there was something obsequious in his bearing. Something of the well trained servant in the way he puffyfooted over to Dorlan's desk.

"Begging your pardon, sir—my name is Yancey," he said. "Mr. Hobson sent me to get the stock. I have the money with me, sir. I'm to pick it up for him."

Chip's eyes moved in the Phantom's

direction. Van's gun slipped out of its shoulder holster.

Yancey swallowed an exclamation at the sight of it and stepped back, the color draining out of his face.

"Frisk him, Chip," Van directed. "Then call Gregg and tell him to send a man down here to get him. I think he'll be able to answer a lot of interesting questions!"

Van waited for one of Gregg's detectives to make his appearance. Then, sure that Sartain's errand boy was in good hands, the Phantom went up Broadway to the Barclay Building.

He got out of the elevator on the twenty-ninth floor and went into an impressive suite of rooms whose main doors were lettered with the words:

ARMSTRONG & CLYDE
Attorneys-at-Law

"I'd like to see Mr. Clyde," Van said to a clerk who came out of a library off the reception room. Inside, an elderly man sat at a long table with a book open before him.

"Mr. Clyde isn't in. He won't be back today."

"Where can I get in touch with him? This is important."

THE clerk frowned. "Mr. Clyde is probably at his home on Long Island. But he sees nobody there. If you'll tell me the nature of your business I'll speak to Mr. Armstrong." He nodded toward the man in the library.

The Phantom's Detective Bureau badge slid into view. "This can't wait. I represent Inspector Gregg. Where does Mr. Clyde live on the Island?"

The clerk's eyes widened. It was evident police callers were not frequent there.

Turning, he hurried into the library and spoke rapidly to Mr. Armstrong.

The elderly man banged the book shut and got up.

"Come in here, sir," he called out. When the Phantom went through the gate and into the library, Armstrong dismissed the clerk and shut the door. "Now, what is it you want?"

He was a pompous, aristocratic old man with a neatly clipped mustache and long sideburns. He looked legal from the top of his well brushed hair to his black polished shoes. The Phantom could see him

in front of a Federal judge, meticulously arguing some fine point of corporation law.

The Phantom explained briefly without letting Armstrong know why he wanted to talk to Irwin Clyde. When the senior partner of the firm realized he was not to learn what he wanted to know, he surrendered reluctantly.

"Mr. Clyde lives at Sandspring. That's near Manhasset, on the Sound. His place is called Salt Winds."

Uptown again, the Phantom got one of his cars, telephoned Steve Huston and, some twenty minutes later, picked the red-headed reporter up near the Queensboro Bridge.

Van explained succinctly as they crossed the span over the East River. Steve listened, his expression expectant.

"You want all the facts for the complete story on the Parish murders which you'll put into print before long," the Phantom said. "I want to know why Irwin Clyde has been trying to buy stock in a defunct mine. You'll want to know, too."

"My guess is," Huston said, "the mine is no longer defunct."

"Could be." Van moved his shoulders. "On the other hand," he said, "it might be the basis for some gigantic swindle. Take your choice."

"That's right." Steve's glance swung around to the one beside him. "I never thought of that! Salt a mine and issue new stock! Get the customers standing in line, drooling—with high pressure sales talk!"

The Phantom didn't volunteer an opinion.

Instead, he said, "Anything new at Headquarters?"

"The Inspector's made a score." Steve frowned. "I can't figure him. He usually lets me in on the ground floor when he gets a break. This time all he does is look smug and says nothing. I have an idea he's made an arrest. And," Huston added, "five gets you eight that you know all about it!"

"You left word at the Hotel Riverton you were to be communicated with if the Delson girl returns?" Van ignored the last of what Huston had said as he put the question to him.

"Yes. For my money she's gone for good. "Why," he asked directly, "wouldn't your head man do the same thing? Why would he continue to stick around and

wait for a crackdown when he must know you're closing in?"

"A good question." The Phantom shook his head. "Sartain can't quit now. He's in too deep. He's in all the way—with the stakes too high for him to give up. He'll fight through to the last inch. Because," Van added, "in addition to being a super criminal he's a supreme egotist. He won't let himself believe he's being caught up with! In his wily brain Sartain figures he still has a good chance to win if—"

"If?"

"He can get rid of us," the Phantom said, dryly. "I'm the only thing that stands between him and his goal. A goal, Steve which, regardless of the Magnalux, means the Parish millions!"

Huston stared blankly. "Carver Parish's fortune?" he said wonderingly.

LEAVING him to ponder that the Phantom descended the Jackson Avenue hill at Manhasset, then took the road that led out to the region of well manicured estates on the finger of land, reaching out into the Long Island Sound, that was called Sandspring.

Salt Winds, when they got to it, comprised a stately English-type, timbered house, four-car garage, tennis courts and gardens on two well landscaped acres.

The sun was low in the west. A breeze off the water rustled the shrubbery. On the parallel cement strips that went back to the garages, a dust-gray Lincoln Continental stood parked with one door open. A tall privet hedge edged the driveway. Trees and six feet hemlock bank on the other side closed the drive off from the lawn and gardens fronting the house.

The Phantom, stopping behind the gray car, got out. With Steve following he was about to head for the house when he stopped.

A pigskin glove lay on the driveway. The Phantom's glance touched on it and moved on to the car. His gaze narrowed to the open door—to the crimson ooze that was bright and red in the slanting rays of the late afternoon sun.

A man lay crumpled, half on the seat and half on the floor, beside the Lincoln's open door.

Even before the Phantom reached the car, he knew that murder had struck again.

That this time the victim was the Irwin Clyde he had come down from Manhattan to question and warn!

MAGNALUX



RIGID with anger, Van surveyed the body. From behind him came Steve Huston's strangled gasp.

The Phantom peered into the car. He had seen Clyde several times around town and knew the attorney by sight.

He recognized him as he bent over the crumpled figure.

Glazed eyes stared up into his. The man's gray-black hair was stiff with coagulating blood that came from a wound above his left ear. A deep, penetrating fissure, Van saw, that could have been made by the savage, bludgeon-like blow of a gun's butt.

He ran a hand up against the lawyer's neck. There was no movement to the big artery there. The flesh was cool but not cold to his touch. Rigor had not yet set in. The man had been cut down only a short time previous.

"Clyde?" Steve's voice was shaky.

Van stepped back from the car, nodding. His narrowed gaze shifted along the privet hedge, down the drive, out to the main road beyond.

"Sartain!" He knew Clyde was after the gold mine stock. He must have followed Clyde down here—or come down in advance and waited. Clyde had the door open and was getting out when he struck."

"But what a chance," Huston said, his voice growing steadier. "One blow to knock him off!"

"The kind he delivers," the Phantom answered grimly, "requires only one!"

The little reporter swallowed. Looking at death was no new or novel experience to Steve. But it always did things to his stomach. He decided that was because of his high powered imagination. He hated the handiwork of the Grim Reaper, the significant and usually present gush of gore, the stiff immobility of death. Somehow it offended his finer sensibilities.

To the Phantom death in its more violent forms was part of his trade. He didn't look on it as Huston did. To him a corpse was something that yielded clues. An object to be examined scientifically for the necessary work leading to those who had been responsible for the snuffing out of a life.

But, Van understood, no clues were necessary in this particular instance. He knew the identity of the killer. One more name added to the red roster of the Parish murders. One more taunting gesture on the part of fate to block his carefully laid plans.

"Call the local authorities," the Phantom said to Steve, and turned toward a narrow entrance in the hemlock wall. . . .

* * * * *

The Phantom's plane, chartered for his trip north, flew over the great wheatlands of the Saskatchewan Province.

Far below, the steel ribbons of the Canadian Pacific Railroad ran straight toward Winnipeg and the cities beyond. As his pilot kept to their course, facts concerning the country he had entered crowded through Van's mind.

Saskatchewan, he knew, had an area of over two hundred and fifty-one thousand square miles. In addition to its wheat growing, its northern territory was rich in lumber cut from its vast forests. The Phantom's thoughts shifted. This province, too, was the fourth largest Canadian gold producer. Most of its mines, as in the case of the abandoned Magnalux, were close to the Manitoba border.

North Freeling was located there, north and east of Regina.

Van also was aware that Canada was second only to South Africa in the production of the precious yellow metal. Its deposits were widely distributed, all provinces except New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island contributed to the output. And, for years, Carver Parish's famous Magnalux had been high on the list of the country's leading mines.

The plane's twin motors droned on. Now and then Van caught glimpses of the silver thread of a river. Glimmering, mirror-like lakes so small that from the air they looked like glinting coins.

THE huddle of a city passed beneath the plane's wings. His pilot, an ex-Air Force flyer, nodded and the Phantom knew they were near their destination.

His jaw hardened. Was he to find in the Magnalux the secret of Sartain's bloody activities? Or, at least, a partial explanation of the man's desperate bid for wealth and power?

The questions burned in his mind as, a short time later, the plane banked for a landing.

The wind rushed past as the ship nosed downward. The earth came up to meet them. The Phantom had the impression of the oblong length of an airport—the houses and buildings of a town behind it.

His pilot, using the radio as they went down, circled the field and dropped the ship accurately on the level stretch of the field's terrain. His name was Cassidy and he did special flying jobs for Frank Havens, who owned the two-motored job.

The Phantom opened the door beside him, stepped out of the plane and stretched his long legs.

"Nice flying," he told Cassidy.

"Nice weather." The pilot grinned. He had no idea of the identity of the passenger he had flown north. To him that was part of his day's work. The *Clarion's* owner had told him he and the plane were at the disposal of the man who would board it at La Guardia Field.

Cassidy hadn't been curious. A flight to Canada was the same to him as a jump to California or a trip to Panama.

"Hole in here," Van told him. "I'll get in touch with you later, regarding going back."

Cassidy nodded and Van lifted out the kit-bag he had brought with him.

The town beyond the airport was called Wellington Depot. From there Van rode a bus the seven separating miles to North Freeling.

It was well after two in the afternoon when he alighted in front of the Sheep Creek Hotel. A glance showed him that the place was no Waldorf. In its palmy days, when Carver Parish visited North Freeling, he had had a suite at the hotel, rooms for his secretaries and entourage. But that had been several years past and, with the shutting down of the Magnalux, North Freeling had lost the money and crowds its boom days had attracted.

Unlike the deserted silver mine towns in the States, North Freeling hadn't become a ghost town. With the Magnalux shut off, its citizens had gone in for farming. There were still plenty of people around, shops, government controlled taverns, movie houses and the usual miscellany of a place of its size.

The Phantom had a room reserved under the name of Gray. He found it was on the second floor. It looked clean and comfortable, but it could have done with new wallpaper, furniture and carpet. He unpacked his kit-bag, made sure his automatic was in its shoulder holster and sat

down to study a map of the surrounding countryside.

The Magnalux Gold Mine was on the west side of the town. From the window in his room, Van could see the rise of ground that loomed up in that direction, the highway that ran toward it. His glance went back to the map spread open before him.

Later, he intended to pay a visit to the spot responsible for the Parish millions.

The first thing on his agenda was the Sam Granby who had signed the telegram Van had turned up in King's apartment. Its wording came back to him:

LEAVING TO-DAY FOR NORTH FREELING.
WILL GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU LATER. EXPECT COOPERATION IN GIVING ME CLEAR FIELD.

The Phantom's brows drew together. According to the message Granby must be in North Freeling now. Van wanted a glimpse of the man. Unless he was all wrong, Granby played an important role in the drama of events that had started with Professor Kurt Parish's death in Poma and had spun the span of murders to Sandspring.

He reached for the telephone beside him.

"Have you a Mr. Granby registered here?" he asked, when the girl at the switchboard answered.

"Just a minute, please." Three passed before she said, "No, sir. Nobody by that name is here."

VAN hung up. Granby could be using another name. Or Granby could be undercover at some other spot in town. He put the map away, locked the door behind him and went down to the lobby.

It wasn't more than a twenty minute walk from the hotel to the Magnalux property. The Phantom headed toward it, swinging along leisurely but careful he wasn't being followed.

The air was dry and crisp. It was warm but not hot. The road was in good condition, but few cars passed him. Now and then a truck, loaded with produce, rumbled along.

After awhile he came in sight of the Magnalux.

The Phantom felt the tightening pressure of his pulses. Since he had gone to Pier 800, where the *Regardia* had docked, to lift the robe and study the body of the

dead Lyda Parish, the closed-down mine before him had been continually present in the back of his mind.

Now, actually to set foot on it, filled the Phantom with new speculations. Was it to be the end of the trail? Was it to be as vitally important as he had believed? In it was he to discover the last necessary clues to put the long arm of the law on the man who called himself Sartain?

Quiet prevailed. Somewhere a bird sang in the bright sunshine. As he went on, the Phantom saw the line of well built wooden barracks where the mine employees had once lived. They remained in good repair, were painted a dark green with white trim. He passed them, slowly circling the smelting plant, the sheds where the mine machinery, all tarpaulin covered, was housed.

Other sheds sheltered the narrow gauge hand cars used in the transfer of ore from the depths of the mine to the surface. Several shafts were stoutly boarded up with warning signs decorating them.

Underfoot, the Phantom noticed, the ground was a curious red-tan clay, dry and dusty.

He browsed around, seeing no one. Desertion hung over the place. Like most lode mines, that had been rich in auriferous quartz, the discarded ore piles were banked on its south side. The Phantom passed them, went a hundred yards further and stopped.

The red-tan clay there held tire marks. A diamond shaped tread had left a faint but distinct impression on the ground. And, Van saw, recently.

He studied them musingly. Someone had driven out to the Magnalux at a time not too long past. He tried to find footprints, but failed. There was nothing on the ground to tell him where the occupant of the car had gone after he had stopped there.

Turning, the Phantom looked from the tracks to the nearest boarded up adit. Thoughtfully, he went toward it. It was no more than fifty yards away. Still there were no footprints, nothing to indicate anyone had gotten out of the car and walked there.

Yet, when he reached the adit's boarding, his keen gaze immediately showed him that the boarding was not in place. It had been moved and put back, but in such fashion that the rust marks of its hinges were revealing.

Someone had gone down into the mine!

CHAPTER XXI

TORRENT



WHEN Van entered the dining room of the Sheep Creek Hotel that night, there were no more than a half dozen patrons in the place. He let a waitress seat him at a rear table that night.

In the corner a radio was broadcasting semi-classical music from a station at Winnipeg. It made a murmurous background for the blend of voices and clink of knives and forks.

The Phantom's gaze wandered over those at the tables. It focused on a man who sat across the room, an evening newspaper spread open before him while he ate with speed and gusto.

He was short and fat. Thinning blond hair was brushed flat on a bullet-shaped head. The man's face was round and pink. He had small eyes an almost bridgeless nose and a thick-lipped mouth. Rolls of flesh bulged over the blue collar of his stiffly starched shirt. His chins hung pendulous, so popular, Van saw, they were going into a third edition.

The Phantom moved his glance so the man wouldn't feel it and realize he was being studied. When the waitress brought Van's coffee he said quietly:

"Who's the stout gentleman yonder?"

The girl suppressed a smile. "That's Mr. Foster."

"Been here long?"

"Just two days."

"Is he in the lumber business? Seems to me I've seen him." The Phantom made it sound impersonal.

"I couldn't say." The waitress frowned. "If you want, I'll ask the manager. He knows everybody's business."

"Don't bother," Van told her. "It's not important."

But he was interested in Foster. It was an interest that quickened significantly when, a half hour later, he saw the fat man again in the hotel bar. This time the Phantom's gaze centered on Foster's shoes. In the light that shimmered on the brass bar rail he noticed something that held his attention closely.

Foster's shoes, black brogues, were well sprinkled with a red-tan clay dust.

The Phantom went back to the desk to get his room key. The hotel used the old fashioned book register instead of the

modern card-signature system. While the clerk turned to the numbered key rack, Van flipped the pages of the register back.

Under a date two days previous, he found the name *Jason Foster, Toronto*, written in an oblique hand. Beside it was the room number, 309.

"This is your key, Mr. Gray."

The desk clerk handed the tagged key to the Phantom and Van went up to the floor above. But he didn't stop there. He continued on to the third floor.

From the fat man's restful attitude at the bar, Van had an idea he'd be there for some time— Long enough for a quick glance into his room.

Making sure the corridor was empty and that no one watched him, Van tried the knob of 309.

The door was locked but the Phantom's master-key took care of that. A turn of it and he had the door open and was in the dark of Foster's room.

His pencil flash replaced the master-key between his fingers. He let it roam around. Two suitcases were on a baggage rack. The Phantom walked over to it. The luggage was unlocked. He eased the lid of the top valise up and let his torch delve into it.

In its light he saw a folded seersucker suit, haberdashery and a Sport Model Colt Woodsman. A pair of light yellow pajamas caught his eye. He moved a stack of freshly ironed handkerchiefs and stared at the initials embroidered on the pocket of the pajamas.

Van nodded to himself. The SG done in dark brown silk told him all he wanted to know.

The fat man, who had visited the Mag-nalux, could call himself 'Foster' or anything he chose, but he was the Sam Granby who had sent the wire to the bony King!

A glance into the second valise showed the Phantom it was full of quartz ore samples. He left them as he had found them and was about to turn to the door when he stopped and walked over to the bureau. On its top were a cigar case, several books of paper matches and a telegram.

Van picked the telegram up and spread it out flat. It was addressed to Granby at a hotel in Regina. It was brief and read:

HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE VISITOR MAY GO TO MINE STOP. RELAYING ON YOU TO USE NECESSARY MEASURE TO PREVENT ENTRANCE.

It was signed with the letter S.

The Phantom put the telegram back and went down to his own room.

NOTING the time he got ready for a second trip out to the Magnalux. In his kit-bag were several things he had brought for the purpose. He put these in his pockets, turned the light off and used the stairs.

Granby was still at the bar, a half filled glass in one pudgy hand. Men who looked like trappers and farmers had come in for their evening libations. The Phantom went on to the main entrance of the Sheep Creek Hotel.

As he passed the bar the pig-like eyes of the fat man lounging there followed him. Sam Granby nodded to himself. Ten minutes previous, Flo, one of the waitresses in the dining room, had told him this man had been asking about him. Quickly, Granby drained the contents of his glass and stepped away from the bar. . . .

Only a few stars dotted the sweep of the night sky. A freshening breeze blew in the Phantom's face as he went along. When he reached the Parish property, he saw the rim of the moon coming up over the eastern horizon.

The entrance to the mine where the boarding had been moved was his first objective. A larger flashlight than the one he had used in Granby's room roved over the boards. He pushed them wide enough to make a space that permitted entry. The torch, slicing the black, showed him a long, steep declivity that led down into the bowels of the mine.

A narrow gauge, rusty track made a path for the Phantom to follow. Rotting ties rocked under his descending feet. The shoring, as he went down, dripped moisture. The rock sides of the passage that narrowed considerably as the shaft began to level, showed the old time marks of drills.

Some distance further on the Phantom stopped.

On one side of the track the stub of a cigar turned up in the flood of the flash. He moved it with the sole of his shoe. Granby's cigar? One he had tossed away after he had gone along this same underground passage?

Further on, the damp beginning to get in his bones, the Phantom found more evidence of the visitor. At a bend in the rock-sided corridor, the fresh marks of

tool work on part of the stone formation around him caught his eye.

A recollection of the ore samples in the second valise on the baggage rack in Room 309 came back to him. The Phantom smiled thinly as he produced tools of his own, propped his flash on a convenient ledge, and went to work.

Twenty minutes later he had what he wanted and turned to start back to the surface.

He walked slowly up the steep incline. The drip of water made a monotonous sound in his ears. It was a long, hard climb. As he went on, the clammy dank of the place chilling him, he began to feel the stirring of his intuition, the first faint warning telegraphed to his brain by his never-failing sixth sense.

He stopped, brows drawn together, ears strained.

No sound except the continuous drip of water came to him for a tense round of minutes. Then, abruptly, a new sound, faint above him, registered quickly.

The low purring of an automobile engine!

The Phantom's fingers tightened over the flash they held. Anyone up there on the surface had only to look at the removed boarding to know someone had entered the mine—had left it—or was still in it!

MINUTES ticked away. Motionless, his flashlight off, Van waited. Faint sounds grew more audible after another pause. Someone was working around at the mouth of the tunnel-shaft. Still as the stone around him Van waited. Granby? Who was the second visitor to the mine?

As he asked himself that question he heard a strange, ripping noise. Its significance sent his mind flashing back to a huge sluice pump he had noticed just inside the wooden barricade at the mouth of the adit. A below frost-line affair that needed only a few turns of its large iron wheel to produce results.

The Phantom learned how correct his surmise was in the next quickening heart-beat.

The ripping sound turned to a roar as, cascading down the steep incline, a flood of racing water, leaping and tearing, swirled in torrent-like proportions!

The ice cold deluge sloshed against the Phantom's legs. He had to act fast. In another round of minutes the full force of the whirlpool would be upon him, drag-

ging him into its swirling current, tossing him like so much dead wood against the rocky walls of the tunnel!

He shot the beam of his flash at the shoring overhead. The brief wink of light showed him heavy timber, stays where the top braces joined those along the sides. He acted with inspirational speed.

The strength that Dick Van Loan had put into the polo match Muriel Havens had applauded at the Rumson Club that other afternoon was used to good advantage now. Tensing himself, the Phantom leapt for the corner brace. He had to reach it in one quick attempt. He knew that. To miss and fall back meant there wouldn't be a second chance.

With every ounce of the power generated by his superb physical condition he thrust himself upward. A cut-out in the brace brushed his fingertips. He grabbed for it desperately, sliding his hand, then his wrist, and arm, through the opening. He hung on, his body swaying like a pendulum while the flood waters, racing beneath him, seemed to dash up to reach him.

It was a perilous position, one he couldn't hold too long. He eased the tension on his arm and shoulder with his feet against the rocky side of the tunnel's wall. The breath began to burn in his lungs as the weight of his body became almost impossible to support. He felt sweat break out on his forehead, trickling into his eyes, dripping off his chin.

How much longer? The question beat against his brain. Not more than a few scant minutes at best. No one could hang on there indefinitely.

The sluice pump had been opened to its full capacity. The water would continue to flow until shut off. Van found himself wondering hazily how long that would be.

His arm and shoulder grew numb. He seemed hardly to feel the pain that had sent quivers of agony lancing through him. The beat of the water held a dirge-like note. It was singing a song of doom as it swept along below him.

He tried to shut his eyes, to close out the lights dancing before them. He was counting the remaining seconds before his paralyzed arm gave way entirely when, loud above the rush of the water, he caught a new sound.

It came almost like a muffled explosion. That was followed immediately by a sucking noise and the taming of the torrent.

Van felt new strength sweep through

him. He thought he understood what had happened. The force of the flood Leland released had torn away part of the dirt wall on the opposite side of the tunnel. He had noticed that, in sections between the rock formation were large expanses of dark, wet earth.

THE explosion-like report must have come when the swelling current's impact had battered in the earthen barrier. To the Phantom that meant there was another shaft or tunnel close to the one he was in. The descending river, finding a new channel, had been diverted into a double section. And, its running off in two directions, the Phantom figured, was responsible for its slackening tide.

He dropped to his knees in the cold stream whirling down the sharp slope. The shock of the icy water was like an invigorating tonic to steady and revive him. He leaned against the wall until the numbness went out of his arm and shoulder, until he could flex his fingers without twinges of pain.

The torch was gone, but he had his pencil flash. He used that as he followed the tug of the water. Some distance beyond the point where he had hung so precariously he found verification of what he had suspected. A great hole between the rocks on one side of the corridor was draining off the flood.

He waded over to it as, suddenly and abruptly, the pump was turned off.

The last of the water streamed by Van. Now in his ears sounded the disappearing trickle of it.

The pencil flash he held winked out. He swung around, his sweat stung eyes attracted by a pinpoint of light far up the tunnel. It bobbed and zigzagged as it grew in size:

Watching its approach, the Phantom breathed in the damp, cold air. The one who had tried to drown him was coming down to check on his handiwork! The Phantom reached for his gun. It was wet, his fingers felt the moisture on its steel. He gripped it, drawing back against the tunnel's side.

It didn't need much imagination for him to figure who had thought up the idea of the pump. The Sam Granby he had left at the bar in the Sheep Creek Hotel had not been as entirely off guard as Van had believed. The fat man must have seen him leave and leisurely followed. Then, from the top of the shaft Granby had un-

doubtedly seen the flicker of his torch just as he, now, was catching the gleam of the fat man's light.

Another breath filled the Phantom's lungs. After all, luck was swinging in his direction. Granby coming on to look for the dead body he hopes to find! Granby was certain that the ruthless torrent he unleashed had served his purpose!

Grimly the Phantom waited, dropping to his knees. He stretched out full length on the muddy floor of the stone-sided aisle.

Sam Granby plodded forward, the yellow circle of his torch dancing on before him. Immovable, the Phantom's strained ears caught the fat man's sudden exclamation. The light played over Van as Granby moved closer.

Tense, holding his breath, Van shut his eyes to the glare of the light beating in his face. A full sixty seconds ticked away before Sam Granby bent over him. Sartain's man had to be fully convinced. The Phantom waited for a pudgy hand to feel for a pulsebeat.

Grunting, Granby stretched out his fingers. They prodded against Van's jacket, fumbling for the opening in his coat to slide beneath it. As they touched the Phantom he reached up and hooked an arm around the blue collared neck where the flesh bulged!

At the same instant the Phantom changed his position. With one quick motion he rose to his knees, putting tremendous shoulder pressure into the arm that circled Granby's neck and throat.

It was a bone crushing, steely grip that held like a vise. The flashlight dropped and went out. Granby's wheezing breath backed up in his lungs in a choking gasp. He tried to fight, to struggle and free himself, but to Van his efforts were like the helpless floundering of a landed porpoise.

Slowly but surely the last of Granby's fight went out of him. Like a fallen elephant he pitched forward to drop face down in the mire of the tunnel when Van let up on his throttling grip. The Phantom searched for and found the fat man's torch. He snapped it on, playing its beam on Granby.

After an interval the man twitched. His stubby fingers clawed at the mud around him. His breath, strangled and explosive, shook him as he made crab-like motions and finally rolled over on his back.

The Phantom relieved him of an automatic stuck in his belt. It was the same gun that had been in the top valise in

Room 309 at the hotel. Training it on Granby, Van let more minutes elapse—minutes that brought consciousness back to the one who had tried to kill him.

Granby sat up groggily.

His mouth hung open and, in the glare of the torch, his pig-like eyes blinked vacantly.

"Get up, Granby!" The Phantom's command was like ice.

The fat man tried twice before he scrambled to his feet. Weakly, he leaned against the stone wall beside him. When he spoke his voice shook with terror:

"Don't shoot!" he croaked. "I—I give up!"

CHAPTER XXII

FINAL MINUTE



OW, after the flat, wheat-growing expanse of vast Saskatchewan, Manhattan with its skyscrapers and tangle of streets and avenues seemed more crowded than ever to the Phantom, as he entered the Clarion Building.

An elevator took him up to the floor where Frank Havens had his office. Miss Marsh passed him quickly in and Van, setting down his luggage, gripped the publisher's hand.

"Great pilot, your man Cassidy," the Phantom said. "We ran into a couple of bad storms, and he had to do some fancy flying."

The *Clarion's* owner couldn't suppress his anticipation. It was in his dignified face, in his eyes. But he knew the Phantom's information would have to wait until he was ready to divulge it.

Van didn't keep Havens in suspense long. Briskly, Van said, "Tell me your news and then I'll give you mine."

"It isn't too much." Havens shrugged.

"What about Yancey, Sartain's man? What did the Inspector get out of him?"

"Yancey talked. He didn't know too much about the man he worked for. He wasn't in on what was going on. What he knew he picked up on his own and that didn't amount to more than a few suspicions."

"He must have given Gregg the location of where Sartain has been operating from."

"Right. It is a house on Gramercy Park. The Inspector threw a net around it and

raided it," Havens said. "But he didn't get Sartain."

"Something frightened him off." Van's eyes narrowed. "I suppose the Inspector has an alarm out for him."

"Yes, but so far it hasn't brought any results. Gregg is of the opinion that Sartain's gone! That by this time he's in South America or—"

The Phantom interrupted with a shake of his head. "He's around. He hasn't left this city! I know how to reach him. I'll have him for Gregg before tomorrow!"

Frank Havens stared wonderingly. But the Phantom volunteered nothing further. Instead, Van asked about Suwanee Delson.

"She was picked up yesterday morning," Havens told him. "The girl went back to her hotel to get some of her belongings. Gregg had a man planted there, waiting. She's under arrest now."

"He can turn her loose. She doesn't count. Suwanee Delson," Van said, "was Leland's girl friend. Sartain only used her to get his jeweled elephant back. What else? Did King or his yellow-faced pal make a statement yet?"

Frank Havens shook his head. "No. Neither has cracked. There's been considerable agitation due to Irwin Clyde's murder. One of the other papers has been demanding the Mayor order a complete shake-up of the Police Department and the removal of the Commissioner if Clyde's murder, together with that of Lyda Parish, isn't solved soon."

The Phantom sat down in the chair he usually occupied beside the publisher's big desk. He stretched out his long legs, lit a cigarette and relaxed.

"Steve will have his story and the Mayor won't have to do any shaking up," he promised.

"Then you're ready to close the case!" Havens leaned forward.

The Phantom nodded. "I was right about the Magnalux." He opened his kit-bag. Out of it he took a square, cardboard box. He opened that and Havens' gaze focused on the quartz ore specimens it contained.

"What—"

"These came out of the Magnalux," Van explained. "They were brought out by a Sam Granby, a crooked minerologist, who's been working for Sartain. Granby tried to do the same thing to me that King did to William Parish, using a tunnel and a sluice pump instead of a river. I got his

full confession before I turned him over to the authorities on a charge of attempted murder."

BRIEFLY, he gave Havens a quick resume of his trip to North Freeling and what had occurred there.

"And the Magnalux—"

"Granby discovered a new vein—a lode so rich," the Phantom said, "that the old mine will again become one of Canada's top producers. Sartain was keeping the discovery quiet until he obtained the Parish millions. He intends to use them, or part of the money, to restore the mine and put it in operation again. His dream is to be the mining king that Carver Parish was!"

"But how can he hope to get the Parish millions?" Havens exclaimed, wonderingly.

Van answered, "That will have to wait until Sartain's under arrest."

Frank Havens sat back in his chair. After a minute he said, "And what about Clyde?"

"His murder's obvious." The Phantom shrugged. "In some way Irwin Clyde learned that the Magnalux was about to resume operations. He saw a chance to make himself some easy money. A legitimate opportunity to get in on the ground floor by buying up whatever stock he could get hold of, at bargain prices, before the news of the new lode became public. Sartain, of course, realized that he couldn't afford to have Clyde alive—with his information."

"So he took care of him?"

"In his usual satanic manner." The Phantom looked at his watch and then at Havens. "There's one last thing you can do. Call Mrs. Carver Parish. Tell her the Phantom has to see her this afternoon. Make an appointment for me with her at five o'clock. It's imperative I talk to her regarding what's happened. You can make the call now, before I leave."

Havens complied and Van, after a brief conversation with Inspector Gregg at Headquarters, picked up his bag and went back to Park Avenue. . . .

It was five o'clock to the minute when he went up the aristocratic front steps of the Parish mansion on East River Drive. Before he had left his apartment, the Phantom had changed his disguised face back to the one he had created at the beginning of the case. The glimmering plate glass doors of the vestibule mir-

rored it as he rang the front door bell.

The inner door was opened by the butler who had replaced Allison. He was a loosely built, lanky man with a long, thin face and pale, rheumy eyes. He wore his livery carelessly. The Phantom, giving him a sharp, quick look saw the man looked nervously ill at ease. His Adam's apple bobbed in his throat as he said:

"You're Mr. Gray?"

"That's right," Van answered. "I have an appointment with Mrs. Parish."

"Yes, sir. Come in." He led the way to a small reception room. "Wait here, sir. I'll tell her you're here."

His footsteps died away on the stairs. As they faded out, the Phantom, close to the reception room's door, moved swiftly out and into the foyer. The reflection of the stained glass windows patterned the stairs with a sprinkle of jewel-like colors. The big house was wrapped in an almost tomb-like quiet.

The Phantom headed for the staircase. On noiseless, cat-like feet he went up the steps. Reaching the broad first floor landing he marked the location of the door the lanky butler had stepped through and was closing after him. Then with the same noiseless speed Van, straining his ears to catch a rumble of faraway conversation, ducked quickly into the nearest room when the butler, reopening the door, came out in the hall.

The room the Phantom had entered had been Carver Parish's library. A spacious room, with a gallery at one end, its walls were lined with glass-faced bookcases that reared up from floor to ceiling. Heavy draperies, cascading over the front of the long windows, shut out the late afternoon sun. Underfoot the carpet was a moss-soft, green. The furniture around him, Van noticed, was Victorian, heavy and cumbersome.

BUT he saw those things last.

A foot in from the library's door, he waited. A minute passed. Then another. From down the hall he heard a door open, slow uncertain footsteps. He drew back, holding his head in such a position that he had a view of the corridor through a crack in the door.

Mrs. Carver Parish went past. Walking slowly, as if with an effort, the woman continued on to the stairs. The Phantom remained statue-still, his face like stone.

The next round of seconds would tell him whether or not success or failure was

to crown his plan.

He breathed evenly, his head lowered, his pulses hammering. This final moment was to bring down the curtain on a murder case without parallel in his career. If things went the way he expected, the master-killer would be in his net before another few minutes elapsed!

From the floor below came Mrs. Carver Parish's thin, fluttery voice. It penetrated the upper corridor in an almost eerie cry:

"Harry! Harry—"

As its echoes died away the Phantom's gun slid into his hand. Once more, down the corridor, a door opened. More footsteps sounded, heavy but quick this time. Van shifted his position so he could catch a glimpse of the person answering the call from below.

A man was hurrying down the hall. He was tall, well built, with soft, graying hair and a familiar face. He moved along swiftly—but not swiftly enough.

The Phantom was over the threshold of the library to meet him as the man came even with it door.

"All right, Sartain! In here—with your hands up!"

Without the dark glasses, Sartain's venom flared in his glinting gaze. Looking into his eyes, while he backed him into the library, the Phantom saw why Sartain had used the dark glasses to hide behind. The eyes burning into his were a strange greenish color, flecked with amber. Cold, merciless and betraying eyes. Anyone observing them once was not likely ever to forget them.

"So we meet again?" Sartain's voice, for all of the hate in his gaze, was coolly unruffled. "What do you expect, Phantom—to do the same thing to me you did to King and Leland?"

"Keep your hands up!" The Phantom glimpsed a telephone on a table across the library.

He backed toward it, but he had hardly put himself in motion before Sartain lunged at him.

The Phantom held his fire. The last thing he wanted was Sartain—dead. The ruthless killer had to be turned over to the law intact and alive. The payment for his crimes was going to hang over and work its dread before he finally bowed out!

He knew what was in the man's mind. With Sartain it was a gamble, a throw of the dice. He had a choice—to allow himself to be caught or to risk a bullet in one

last, desperate attempt to turn the tables and get clear. He chose to fight, hurling himself at the Phantom.

The merciless greenish eyes flamed. Sartain's onslaught made Van give ground. He saw Sartain's clutching hands reach out for him. Like lightning the Phantom's gun flashed up and dug into the man's chest.

Sartain laughed. It was a laugh that told Van he knew the Phantom wouldn't shoot.

Hammering blows at him, Sartain forced him up against one of the bookcases. The glass front shattered under the impact of the Phantom's body. Sartain was clutching for the gun when Van whipped the heel of his shoe across and down on the man's instep.

The force of it brought a grimace of pain into Sartain's livid face. He stopped in his tracks and the Phantom took full advantage of the pause. With one of his famous gun twirls he had the barrel of the automatic in his hand and its butt ready for use.

The next instant he brought it down in a carefully placed, accurate skull blow that stopped Sartain temporarily.

Without a sound, the man's legs buckling, Sartain sagged limply to the moss-soft carpet, unconscious.

The Phantom, stepping past him, hurried to the telephone.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE PHANTOM EXPLAINS



QUITE unexpectedly, the Blue Book neighborhood of East River Drive had its aristocratic calm shaken by the radio cruisers sirening to a stop in front of the Parish mansion. Crowds had gathered to see what it was all about. Not since the great social functions the Carver Parish's had staged in the past, had there been the same excitement.

Finally, the crowds dispersed, order restored and the police gone, the neighborhood began to function normally again.

But in the big house Frank Havens, Steve Huston and Chip Dorlan still remained, after their hurried arrival.

The Phantom, in the library with them, looked from one to the other, a faint, enigmatic smile on his face.

"Sartain," he began, slowly, "as you

probably realize now, is Harry Maxon, Mrs. Parish's son who was supposed to have died years ago in Denver. The son she pretended was dead because of his early criminal proclivities, a thing she was afraid might interfere with her marriage to Carver Parish."

"What made you suspect that?" Havens asked.

"Down in the Jersey hotel," Van continued, "I noticed a tiny purple blemish on Sartain's lower lip. It stuck in my mind. Somewhere I'd seen one exactly like it. And recently. Finally it came to me. Mrs. Carver Parish had that same mark on her lower lip. I had seen it the day her step-daughter was killed—here—when she had no lipstick on her mouth."

"A hereditary trade-mark," Chip Dorlan said.

"One that often passes from generation to generation," the Phantom added. "It was significant—so much so that when in Denver I took more than ordinary pains to learn about the supposedly dead son. When I was unable to turn up any official record of the death of a Harry Maxon, I had to conclude that he never died, that there was more than a strong possibility he could be the man in the dark glasses. Because, as subsequent events proved, the master-killer *had* to be someone closely affiliated with Mrs. Parish and her household."

"But the enormity of it!" Havens exclaimed. "A woman of her standing, deliberately aiding and abetting murder!"

"She was a hapless catspaw," Van replied. "Secretly, Maxon hated her because she had renounced him and pretended he was dead. She did what he told her to. And because of her social position she played along with him, hoping to circumvent a scandal. I don't believe she realized the full extent of what her cooperation meant. If she had she would never have cabled her step-daughter to return from Switzerland to her—death."

"What will happen to her?" Havens asked.

"I'm sure a medical examination will prove the woman is mentally ill," Van said. "I don't believe she'll ever be brought to trial."

"Mrs. Parish," the publisher went on, "was about to turn the estate over to her son? That's what you meant when you said he hoped to obtain the Parish millions!"

The Phantom nodded. "Exactly. He ex-

pected to use that money to pile more millions on millions."

Huston, scribbling rapid shorthand notes, looked up.

"You must have figured Sartain would be here this afternoon—"

The Phantom smiled thinly. "I knew that the minute Mr. Havens made the appointment for me with Mrs. Parish she would relay the information to Maxon. I wouldn't be surprised if he's been staying here since the Inspector combed through his Gramercy Park address."

A few minutes later Steve hurried off to the *Clarion*. Chip Dorlan got up from one of the carved library chairs.

"Guess I'll go back to Mrs. Smith's. She's probably been worrying about me." He laughed. "By the way, how about that jeweled elephant? Are you going to send it back to Sartain?"

It was Van's turn to laugh.

"I don't think it would do him much good now. All the luck pieces in the world won't keep him out of the chair."

AFTER Dorlan said good-by and ducked, Havens lighted a fresh cigar and asked a couple of final questions.

"What about Irwin Clyde? Did he get his tip on the mine inadvertently from Mrs. Parish?"

"Probably. Undoubtedly she must have

let something about the Magnalux slip out. Clyde, of course, was smart enough to pick it up and act on it."

"And Allison?"

"Mrs. Parish must have overheard him talking to me, making his appointment, as I was leaving that day," Van said. "The acoustics here are such that voices in the foyer downstairs carry up the well of the stairs to this landing. I noticed that when Mrs. Parish called to her son."

"Another case ended." Havens looked at his watch. "Well done, Phantom!"

Van smiled faintly and didn't answer. The entire credit for the cracking of the case would be the Inspector's, but that didn't matter—too much. The knowledge that one of New York's most infamous killers had been apprehended and put safely away was enough reward for the Phantom.

"I think," he said, in Richard Curtis Van Loan's slow, familiar drawl, "I'll start home, take a shower, put on some dinner clothes and—"

"And?" Havens prompted, when he paused.

"Ask your daughter if she doesn't want to look in at the East River Club with me tonight. On a guarantee," Van smiled, "you won't call her on the telephone to come home and hung up an imaginary key!"



When a sinister gang of underworld moguls leads unwary youths into the pathways of crime, the Phantom Detective battles to unearth a diabolical mystery of plunder and death in

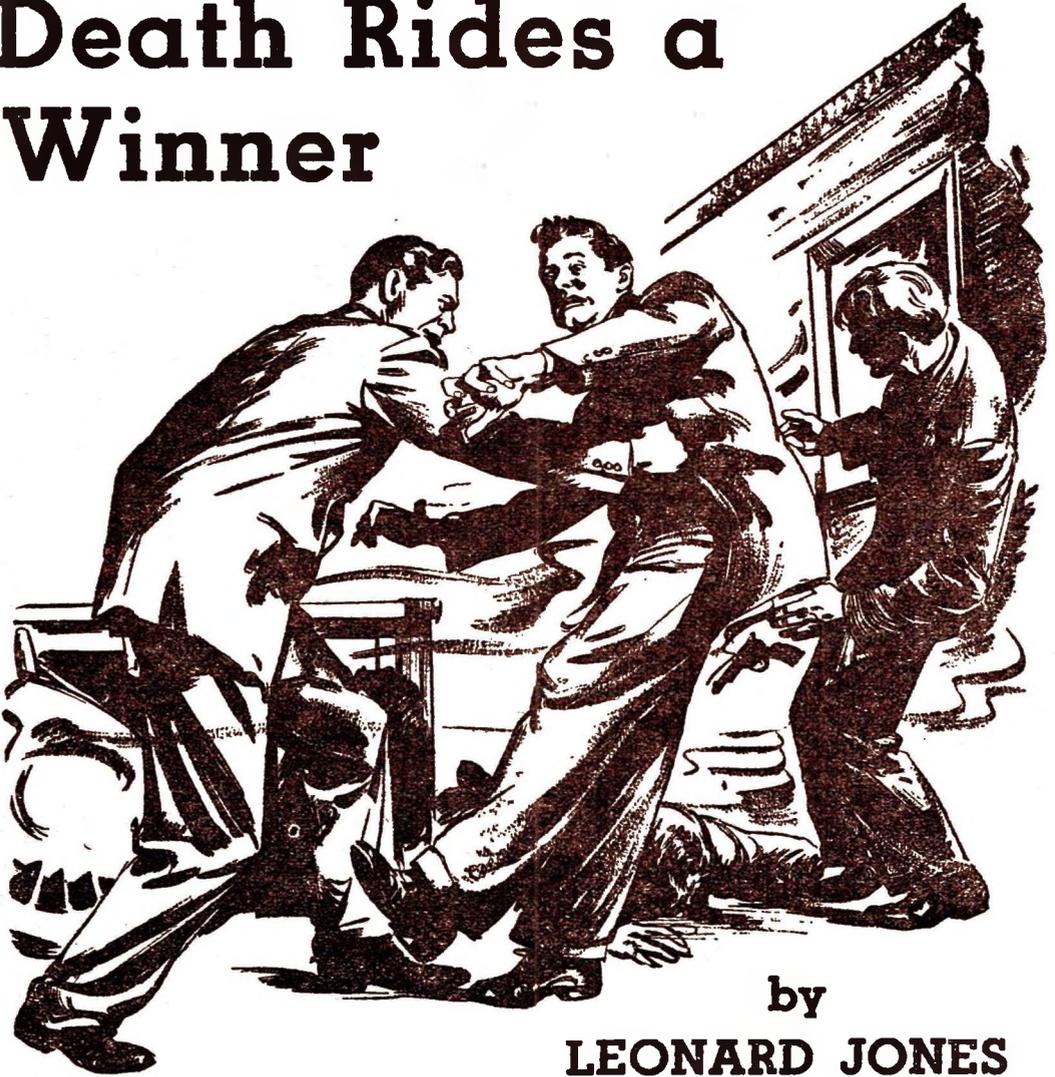
THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT

Another Exciting Complete Phantom Novel

By ROBERT WALLACE

COMING NEXT ISSUE!

Death Rides a Winner



by
LEONARD JONES

Racing reporter Tim Northolt is right there at the finish line when lethal mystery stalks the tracks!

LIKE Janus, the Roman god of war, the Stirrup Club faced two ways. One half was open to the public and was just what it purported to be—a noisy night spot catering to the racing world. The other was discreetly entered by a door in a service alley and contained the offices where Nat Colles conducted his betting business.

On the night of the Oak Springs Handicap only the front part of the club was in use. Colles was giving a dinner at which the guest of honor was Tom Som-

ers, who had booted home the winner that afternoon.

Tim Northolt, racing reporter for the *Evening Standard*, sat at a table near the wall. He took in the scene and smiled a little wryly. Nothing for nothing was Colles' motto, and Northolt knew he had been invited only for the publicity he might be able to give. A dinner for half a column in the *Standard*; not too flattering an estimate of what his stuff was worth.

Somers, a youngster of twenty or so,

and only in his second year of riding, was taking the compliments and applause with mingled embarrassment and gratification. Northolt listened, yawned, and hoped he was not taking it too seriously. He had seen more than one promising young athlete put the skids under himself by believing he was as good as his admirers told him he was.

Colles himself presided over the center table, faultlessly attired in tails and white tie. Most of the others were known to Northolt, though there were a few strangers, notably one girl whose level gray eyes held a hint of amusement as she studied the queer types the racing game seems to attract. She caught the reporter's glance, and he was suddenly and uncomfortably aware of his undisciplined shock of hair and his carelessly pressed suit.

The arrival of an individual whose sartorial standards were even lower than the newspaperman's own provided a relief. Detective-lieutenant Simpson, in baggy tweeds and crumpled tie slouched in, nodded mournfully to the diners at the main table, and sat down opposite Northolt with the resigned sigh of a man whose arches aren't all they used to be.

"'Lo, Tim," he said by way of greeting. "Thought the Automat was the limit of your night clubbing."

"I'll ignore that," said Northolt. "What are you doing in this den of vice?"

"I don't know," admitted the detective lugubriously. "I never enjoy myself. Some day I'll close this joint up. Betting is against the law."

"Do tell," said Northolt politely.

SIMPSON glanced around appraisingly. "What sort of shindig is this going to be?" he asked. "Civilized, or are there after-dinner speeches? If there are, I'm going to sleep. Can't imagine why Colles invited me in the first place."

"Probably wanted someone to watch the silver," said Northolt cynically. "When these racing bugs go broke they're really flat."

"Something in that," admitted Simpson.

His deceptively mild eyes moved speculatively from one guest to another. They lit up appreciatively as they fell on the blonde who had already attracted Northolt's attention, then passed on reluctantly to the next. In spite of being a happily and thoroughly married man

Simpson had his moments of near-humanity.

As he had feared, after the tables were cleared the speeches began, and he sat through them with a martyred air. But even an after-dinner speech has to come to an end, and by midnight the last platitude had been brought out of moth-balls and the last fulsome compliment uttered.

Possibly young Somers had been as bored as the detective. At any rate, it was with an expression of relief that he got to his feet at the end.

"I'll see about a taxi," Northolt heard him say to the girl with him, and went through the door with the lithe tread of a youngster in perfect training.

"Thank goodness that's over," muttered Simpson, stretching his cramped legs. "I'll never—"

Whatever he was going to say was never finished. From the street came the crash of a volley of shots, followed by the sound of a car racing away from the club. With a startled grunt Simpson leaped for the door, with Northolt hard on his heels. Behind them they heard a babel of voices as the others tried to collect their scattered wits.

The street was empty when they reached the sidewalk, the dingy expanse of asphalt dimly lit by the hooded lamps over the door. Not quite empty, either. The tail-light of a fast car was just vanishing around the corner in a mocking red arc, and on the sidewalk in front of them sprawled the bullet-riddled body of the jockey, Tom Somers.

As they bent over the body they heard a stifled scream behind them. Out of the corner of his eye Northolt caught a glimpse of the girl, her hand pressed hard against her mouth, and her gray eyes opened wide in horror.

There was no need of a doctor to tell them that Somers was dead. He must have been shot at least five times, and one slug had taken him between the eyes. Simpson rose slowly to his feet, his eyes a gleam with the light that always filled them when he had stumbled across the trail of a killer. Aside from that his expression was unchanged from its usual gloomy norm.

"This," he said to no one in particular, "is going to make trouble."

Northolt reflected grimly that it was a new high in the way of understatement. When the headline hit the city

next morning that the winner of the season's most important race had been murdered a few hours after it the public would make the devil's own fuss. All of which reminded him that there was a newspaper that paid him for news, and that there was a telephone in the lobby of the club.

Simpson probably guessed what he was thinking.

"Call the Homicide Squad for me while you're at it," he said as Northolt started back up the steps. "I'll have to stick here until a cop comes along. There's never one around when you want him."

The first wave of excitement following the murder eased off about mid-morning the next day, or the same day, to be exact. The *Standard* had put out an extra edition, and Northolt had been in constant demand by editors and rewrite men. He was trying to snatch a few minutes rest when one of the office boys came up to him with the air of one who imparts momentous news.

"Dame waiting to see you, Tim," he said.

"What sort of dame?" asked Northolt cautiously.

He had had experience before with women waiting to see him. Usually they had scandal to sell, but there had been one hot-tempered actress who had mistaken him for the *Standard's* dramatic critic and greeted him with a pot shot from a toy automatic. Fortunately her shooting had been even worse than her acting. But he was not taking any more chances.

THE office boy made a curve-sketching gesture in the air. "A blonde," he said, "and has she got what it takes?"

"I'm surprised at you," said Northolt, getting to his feet. "I thought you were still being true to Grable."

"I am," said the office boy with stout good sense. "But Grable is in Hollywood, and this skirt is right here. Ask her if she's got a friend," he called as Northolt went toward his office.

He found the girl waiting by the window. She was the same one who had attracted his attention the night before at the Stirrup Club, and her eyes showed signs of recent grief.

"You wanted to see me?" he asked.

She nodded. She was looking at him anxiously, estimating him.

"My name is Edith Somers," she said.

"My brother was killed last night. You know—you were there."

Northolt's first feeling was one of illogical relief. He had been under the impression she was Somers' fiancée.

"I'm terribly sorry," he said. "It was a shocking business. If there's anything I can do—"

"I think there is." The girl was twisting her gloves nervously. "People are saying the race my brother won was crooked. That's not true! Tom would never have done a thing like that. He loved racing too much to be a party to cheating. And I want your help proving it."

Northolt blinked. He hated to disillusion her, but he had heard some of the rumors himself, and he was of the opinion there was a basis of fact behind them, that the race had been crooked.

"The police—" he began cautiously.

The girl made an impatient gesture. "I know," she said. "They'll do their part. They'll find out who killed Tom. But I can't be sure they'll clear his name, and that would have been even more important to him."

"I see. But why me?"

Edith Somers looked away. "I don't know," she said slowly. "But I was watching you last night. Maybe it's your impossible red hair." She laughed, a laugh that was not far from tears. "Or maybe I'm wrong about you. But I got the impression that you were human, and that you could be trusted. And—and I don't know where else to turn."

Northolt frowned irresolutely, then nodded. "All right," he said. "I'll do what I can, but I warn you that if I find out the truth I'll have to print it. And that holds no matter which way the truth points."

The girl nodded stubbornly. "That's fair enough," she said. "If Tom was mixed up in anything. . . But I know he wasn't."

On the principle that the best place for a start was at the beginning, as soon as the girl had gone Northolt took a taxi to the Oak Springs track. A word with the stewards or trainers might be useful. Also he wanted, if possible, to see Rains, the jockey who had come in second.

The track on a Sunday looked far different than it did on a Saturday afternoon, when it was jammed with people. It was almost deserted when the reporter arrived. A few horses were being ex-

exercised, and a dozen or so stable boys were perched idly on the rail watching them.

A slender youngster was walking across the paddock in their direction. Recognizing him as the man he was looking for, Northolt opened the cab door and hailed him.

The jockey, his hands in his pockets and a sullen expression on his face, came over.

"How are you, Rains?" said Northolt cheerfully. "I just wanted to ask you something about yesterday's race. Did you—"

Rains' face grew fiery red, and he turned away with a muffled curse.

"You can keep your devilish questions to yourself," he said.

Northolt stared after him in blank astonishment. "Now, what in blazes has happened to him?" he wondered aloud.

One of the stable boys standing nearby looked at him curiously.

"Ain't you heard?" he asked. "He's been suspended for the rest of the season. The judges think he pulled his horse yesterday."

Northolt whistled thoughtfully. No wonder the jockey hadn't wanted to answer any questions about the race! But at the same time it answered one question. The race *had* been crooked.

AFTER a moment's inconsequential talk with the stable boy Northolt made his way across the deserted enclosure to the little glass-fronted building where the track stewards usually transacted their business. When he went into the office he found it occupied by Merton, the head steward. With him, looking as sad as ever, was Lieutenant Simpson.

The detective nodded to him as he entered. Merton, who knew him slightly, waved him to a chair.

"I suppose you're here about that mess last night?" he said. "I was just talking it over with the lieutenant."

"There were one or two things I hoped to find out," admitted Northolt. "But what's this about Rains being suspended? Is it true?"

"I'm afraid it is," said Merton regretfully. His finely cut features bore lines of worry. "I've no doubt whatever that there was something wrong with that race. Unfortunately we didn't have conclusive enough proof at the time to de-

clare it void. That means all bets stand. I blame myself for not acting at once, but I hated to admit that one of our jockeys—" He spread his hands in a gesture of distaste. "Rains was a protégé of mine," he explained. "I had hoped there was a great future for him."

Northolt nodded comprehendingly. "And Somers? Do you think he knew he was riding in a crooked race?"

Merton drummed on the desk with a pencil, and the frown on his face deepened.

"It isn't easy to say," he admitted. "He must have suspected something. Remember, he was neck and neck with Rains towards the finish. If Rains pulled his mount, he must have seen it. But he said nothing, and that doesn't look good for him."

"No youngster his age wants the reputation of being a squealer," Simpson put in mildly. "And he may not have noticed. But the fact remains that he wasn't killed for nothing."

"You're sure then that the race and the killing are linked up?" asked Northolt.

It was a statement of fact rather than a question, and Simpson accepted it as such.

"Somebody made a packet on that race," he said quietly. "Out of eight runners, only Somers' or Rains' mount had a chance of winning. With one of those two eliminated the other was a certainty. Somebody backed Somers at the last minute with nearly fifty grand. Whoever it was knew the ropes well enough to do it without upsetting the odds too much. We're still trying to trace that dough. When we find out who backed Somers we'll have the person who bribed Rains to pull that race. But whether that person also killed Somers I don't know. I can't figure a motive for it."

"Maybe Somers did see something, and was killed to keep him from telling what he'd seen," suggested the reporter.

Simpson frowned. "Possibly," he said. "Frankly, I'm up a tree. If it became known that Rains pulled his horse, you might expect the gamblers who backed the loser to take it out on him. If it weren't that the two jocks were as different as night and day I'd put it down to a case of mistaken identity." He paused, and looked speculatively at the reporter. "What's your angle, Tim? You're not

on the crime side of the *Standard*."

In spite of himself Northolt felt his face grow red. "I'm sort of looking into it for—for a friend. Someone interested in clearing Somers' reputation."

Merton smiled faintly at that, and Simpson looked vaguely at the ceiling.

"Blonde, age twenty-three, height five feet seven, answers to the name of Edith," the detective murmured. "It's nice work if you can get it."

"Is there anything you don't know?" demanded Northolt in exasperated amusement.

"I get around," Simpson agreed modestly. He got to his feet. "Well, I'll be getting back to town. Much obliged, Mr. Merton. Can I give you a lift, Tim? Squad car outside."

"No, thanks," said Northolt. "I've got a cab waiting."

"Expense accounts, they're wonderful!" said Simpson. "Be seeing you, then."

When Simpson had gone Merton's attitude seemed to undergo a subtle change. His manner became brusque and impatient, and he answered Northolt's questions in curt monosyllables. It was not until the reporter asked about the delay in suspending Rains that he found out the reason for the steward's preoccupation.

FOR a moment Merton had stared at him with undisguised hostility. Then his shrug was a hopeless gesture. He seemed suddenly to have grown older.

"I suppose I may as well tell the truth," he said at last. "The public has a right to know." He paused, and his fingers drummed the desk nervously. "I'm handing in my resignation. I saw Rains pull that horse, and I refused to believe the evidence of my own eyes. More than that, when the judges wanted to declare the race void I opposed it. I wanted to give Rains a chance to explain—as if there could be any explanation! Racing is the finest sport in the world, but only as long as it's kept clean. Keeping it clean was my job, and I failed. I've no choice but to resign. But I'll ask you as a favor not to print it until tomorrow."

Northolt nodded. He could understand Merton's position, and he sympathized with him. At the same time he realized that resignation was the only course open to the head steward. North-

olt was beginning to wish he had never become involved in the whole muddled affair. He had discovered nothing that tended to involve Somers, but neither had he uncovered any positive proof of his innocence. And when the news of Rains' suspension became public property people would talk. They would say Somers had not been killed for nothing, that he must have been in on the deal.

The newspaperman sighed and got to his feet. "Give me a ring when you're ready to break the story," he said. "Remember, I work for a newspaper."

"You'll hear about it," said Merton. There was a grimness in his voice that made Northolt look at him sharply. "You'll hear about it," repeated Merton. "Thanks, and good afternoon."

Northolt went back to town. He had intended to call on Edith Somers, but he was unwilling to do that without any progress to report. On impulse he told the driver of the cab to set him down at the Stirrup Club. There was a chance that Nat Colles might have heard rumors through the gamblers who had thronged his club the day of the race.

Colles grinned ruefully when Northolt asked him if he remembered anything about the race.

"I remember it, all right," he said, with a shake of the head. "I lost more than I like to think about on that race." He glanced shrewdly at the reporter. "The boys are saying it was crooked. Anything to it? Or is it just talk?"

"I'm afraid it's more than talk," said Northolt. "Rains is out for the rest of the season. Maybe for good."

Colles' eyebrows shot up, and he pursed his lips in a silent whistle.

"Rains, eh?" he repeated thoughtfully. "Merton's white-haired boy! I'd never have suspected it. A blow for Merton, that."

"Yes. But the trouble is that every jockey who rode in that race is under suspicion, especially the winner. You haven't heard anything yourself?"

Colles shook his head. "No, I'm afraid I haven't heard much. Most of the regulars were taken more or less by surprise. But I shouldn't worry too much about what people say. The whole business will blow over eventually."

Which was undoubtedly true, but not much help. Northolt left the Stirrup Club feeling that he was on a hopeless job. Colles accompanied him to the door,

and after he had gone stood for a moment looking after him. Then he shrugged and went back with the air of a man who has his own troubles to worry about.

Northolt drifted around town pursuing one lead after another, but all of them ended in blind alleys. It wasn't until late in the evening that it occurred to him there was one important question he had forgotten to ask Merton.

Merton's job as turf steward was an honorary one, for by profession he was a stock broker. The chances were that as such he had looked after Rains' financial affairs. If Rains had pulled that race he had been paid plenty for it, and Merton might be able to trace any such payment. Perhaps he already knew.

Northolt glanced at his watch. Nine o'clock. Most likely Merton would be at the house he occupied not far from the track. He decided to pay him a second call. By the time he got there it was not far from ten.

Merton was a man of simple but cultivated taste, and his choice of a home reflected the fact. Unmarried, his own requirements were few, but he entertained frequently, and the house had been chosen with that in mind. It was a fair-sized Georgian home, set well back from the road and surrounded by carefully laid out grounds.

AS NORTHOLT turned in the gate he could see a light from one of the first floor windows, and he breathed his relief. At least Merton was home.

But if he was, he was singularly reluctant to answer the bell. Northolt could hear it distinctly, but no footsteps came in response to its repeated ringing. Frowning, the reporter studied the curtained window. He could not see through it, but surely it would not be lit unless Merton or one of the servants was in. With a vague but growing feeling of uneasiness he went around and tried the rear entrance. Still no result. He was sure now that something was wrong.

He was on the point of trying a window when he noticed that the door of the attached garage was open. There might be a connecting door to the house. At any rate it was worth trying.

Merton's car was standing inside, and as he passed Northolt idly turned his flashlight on the interior. It was empty. He was about to turn away when a glint

of metal caught his eye. He opened the door to look closer, and his lips tightened. Wedged in between the seat and the back cushions, where his flashlight had caught it only by chance, was a bur-nished brass cartridge case.

He picked it out, careful not obscure a possible finger print. It was from a .38 automatic, the same type of gun that had been used to kill Somers.

That put an entirely different face on the matter. Merton had spoken of Rains as a protégé, but the relationship between the two was more like father and son. Suppose Somers had gone to him after the race and told him what he must have seen? Merton might, under pretext of wanting to investigate further, have persuaded Somers to say nothing to anyone else, and then killed him that night to keep his mouth shut. He had overlooked the empty cartridge case, or assumed that it had been ejected through the window.

Northolt was beginning to regret the fact that he had come unarmed. A man who had killed once to keep someone from talking might not hesitate to do so again. But at least he had the advantage of knowing the danger. He would not be the unsuspecting victim Somers had been. Quietly he opened the communicating door and entered the house.

He found himself in a sort of anteroom, dimly illuminated by what moonlight filtered through the windows. Opposite him he could see a glimmer of light under a door. That would be from the room whose curtained window he had seen from outside. He crossed to it on silent feet, cautiously turned the handle, and flung the door wide.

Merton was seated at a wide-topped desk facing him, his head slumped forward as if he were asleep. He did not move as the door crashed back against the wall, and reason enough. There was a small bluish hole near his right temple from which blood was still seeping, and by his right hand, hanging limp over the arm of the chair, lay a .38 automatic. Merton would give no further information.

"So he beat us to it, eh?"

Northolt jumped a foot. Just behind him stood Lieutenant Simpson, a look of disappointment on his face.

"What in blazes are you doing here?" demanded Northolt.

"Same as you, probably," said Simp-

son. "I wanted to ask him some questions. I even had a warrant for his arrest. Suicide—maybe the best way out for him."

Northolt looked at him in growing astonishment. "You suspected him, too?"

"Too?" Simpson looked sharply at the reporter.

Northolt told him about the cartridge case in the car, and the detective nodded.

"That's another link in the chain against him," he said. "We've traced those bets that were made on Rains. Fifty thousand at an average of three to two. Merton made them, through agents. And Rains deposited five thousand in his account the day before the race. You can put two and two together yourself and get the same answer. I reckon that about winds up the case."

"It seems unbelievable that a man like that would stoop to cold-blooded murder," said Northolt.

"I wouldn't have expected it myself," admitted Simpson. "Or that he'd have chosen that way out, either. Still, no one can claim to know what goes on in another man's mind."

"I suppose not."

Simpson shook himself, as if to get rid of something unpleasant.

"Usual people to notify," he sighed. "Hang on here a minute, will you, while I phone the department."

WHILE Simpson was phoning from the hall, Northolt was idly turning over some papers on the desk. Usually suicides leave a note, but this time there was no sign of one. Perhaps Merton considered his action sufficiently clear without leaving a written explanation.

Most of the papers Northolt saw related to Merton's stockbroking business, and even a cursory examination was enough for the reporter to see that it was shaky. Merton's need for money was obvious enough. There were records of sales of various holdings at what Northolt knew were sacrifice prices, including one transfer of an oil stock whose face value was one hundred thousand dollars at half that price. The buyer's name did not appear.

"Anything interesting?" asked Simpson, coming back into the room.

"Nothing much," said Northolt, pushing the papers toward the detective. "Merton's business was on the rocks."

Simpson nodded. "The usual story,"

he said indifferently. "What's on your program now? Staying on?"

Northolt shook his head. "Back to town for me," he said. "There's a story to be written. I was going to hold it until tomorrow, but there's no need for that now."

Northolt's story was not written exactly on the lines he had intended. On the way back to town he had been mulling over what had happened, and he was not satisfied.

His knowledge of stock dealings was limited, but even so he had the impression the sale of those oil stocks was queer. Oil was booming. Why had Merton sold at half price? He made a phone call from a booth at Grand Central. The financial editor of the *Standard* answered his ring.

"Northolt," said the reporter. "That you, Craig? Can you tell me off-hand what Pine Flat Petroleum is worth?"

Craig's voice betrayed his curiosity. "That's out of your line, isn't it? But I can tell you, all right. It's worth current prices for wall paper, and not a cent more. If anybody is trying to sell you some, hit him with the handiest bottle."

Northolt was thinking fast. It looked as if Merton had got fifty thousand for worthless stock. Or had he? Why shouldn't it have been a blind to cover transfer of other cash?

"It's a registered stock, isn't it?" he asked. "Who's been buying lately?"

"What am I—a directory?" asked Craig plaintively. "If anybody's been buying you'll probably find him in the nearest booby hatch. But I'll look up the records for you. Hang on."

Northolt heard the receiver being placed on the desk. A few minutes later Craig was speaking again.

"Beats me," he said wonderingly, "but it looks as if you were right. Man named Colles bought a block of it Friday. Barnum was right, I guess."

"Thanks, Craig," said Northolt. "That's what I wanted."

"Uh-huh. Don't mind me—that hissing noise is my curiosity boiling over. What gives?"

"You'll read about it in the morning," said Northolt.

He hung up the receiver, cutting short Craig's protests. For a moment he looked with unseeing eyes at the hurrying crowds. Odd that a man so astute as Colles should have paid fifty thousand

for stock known to be valueless. So odd that Northolt intended to ask him the reason in person. . .

The murder the night before had done nothing to harm business at the Stirrup Club. If anything, it was a help. In addition to the regular patrons, scores of morbid sensation seekers had thronged to the scene of the tragedy, and the place was packed.

Northolt was stopped by a bulky figure standing by the entrance, a figure whose hulking muscles and battered face seemed incongruous in the flawlessly cut tuxedo he wore.

"Sorry," came the smooth challenge. "No one permitted not in evening dress. . . . Oh, it's you, Northolt. What's on your mind? You know it's a club rule—evening clothes after ten."

Northolt recognized him as Harris, one of Colles' heavy duty men. His job was to act as unofficial bodyguard to the club owner, as well as sifting the clientele of the club.

"I want a word with Colles," said the reporter. "It's urgent."

Harris' face was blank and expressionless, but he managed to convey an atmosphere of hostility all the same.

"I'm not sure the boss wants to be disturbed tonight," he said. "Better see him in the morning."

"I'd prefer to see him now," said Northolt, and his voice was hard. "Tell him I've just been talking to Merton."

HARRIS' eyes flickered slightly, but his face did not change. "I'll tell him," he said. "Wait here."

Harris was gone only a couple of minutes. "The boss will see you," he said curtly. "This way."

Northolt followed him along a narrow passage that led to the rear of the club. From time to time snatches of music and alcoholic laughter reached him, but there seemed to be no direct communication between the passageway and the club.

Colles was waiting for him in the back room he used for his betting. The odds for that ill-fated race on Saturday were still chalked on the board. The club owner waved him to a chair. Northolt remained standing. He observed that Harris had taken up his position just inside the door, and was watching him impassively. A second man came from an adjoining room and joined him.

"Harris tells me you've been talking to Merton," said Colles. His attitude was one of polite interest. "I'm curious to know what that has to do with me. I don't want to seem abrupt, Tim, but I'm a busy man."

"I don't for a moment doubt it," said Northolt drily. "The proverbial bee has nothing on you when it comes to getting around."

There was a pause while the tension grew.

"We were speaking of Merton," said Colles.

"So we were. I've just come from his place. He's given me some very interesting information about Saturday's race."

Colles exchanged a quick glance at the others at that. He frowned and turned back to the reporter.

"What's your angle, Northolt?" he demanded curtly. "What's the race to you?"

"I'm always interested in a crooked race," said the reporter.

Colles nodded. "I heard it was fixed. You told me. Rains, wasn't it? Pity. He was a good rider, but he's finished now."

"So are you," said Northolt quietly. "You might have got away with a gambling fraud, but not murder. You're finished, Colles."

Colles grinned crookedly. "For a minute I thought you said murder," he gibed. "Seems to me I have two witnesses to prove I couldn't have done it. You and Simpson."

"I wasn't talking about Somers' murder," said Northolt. "I was talking about Merton's. Your faked suicide was good, but you should have gone through his papers. That oil deal was suspicious from the start."

"Carelessness," murmured Colles. "And who killed Somers?"

"For a guess, your playmates here," said Northolt coolly. "Harris, or the little man beside him. Maybe both. At your orders, of course. Need I go on?"

"No," Colles was scowling blackly. "And just where do you think all that leaves you?"

That was something the reporter was beginning to wonder about himself. He hadn't intended to go so far. He had meant merely to satisfy himself that his theory was correct, then bow out gracefully, leaving it for Lieutenant Simpson

to take over. Now there was no mistaking Colles' intentions any more than the menace of the revolver that had suddenly appeared in his hand.

"You're a fool, Northolt," said Colles.

He raised his gun. Northolt leaped forward. There was the roar of a shot, and the reporter found himself struggling with a dead man. There was something so repellent in Colles' sudden glassy-eyed limpness that he cried out aloud. For a moment he could not understand what had happened, and then he saw. From that unguarded passageway had emerged a figure whose hate-filled eyes held as much menace as the smoking gun he held. The last man Northolt had expected to see—Rains, the jockey who had thrown the race.

Harris and the other man went for their guns. Rains and Harris fired at the same instant, while the reporter floored the third man with a wicked right to the pit of the stomach.

Both shots had gone home. Harris was on his knees, coughing blood, and even as Northolt looked he slumped forward on his face and lay still. Rains was still standing, but swaying so that he would have fallen had not Northolt caught him and eased him into a chair. Rains grinned, a lopsided effort twisted by pain.

"You're one up on Simpson, eh? I was watching—I saw Colles put that cartridge case where you found it. I knew he'd killed Mr. Merton, but I hadn't a gun then—" his voice trailed off into silence. . .

HELL live," the police surgeon said, some half hour later.

Lieutenant Simpson grunted, but he

was plainly relieved. "Lucky for him you were there," he commented to Northolt. "He went to the Stirrup Club to commit a murder. With Colles threatening you it becomes justifiable homicide. Just what happened, exactly?"

The reporter explained. "Merton was more of a criminal than we—or Rains—suspected," he said. "Colles approached him with the idea of cleaning up on a fixed race. Merton needed money badly, and he agreed. Colles furnished the cash, and Merton made the bets. He'd insisted on a fake stock transfer to cover the amount involved, in order to avert suspicion from himself.

"The original plan must have been to bribe Somers. But Merton introduced his own angle. He wanted the lot, and he worked out a scheme to keep from having to split with Colles. Instead of attempting to bribe Somers, he persuaded Rains to throw the race, and told Colles everything was set as planned.

"Somers won, Merton collected seventy grand and kept fifty thousand more of Colles' money, and Colles believed Somers had doublecrossed them. We know how Somers was killed. Colles' gunmen took care of him, giving Colles himself an alibi. Then, unknowingly, I gave Colles the clue to what had actually happened by telling him of Rains' suspension. He went out to Merton's place, killed him to make it look like suicide, and planted evidence to make it look as if Merton had killed Somers."

Northolt paused. "Actually it was a remark of yours that made me begin to suspect the truth. You said it was like a case of mistaken identity. That's exactly what it was."



Follow the Exploits of Tony Quinn, the Masked Nemesis of Crime
Known as the Black Bat, in **THE RIDDLE OF THE DEAD MAN'S
BEQUEST**, an exciting complete mystery novel by G. WAYMAN
JONES featured in March **BLACK BOOK DETECTIVE**
—now on sale, 20c per copy at all stands!

Master OF



by Jackson Hite

Meet Professor Edward Oscar Heinrich, the noted American scientific criminologist, whose mystery-solving exploits are so astounding that they seem almost like black magic!

FEW men in the United States actually are criminologists in the sense of the word, i.e., experts in the scientific study and investigation of crime and criminals. Of these, Edward Oscar Heinrich of Berkeley, California, stands head and shoulders above the rest, and is the only one of his kind to be listed in Who's Who.

To students at the University of Cali-

fornia, Dr. Heinrich is a partially bald, pipe-smoking professor of chemistry. To police departments in many sections of the country, he is a consulting expert on various technical phases including poisons, spectograph, microscopy, handwriting, ballistics, and others. To hundreds of criminals who are now behind bars for their crimes, Dr. Heinrich is a master of black magic who in some quiet,

Clues

UNUSUAL AMERICAN DETECTIVES

One of a series of inspiring true stories which tell the saga of the plainclothes men who protect Mr. and Mrs. American Citizen—in many more ways than the average person can realize! Here you will find the records of lawmen who operate in off-the-track fields. All these stories are based on authentic and actual cases. —



A hidden gunman suddenly opened fire on the three girls

cloistered spot, distilled evidence against them although they had been certain they had committed the perfect crime.

Even seasoned law enforcement officials regard Professor Heinrich with awe. They wonder how he does it, particularly since he isn't called into a case until others have failed and much of the valuable evidence destroyed by bungling hands. Few cases can equal the astonishing performance he

gave in 1927 when with nothing more than a pair of stained overalls, he practically was able to write a detailed biography of the wearer.

It was in October of that year when three men held up Southern Pacific Train No. 13 as it made its way up a steep mountain pass in Siskeyou, Oregon. The bandits had planned their job with extreme cunning since the train had to travel slowly

at that spot in order to make the tough grade. Suddenly swooping out from behind a screen of trees, they clambered aboard the train and in cold-blood shot down the engineer, the fireman and the brakeman.

When the plucky railway clerks refused to open the door to the mail car, the bandits fired through the door and then dynamited the car. A mail clerk was killed in the blast which followed. The bandits had used so much dynamite that they almost wrecked the entire train. Frightened by the effects of the blast, they fled without any loot, leaving four bodies behind them. This holocaust of banditry had taken just ten minutes.

The area soon was swarming with local, state, Federal, and railroad police who found a gun with its numbers filed off, an automobile magneto used as a detonating battery, some empty gunnysacks in which the train robbers had hoped to carry away their loot, and a pair of greasy overalls.

Crystal Ball Stuff

All the clues were examined carefully and studied without much being gleaned from them, except the magneto. This was traced to a mountain village repair shop and when the officers discovered that the mechanic there was an ex-convict they reasoned they had solved the case—particularly after he was ordered to put on the discarded overalls and they fit him. The prisoner insisted that he had not stirred from the village and had enough reputable witnesses backing him up to throw some first-class doubts about his connection with the crime.

With the suspect holding firm in his denial of guilt, one of the officials decided to send the overalls to Dr. Heinrich and see if he could find some clue they might have overlooked. The overalls, of course, had been examined thoroughly by scores of officers.

Dr. Heinrich accepted the overalls and retired to his laboratory. Several days passed and then he sent a telegram to authorities in Oregon. The men blinked, rubbed their eyes, and then re-read the message, not daring to believe what appeared on paper.

The telegram Dr. Heinrich sent read:

You are holding the wrong man. The overalls you sent were worn by a left-handed

lumberjack working around Douglas fir trees. He is a white man between twenty-one and twenty-five years of age, not over five feet ten inches tall, weighing about 165 pounds. He has medium light brown hair, a fair complexion, light brown eyebrows, small hands and feet, and is rather fastidious in his personal habits. Apparently he has lived and worked in the Pacific Northwest. Look for such a man. More coming later.

One of the officials who read the telegram snorted and then said, "I suppose that next he'll wire us the man's name. How could he tell all that from a pair of dirty overalls? We all looked at the garment and we're not blind."

Several days later the officials were rendered numb by Professor Heinrich's latest message. In a laconic wire he informed them that the man who had worn the overalls was named Roy d'Autremont.

By now the officers working on the case were convinced that Dr. Heinrich either was trying to pull off a tremendous crystal ball bluff or else was a miracle worker. Several traveled post-haste to Berkeley to find out how he arrived at his amazing information with nothing more than a pair of dirty overalls to work with.

First of all they wanted to know how he knew that a man named Roy d'Auremont had ever worn the overalls. His explanation left them with red faces.

The college professor had carefully brushed out the contents of the pockets in the garment. Wedged in a corner of a pocket was a tiny rolled up piece of paper that all the officers working on the case had ignored. Dr. Heinrich had taken this piece of paper, ironed it smooth, and subjected it to various chemical tests. He discovered that it was part of a registered mail receipt and he was able to bring up the number, date and issuing post office which was in Eugene, Oregon. Post office records showed that this receipt had been issued to Roy d'Autremont. The description of Roy tallied perfectly with the one given by Dr. Heinrich.

The persistent officers wanted to know how the criminologist had been able to describe the wearer even before he knew his identity. Heinrich said he had analyzed the stains on the overalls and found that they were caused by pitch from Douglas fir trees, the kind that grow in the Pacific Northwest.

Since these stains were not fresh, he knew that the wearer had to be a lumberjack in that region. This was further con-

firmed by the dust he found in the pockets which was examined under the microscope and proved to be minute particles of Douglas fir trees. He knew the man was left-handed because the wear and tear on the buttonholes showed that they had been buttoned from the left side.

Two Wrongfully Accused

Hairs found clinging to one of the overall buttons, helped him determine the man's complexion and color as well as the age group. He was able to tell that the man was fastidious because he found particles of nail clippings in the pockets. They were narrow and clean. It is a known fact that very few lumberjacks care that much about their appearance that they constantly clip their nails. The nail parings also indicated the small size of the man's fingers.

By measuring the overalls and the creases in the garments caused by the body of the wearer he had been able to determine the man's height and weight. Subsequent investigation proved that the three d'Autremont brothers—Roy, Ray and Hugh—had fled from their homes about the time of the train massacre.

For several years persistent post-office inspectors kept on their trail and finally rounded them up. The men admitted their guilt and were sentenced to life imprisonment, caught because Roy's overalls had told such an amazing story to Dr. Heinrich.

At one time in his career, Professor Heinrich served as Chief of Police of Alameda in California, but his talents as an expert were too much in demand for him to remain tied to one department. Although he usually is a consultant for law enforcement agencies, now and then Dr. Heinrich will appear as an expert witness for the defense and such an appearance usually results in the vindication of the accused.

Naturally enough, he doesn't appear in such a case unless he is completely convinced of the innocence of the person accused.

One of the most discussed cases on the West Coast was the death of beautiful Allene Lamson, wife of David Lamson, who was found dead in their cottage on the Stanford University campus. Lamson claimed that his wife had fractured her skull by a fall in the bathtub while police charged that the husband had killed her

by hitting her on the head with an iron pipe.

Three times the state tried to convict Lamson but found themselves unable to overcome the testimony of Heinrich that the line of the arc of the bloodstains showed that Mrs. Lamson had fallen and accidentally injured herself. After his harrowing experiences and his final vindication, Lamson became a noted writer.

There is a taxicab driver walking the streets of a California town today a free man because of the wizardry of Professor Heinrich. The hackman claimed that a passenger had blackjacked him and in defending himself he had killed the man. The blackjack was on the floor of the cab. The driver had too few bruises to show police for them to believe his story and he was arrested, charged with the murder of his passenger.

Heinrich was asked to assist the defendant. He examined the blackjack and found some hairs trapped in the woven leather covering the steel shot. Several hairs were snipped from the corpse and from the taxi driver. Micro-analysis proved that the hairs in the blackjack actually were from the cabbie's head, upholding his story. The murder charge against him was dropped.

Geometry to the Rescue

Part of Professor Heinrich's seeming ability to find clues where nobody else can, is due to his attention to minor details and his refusal to allow anybody to do his thinking for him. He does not accept the word of a witness, no matter how honest and sincere that individual may be, until he has checked the information for himself. This is not due to any capricious nature, but to the very understandable fact that witnesses can make honest mistakes which if accepted at face value would lead officers to a dead end.

While Heinrich still was police chief in Alameda, three girls were walking on the street when an armed man hidden somewhere opened fire at them. One of the girls was killed, another critically injured, while the third escaped. The officers who raced to the scene found a witness who lived nearby. He said that he saw the shots fired by a man who stood in front of a basement window on the other side of the street. "Why I even saw the flash of his gun," the witness told the officers. The shooting had occurred at dusk.

Powerful lights were strung up and police searched the ground where the killer had stood but they were unable to find any footprints or empty cartridges. They reasoned that the gunman had picked up the shells before fleeing.

When Heinrich arrived at the scene, he studied the basement window in front of which the witness said the killer had been standing. The officers wondered what had happened to their chief when they saw him peering into the window waving his arms in various directions and then working out on paper a problem in geometry. Finally the chief directed his men to go across the street and look behind a certain bush of a particular house there. The mystified officers did and stared in surprise at several empty cartridge shells.

Heinrich reasoned that the witness had not seen the actual shooting as he thought, but a reflection of the gun flash in the basement window. If this were so, then the killer really had been standing on the same side of the street with the witness.

The witness laughed loud and long when this was suggested to him, but he agreed to stand at the exact spot he had been when the shooting occurred. Heinrich now had three fixed points—the spot where the witness had been standing, the place where the girls had been shot, and the window. By working his problem out mathematically, he was able to pinpoint the exact place the killer had been standing. It was later proven that Dr. Heinrich was correct.

Solves Hillbilly Poisoning

Some fifteen years ago a dance was being held in a one-room schoolhouse high up in the Sierra Mountains of California. The dance had brought hill folk together from scattered hamlets and isolated farms.

The music—a guitar and a violin—was being played by John and Steve Rablen, well known throughout the mountains.

Another Rablen was there, Carroll, Steve's son, a strange, moody and morose young man who worked in a lumber mill. Carroll's mail-order wife, Eva, was there dancing gaily through the night while the non-dancing Carroll remained outside in the clearing about the school building.

It was no secret that Carroll and Eva were not particularly happy but many thought that this was due to Carroll's father who had never wanted his son to

marry. Carroll on several occasions had attempted suicide as the only way out of his unhappy dilemma.

At midnight the dance came to a temporary halt while the folks attending the party surged about several tables piled high with food. Eva filled a tray with sandwiches, cake and coffee for Carroll and went outside. As she moved down the dark steps with the tray, she bumped into a woman ascending the steps.

They exchanged apologies and Eva found her husband standing near their car. He accepted the tray of food but refused to come inside to watch the dancers or mingle with the mountaineers who had gathered for the social affair.

A short time later dancing resumed but the music was cut short when a man's scream could be heard above the noise in the building. They ran outside in time to see Carroll die, writhing in agony on the ground.

"Why did you do it?" Eva cried, sobbing out her grief.

Local authorities held an investigation. They found a cup of coffee on the grounds which contained some drugs. Others reported how they had tried to lure Carroll inside to join in the festivities but he had put them off. A man reported that the day before the dance, Carroll had told him that if he attended it, it would be his last. An insurance man reported that when he called upon Carroll to renew a policy the other told him he wasn't going to keep up payments because he wouldn't need it any more.

Everything pointed to suicide with Carroll dropping some poison into his coffee after his wife left him. The type of poison was answered when the investigators found a bottle of strychnine crystals in the grass some distance from Rablen's car.

Steve Rablen, however, was certain that his son did not commit suicide and charged that he had been murdered. Puzzled officials decided to see if they could trace the poison. They found that a drug store in Tuolumne had sold some strychnine crystals to a woman who had signed the register as Mrs. Joe Williams. The woman told the clerk that she had wanted to kill some stray dogs who were bothering her chickens.

The drug clerk did not know Eva Rablen and when he confronted her, he identified her as the woman who had purchased the strychnine signing the register as Mrs. Williams. Eva replied that the

clerk was mistaken.

The evidence was too slim to warrant any charge being placed against Eva and local authorities decided to call in Professor Heinrich to help them.

The criminologist determined from Eva that nobody but herself had handled the tray of food which she brought to her husband. He learned about the stair bumping incident and spoke to the other woman. She readily recalled the episode and added that some of the coffee had spilled on her dress leaving a slight stain.

"It's my pink party dress and I haven't been able to get to town to bring it to the cleaners," she said. "It really wasn't Eva's fault because it was dark on those steps."

Dr. Heinrich asked permission to borrow the dress. He also took with him the register from the drug store, the strychnine bottle found in the grass, the coffee cup, plus several letters Eva had written. A week later he forwarded his report. Eva was arrested for the murder of her husband.

The criminologist had found strychnine in the coffee cup dregs, which also was expected. Using a spectroscope he had determined that the strychnine in the bottle was identical with that in the cup, which also was expected. But that small coffee stain on the pink party dress had ended any question as to whether it was suicide or murder.

In the tiny residue left by the stain, Professor Heinrich discovered microscopic specks of strychnine crystal proving definitely that the poison had been in the coffee which Eva was bringing out to her husband. He also was able to show that the signature on the drug store poison register matched that of Eva's. Confronted with the evidence, she pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Whose Charred Body?

It was Professor Heinrich's work in the Schwartz case which won him an international reputation. The case ranks among the first ten crime stories in this country and is a masterpiece of scientific crime detection and brilliant deduction.

Early in 1925, the Pacific Cellulose Company erected a plant in the town of Walnut Creek, not far from Oakland, where it planned to produce a substitute for silk under the direction of its chief chemist, Charles Henry Schwartz. Sch-

wartz was busy carrying out experiments in the factory building prior to the start of full scale production.

On the night of July 30, an explosion shook the building with flames engulfing the structure. The night watchman reported that Schwartz was in the building. Firemen frantically worked their way into the laboratory only to find Schwartz dead in the wrecked room.

The watchman said he had spoken to Schwartz only about ten minutes before the explosion. The other had been excited because he had perfected his formula. This was confirmed by the foreman of the plant who lived nearby and said that Schwartz had told him the same thing.

Although the body recovered in the laboratory had been burned beyond recognition, the firemen had found a pair of cufflinks, a belt buckle and a piece of trouser cloth all of which were identified by Mrs. Schwartz as belonging to her husband. The dead chemist had a front tooth missing. A like condition was found in the charred body.

Fire officials who had sent equipment from surrounding towns, wanted to determine the cause of the fire. Chief Guy Spender of Berkeley poked through a brick wall that had caved in and found some dynamite in the debris. In another part of the building that had been saved from destruction, firemen found chemically-soaked cloths wrapped about the ends of sticks.

The night watchman was certain that no dynamite was kept in the building. The chemically soaked cloths indicated the possibility of the fire being of incendiary origin.

Since Schwartz had just completed perfecting his formula, authorities ruled out the possibility of suicide. The only conclusion was that the chemist had been murdered.

The insurance companies who were carrying some \$200,000 worth of policies on the life of Schwartz, decided to take a hand in the investigation and asked Dr. Heinrich to check. Police were happy to welcome him.

He went to the laboratory and after inspecting the room, made measurements. He found a bloodstained board which he brought back with him along with bits of burned clothing, a charred blanket, some coffee wrapped in a sugar sack, and a bar of soap.

He questioned the night watchman and

the other was certain that he had spoken to Schwartz only a few minutes before the explosion. The watchman said he had brought Schwartz some food a short time before that, because the other had been too busy to go out. In answer to a question by Heinrich, he replied that the food had been beans and cucumbers.

The criminologist made several return trips to the factory, prowling about and bringing back odds and ends to his laboratory. At his request an autopsy was made of the charred corpse and the report turned over to him.

Uncover a Clever Killer

Days passed and the death of Schwartz slipped off the front pages since there seemed to be no new developments. It suddenly returned in banner headlines.

Dr. Heinrich revealed that murder had been committed in the laboratory but at the same time he said that Schwartz was the killer rather than the victim.

As soon as he had entered the laboratory, he realized that something was wrong. The equipment in the laboratory was woefully incomplete for any chemist to have carried on experiments, particularly of the nature Schwartz was supposed to be doing. Even more significant was the fact that the so-called laboratory contained no water, gas, illumination or heat for a chemist to have used in making necessary tests.

Dr. Heinrich said that chemical analysis of different pieces of residue he brought with him from the gutted factory, showed the presence of carbon disulphide, which has a corrosive effect on the throat. The autopsy of the body did not show any throat corrosion but did reveal a fractured skull.

While all this indicated that the man had been dead before the fire broke out, it still did not account for Heinrich's theory that the dead man was not Schwartz.

He soon proved this point to the satisfaction of authorities. Although the right ear of the corpse had been badly burned, the lobe was virtually intact. Heinrich had obtained a photograph of Schwartz which he enlarged and which clearly showed that the chemist's ear was a dif-

ferent type. An analysis of the food in the dead man's stomach showed that he had not eaten any cucumbers or beans, the food which the night watchman had seen Schwartz eat. An attempt had been made to have the body resemble Schwartz. The killer had removed a front tooth from the same place in the jaw where Schwartz had one missing, but Heinrich showed under the microscope that the tooth missing from the corpse had been yanked quite recently.

This left the authorities with the problem of trying to identify the charred and disfigured corpse, particularly in view of the positive identification made by the chemist's wife.

Heinrich's magic was not at an end. His microscope showed that the charred body had been clothed in a blue denim shirt, overalls and a hunting jacket. Among the various odds and ends he had found in the laboratory were a small sewing kit of needles and thread, and a packet that contained a new pair of socks and religious pamphlets.

The charred piece of blanket, the coffee wrapped in a sack, the new pair of socks all suggested to Professor Heinrich that the dead man had been an itinerant of some kind. He didn't believe he was a hobo, however, because the man's hands and feet appeared to have been well kept. The booklets indicated that the man might have been connected with some kind of religious work. The packet also had contained part of a letter he had been writing.

Newspapers promptly printed Heinrich's theory as to the identity of the corpse and reproduced the unfinished letter. The criminologist had hit the nail directly on the head. A short time later a woman reported that the description answered that of Gilbert Warren Barbe, a sort of wandering missionary. Positive identification was made by comparing the handwriting in the unfinished letter with known samples of Barbe's writing.

Police began a determined hunt for Schwartz and traced him to Oakland. As they were breaking in the door they heard a shot.

Schwartz, his fantastic murder plot to collect insurance on his own life spoiled by Professor Heinrich, had committed suicide.

Next Issue: THE DOCTOR CALLED THE TRUTH, another true story of an unusual American detective by JACKSON HITE

LINE of FIRE

Captain Banning suddenly confronted Grayson



By RAY CUMMINGS

ELLIOT GRAYSON sat on the bench of the flowered pergola gazing over the brink down to the spreading valley where the village lights winked like the eyes of some great cyclops squatting there. Summer moonlight through the pergola trellis glinted with a leafy pattern on Grayson's white hair, on his shoulder and arm. But mostly he was in shadow, his solid square figure in its butler's uniform a blob in the darkness.

Except for serving Rollins the usual whisky and soda in the library about eleven o'clock, Grayson's day's work was done. He had quietly come out here to smoke his pipe, to mull over his hatred of Rollins.

The small, old-fashioned revolver was

a lump in Grayson's jacket pocket, pressing against his hip as he slouched on the rustic seat. He often carried it with him at night. It was the badge of his hatred, and upon some occasion, perhaps quite unexpectedly, he would use it. Two weeks had passed now since he had gotten this job as butler in the home of the wealthy James T. Rollins. Grayson had brought the revolver with him. One of these nights, almost anytime now, he'd get revenge!

Hatred is a queer thing. Like jealousy, it makes the meat it feeds on. It seemed to Elliot Grayson that for all the rest of his life the hatred he felt for Rollins, and for young Peter Rollins too, would nag him, torture him so that life would hardly

Geometry Upsets a Neat Formula for Murder!

be worth living. It was more than revenge that Grayson wanted. He wanted release, peace of mind, freedom from this torturing hatred.

So Grayson, with his revolver, had come here. The hatred had redoubled, after seeing Rollins and Rollins' adopted son, Peter. Every day he had been hearing their voices, obeying their commands. Grayson now was thinking that no one had ever before felt such hatred.

The thought, somehow, was incongruously comforting. It seemed to ease his grief over Annie, as though hating these two men so greatly in some way was a measure of his love for Annie. And killing them—that too would be a measure of his love.

The sound of footsteps and voices on the verandah of the nearby house made Grayson take his pipe out of his mouth and turn to gaze through the trellised vines which were at his shoulder. The side verandah of the big house was only a few feet away here, across the garden path. Part of it was screened, but the nearer section was an open terrace. Two men had come out onto the terrace. They were in shadow, diagonally above where Grayson was sitting.

THEY were Rollins and Peter. Pudgy Rollins sat down on a chair, and Peter stood beside him. They were talking softly, voices that barely carried down to Grayson so that it was only a low murmur. Then he heard the voice of Rollins senior saying:

"No I won't, and that's the end of it!"

They were quarreling again, or at least arguing angrily. Peter flung down his cigarette and ground it on the terrace flagging with his heel. They were talking softly because they didn't want the servant in the house behind them to overhear, Grayson knew. Nothing got by old Mrs. Green, the housekeeper.

Previously, they had been arguing at dinner. Mrs. Green had heard that too, as well as Grayson, and Jane, the maid.

Grayson, down in the pergola, held his pipe, forgetting to smoke it. His hands were trembling. The revolver in his pocket seemed like a thing alive. Annie would understand, that is, if her spirit should be hovering near, watching the husband she had loved.

In the thirty years of their married life together, he and Annie had understood each other perfectly. Perhaps only Gray-

son, of everyone, had understood why Annie had stolen so slyly, so cleverly from Rollins and his wealthy guests, when she had been housekeeper here, two years ago. The war, the country's unsettled condition afterward, had made it more profitable for Grayson and Annie to get separate situations, so he had taken a job as butler with a family up in Maine. He had not known what Annie was doing, not until she was arrested. Grayson could remember well how he had pleaded for mercy. There would have been no one to push the case against Annie, except Rollins. But Peter had insisted on pushing the case, because he was a weakling himself. He took a cruel pleasure in seeing others punished.

So Annie had gone to jail, under a two-to-five-year sentence, with no one but Grayson appreciating how much those thefts had meant to Annie. They represented a little home of their own where, with the small annuity Grayson had, they could have lived out their lives together the way Annie had always dreamed.

But Annie was gone now. She had told Rollins hysterically that she would never live in jail. And she had taken her life as she had threatened.

James T. Rollins had not realized his error, when he accepted Grayson as his butler. Perhaps he had thought it some measure of recompense for what he had done to Annie Grayson. A charitable gesture.

Peter Rollins' raised voice floated out from the terrace.

"You can go to the devil with your money. I don't want any more of it." Peter's anger came to Grayson plainly. They were arguing because Peter was a spendthrift, who stalled on every kind of work, with dissolute, fawning friends, a product of too much money.

"That suits me fine," the elder Rollins said. Then suddenly Peter in a huff jumped down from the terrace, stalked along the moon bright garden path and took the path under the nearby trees, down the hill. He'd walk off his anger. He'd realize that he'd better keep on soft-soaping Rollins. He'd be back by midnight with a lot of new promises about mending his ways.

On the terrace, near the door that admitted into the screened-off section of the verandah, Rollins sat quietly in his chair, nursing his annoyance at Peter. Moonlight bathed him now. The end of

his cigar was a red-glowing coal.

In Grayson's mind, as he sat secluded in the little pergola, there was the flash of realization that several circumstances were suddenly conspiring to help him settle for Annie. He knew that his hand was shaking as he leveled the revolver. He steadied it, waited a breath.

The first shot must have gone wild, because it only brought Rollins to his feet with a startled oath, but the second shot struck him in the head. He pitched forward to the terrace flagging beside his overturned chair where, for just a moment, his body twitched. Then it became a motionless blob.

Grayson stood up. He wondered if Annie was aware of what was happening now. His legs felt queer and shaky as he darted out of the side of the pergola, wiped the handle of the gun on his jacket, and gripping it by the muzzle, flung it away. The cries of the servants in the house mingled with the little swish and thud of the weapon as it fell, over by the path down the hill.

SHOUTING something about having heard the shots over in the woods, Grayson himself ran up to the terrace, joining in the other servants who were expressing horror.

Peter too, had heard the shots. He came running back from down the hill, arriving white-faced and breathless with the smell of liquor on him just as Grayson was phoning for the local police.

The police investigation did not take long to get under way, after the medical examiner had left. Peter was the first one examined.

"You heard the shots," Police Captain Banning said to Peter. "How far down the hill had you gone at that time?"

"I don't know," Peter protested. "How can I remember anything like that? All I know I heard the shots, then voices shouting. I came running back. All the servants were gathered near the phone in the hall. Then I ran to the terrace, saw the body. Why should you—"

"Because you had a fight with him at dinner," Sergeant Clancy said. "You did, didn't you?"

"We had an argument," Peter said. "So what? These servants! Always snooping!"

"Bad terms with him nearly always, wasn't you? Had you on a spot, about drinkin' less, and goin' to work, didn't he?"

"We talked about that. So what?" Peter's callow, weak-chinned face was pallid, with little spots of color from his terror in his cheeks. His thin hair was plastered in streaks on his sweating forehead.

"You were out there on the terrace with him just a few minutes before the shots," Captain Banning put in. "Arguing again, weren't you?"

Grayson stood quietly across the library among the other servants, old Mrs. Green, and Jane, trim in her black uniform and apron, with her dark eyes big and her pretty face frightened, and her little lace coif awry on her head. And Tom, the chauffeur, who had been in his room down over the garage and knew nothing about it at all, except that Peter often quarreled with his foster-father over the way Peter banged up the cars with his reckless driving.

There was nothing for Grayson to say now. He and the other servants had told Captain Banning and Clancy that they had heard the quarrels and heard the shots from out there in the woods. With impassive face, Grayson stood and listened and watched Peter standing in the ring of badgering policemen who were firing questions at him.

The elder Rollins was dead. You could only hate the memory of a man who was dead. All the silent hatred from Grayson was flowing now like a deadly current at the harried Peter standing there so frightened. Soon Peter would be in jail. Vaguely Grayson wondered if one would bother to hate a man who was spending a lifetime in jail. Probably not. Annie would understand how Grayson was feeling now.

Grayson turned with a new little thrill of comfort as a policeman came in from outside.

"Found the gun, Cap'n," the policeman said. He displayed it, holding it gingerly in case fingerprints might be on it, which Grayson knew there wouldn't be. "Six cartridges in it, two of 'em empty. Guess it's the gun all right, easy to prove by the bullet in the corpse."

"Well, well, good enough!" Banning said. "Where did you find it, Jake?"

He had found it near the path that led down the hill, the way Peter had gone.

"And I guess that does it," Sergeant Clancy said. He swung at Peter. "How about that, you shifty-eyed killer? Shot him and ran, eh?"

"I didn't! You're a liar!"

Grayson's face as he watched and listened while the policemen pounded Peter harder than ever, still was impassive. Captain Banning had gone outside for a moment. He came back.

"Might as well put this bird under arrest, eh, Captain?" Clancy said. "Evidence, unless there's fingerprints on that gun, might be kind of circumstantial. But what the devil! It all fits together. We'll get an indictment on it, and then if the D. A. is smart—"

"Well," Captain Banning said, "that's good dope, but this thing isn't just that way, Clancy." Banning was a big, soft-spoken man. He smiled faintly at Clancy.

Unexpectedly he moved over and stopped in front of Grayson.

"It's you I have to put under arrest, Grayson," the policeman said.

"Me, sir?" Grayson answered. "You're joking sir!"

"Him?" Clancy said. "How's that?"

"You were in that little pergola when you heard the shots?" Banning asked.

GRAYSON raised his eyebrows. "Me? Why of course. I told you so."

"I saw him there," Peter Rollins said. The relief Peter felt was stamped all over him. To see it was an affront to Grayson. Fear was only beginning to pluck at the butler. There could be no positive way of telling where the shots came from.

Behind the bulwark of that knowledge, Grayson had felt so secure that he lost his uneasiness. Banning was trying, like every good policeman should, to explore every possibility, so that Grayson's first emotion now was annoyance that Peter should have a respite. It was so good to see him squirming.

"No argument but what you were in that pergola," Banning was saying. "And we found your pipe there."

"I was there," Grayson said. "When I heard the shots, not far from me, off to the left under the trees, I hurried out."

"Two shots were fired," Banning said. "The first one missed. It went through the verandah screen, which was close beside Rollins as he sat on the terrace."

"Is that so, sir?" Grayson said. "What that would mean, I don't know." Grayson

was very polite, as a well trained butler should be. Courteous, imperturbable, impassive, Elliot Grayson now was summoning all his training to maintain those traditional qualities. But he could feel his heart beating faster, and little prickles spreading inside him.

"Where we found the gun doesn't mean very much," Banning said. "Anyone could throw it from somewhere else."

"I suppose so sir," Grayson said, with just a flicker of smile.

"That first bullet," Banning said, and the room was very still now, listening, "went through the screen and thudded into the house wall. It was traveling upward, you can tell that because the spot where it's embedded in the wall is quite a bit higher than the hole it made passing through the screen."

He waited, as though expecting Grayson to say something. But Grayson only held his faint inquiring, polite smile. It was Sergeant Clancy who said:

"Travelin' upward? Why not? The ground out there is all lower than the terrace. The head of the path where the gun was found is well up the slope."

"To establish a straight line," Banning said, "you only need two points anywhere along its length. In this case, we have them—the hole in the screen, part way along the line which the bullet traveled, and the point where it hit the wall. So starting from the wall and going through the hole in the screen, we only have to continue with that line of fire to reach the point where the bullet was fired." The big Police Captain paused.

"That point is in the little pergola, Grayson," he added grimly. "You can't avoid it."

There was a chair beside Grayson. Abruptly he collapsed into it and he stared, gulping. He couldn't talk. He didn't want to talk, because there was so much that he was thinking. Poor Annie, hovering out there somewhere, with this happening here! He was thinking vaguely of what might have been, for him and Annie. It was very singular that two people, loving each other so much and guided only by that, should make such a mess of their lives.

For the Best in Brand-New Crime Fiction, Read MYSTERY BOOK
MAGAZINE—Now on Sale, 25c at All Stands!

Three Clues



to Murder

A skull, a whiskbroom and a dinner check—and a corpse on the floor!

PROFESSOR MARTIN WHEELER put down the phone and looked at me with his blue eyes twinkling. At the moment I couldn't decide whether he reminded me most of a man about to play Santa Claus or a hound dog on a scent.

"That was Sheriff Larkin on the wire," the professor said in his soothing syrup voice. "He has startling news, Carter. Keith Stilson has been murdered!"

Apparently that was my cue to gasp with amazement, horror or something of the sort, but I wasn't in the mood. I had listened to Wheeler talking to the sheriff over the phone and caught the gist of the conversation fairly well.

Since the professor without any undue modesty considered himself the greatest of all amateur criminologists, and I was his assistant he expected me to act like "Doctor Watson" in a third-rate production of a Sherlock Holmes play.

"Then you knew?" said the professor, when he saw I wasn't getting excited. "Someone told you Stilson had been murdered?"

"I gathered as much from your conversation with the sheriff," I said. "Are you going to assist the sheriff with the investigation?"

The professor ran his hand over his thick white hair, he tugged at his gray beard, and then brushed the crumbs of the toast he'd had for breakfast off his vest.

"My dear Mr. Daniel Carter," he said. "The sheriff will assist me."

There didn't seem much I could say to that. As a former police detective, the professor's egotism sometimes got me. I had met him in New York about a year ago about a month after I had quit the force, and he had offered me a job as his assistant. The pay was good, for Wheeler had quite a bit of money, and I needed the job.

I was big, dark and husky, and save for the limp from an old bullet wound in my left leg that never had healed right, I could move fairly fast. This summer the professor had rented a cottage back in the hills in Maryland and had gone there to write a book, taking me with him.

"Get the car, Dan," the professor said. "We are going to Keith Stilson's place right away. I had better be there and take charge before the sheriff makes too many blunders."

I got the coupe, Wheeler climbed in beside me, and we started off. The morning was bright and clear, but the summer was about over and there was a slight chill in the air. The leaves of the trees on the hills and mountains were beginning to turn.

ALL I knew about the murdered man was that Keith Stilson had been an elderly retired millionaire who had an estate nearly two miles from the cottage the professor had rented. I had seen him

By C. K. M. SCANLON

around, but never had actually met him. I had heard that Stilson, who was a widower with a son and a daughter had recently sold his place and moved out.

"According to the sheriff, the local real estate agent, John Hill, drove to the Stilson place this morning," said Professor Wheeler as we drew nearer to the big old white house. "The new owner had asked Hill to check up on the place—and see if everything was all right now that the Stilsons had moved out."

"And then Hill found the body?" I asked.

"He did," said the professor. "Unlocked the front door with his key, stepped into the empty house, and started looking around. In the room that used to be Keith Stilson's den, he found the body lying on the floor."

We reached the gravel driveway leading into the Stilson place. The big old house stood half hidden by trees in the center of a ten acre estate. I turned the car off the road and onto the drive. There were a couple of other cars parked in front of the house.

I stopped behind one of the other cars and got out and so did the professor. Just as we started up the steps a lean, tall man dressed in rumpled clothes came out on the porch.

"Mornin', Professor," Sheriff Seth Larkin said. "Hi, Carter."

"Good morning, Sheriff," said the professor. "I hope you haven't disturbed things too much."

"There isn't much around to disturb," Larkin said in his soft drawl. "Not in this place."

We followed him into the house. All of the furniture, decorations and rugs had been taken away. There was nothing but bare floors and empty walls in the rooms. Our footsteps were loud in the depressing silence of the place as the sheriff led us back along the hall to the room where the body had been found.

The corpse was still lying on the floor. Doctor Barton, who was also the local coroner was all through examining the dead man. Stilson had been stabbed in the heart, and the knife was still sticking in his chest.

"So the weapon was a knife," said the professor, as though he had just made an important discovery. "Very interesting!"

I wasn't paying any attention to him. There were three objects on the floor near the corpse that interested me. One was

an ordinary whisk broom, another was a fair sized replica of a human skull, and the third a waiter's dinner check.

"Three clues to murder," said Sheriff Larkin.

"What?" said Professor Wheeler blankly, and then he saw the three objects on the floor. "Oh, I see. That makes the whole thing quite simple. Stilson obviously came back here to get the skull which contained the hidden secret of his past. Naturally the place where the skull was hidden was dusty, so he was brushing off his clothes with the whisk broom when he was murdered."

"Uh-huh," I said, picking up the dinner check. "Probably followed here by an angry waiter who killed Stilson because he didn't pay this check."

The professor gave me a reproachful look. The sheriff glanced at the coroner and they both grinned. I began to wonder if Larkin had asked Wheeler to help him on this case just for the laughs.

All summer the professor had been pestering the sheriff, telling Larkin what a great criminologist Martin Wheeler was, and insisting he should be allowed to assist if there were any serious crimes committed in the vicinity. This was a serious crime, all right, and the sheriff had carried out his promise and phoned Wheeler as soon as Larkin had learned of the murder.

"How long has he been dead, doctor?" I asked Doctor Barton.

"Four or five hours at least, Mr. Carter," said Barton. "Hard to be certain of the exact time. I judge that Stilson was killed sometime during the night."

"Excellent, Dan," said the professor. "You check. Get all the routine facts while I look over the house for further clues."

HE STRODE out of the room, head bent, and apparently in deep thought. For a man who claimed to be such a great amateur criminologist he didn't appear to have the foggiest notion what it was all about.

"Where's John Hill?" I asked, when the professor had gone. "He found the body didn't he?"

"He did," said Larkin. "He had some business to attend to in town so I let him go soon as I got here. The phone is still connected here, you know."

I picked up the skull and examined it. The top of the head came off and I found

the inside of the skull was half filled with tobacco. I hadn't seen one of those skull shaped tobacco jars like that in years.

"I've got to be going, Seth," Doctor Barton said. "Have some patients to visit this morning. The undertaker you phoned should be out here soon to pick up the body. We'll decide later when we will hold the coroner's inquest."

"Run along, Doctor," said the sheriff. "Don't reckon there's any more need for you here now. I know where to reach you."

The doctor departed, and I heard his car start up as he drove away. I wondered where Professor Wheeler was, and what he was doing now.

"This looks like a tough case, Carter," Larkin said when I was alone with him. "No suspect—and no motive, far as I can find out so far."

"There's things I would like to know more about," I said. "For instance, why did Stilson come back here to this empty house in the middle of the night?"

"Only one reason I can suggest," said the sheriff. "He remembered something important that he had forgotten after he and his family moved out and came back to get it in a hurry."

"Just what I think," I said. "When did the Stilsons move out?"

"The moving van people took the last load of furniture away just yesterday morning," said the sheriff. We both glanced at the doorway as a stout middle-aged man appeared. "Oh, hello, Hill. So you came back."

"I did," said the real estate agent. "Finished up my business in town, and hurried out here. Being connected with a murder is too exciting to miss any of it."

The sheriff introduced Hill to me. Then the undertaker arrived with a couple of assistants and they took the body away. That was all right with me. Even with my years as a police detective I never had liked being around a corpse.

When they had gone Professor Wheeler came rushing into the room.

He was holding some small object clutched tightly in his right hand and he was excited.

"Eureka!" the professor shouted. "I've found it."

"Found what?" I asked.

"This!" The professor opened his hand. "See!"

Resting on the palm of his hand was a

small unset, but cut and polished diamond.

"Where did you find that, Professor?" I asked.

"In a broom closet at the end of the lower hall," said Wheeler. "There were more of them of course."

I moved and a few grains of tobacco crunched beneath my feet. Hill and Larkin were watching and listening with puzzled expressions on their faces.

"According to the coroner Stilson arrived here in the middle of the night last night," I said to the professor. I looked at the sheriff. "Where's the phone? I just remembered a call I have to make."

"In the room on the other side of the hall," said Larkin.

I thanked him and hurried into the other room. The phone was sitting on the floor, a local phone book beside it. There was no furniture in the room. I looked at the waiter's check; it had the name of a local road house on it. Then I looked for the number of the place in the book and found it.

I got the manager of the inn on the wire.

"Do you know Mr. Keith Stilson?" I asked, and when he said he did, "Do you happen to remember if he had a late meal at your place last night?"

"No, I'm quite sure he wasn't here at all last night, Mr. Carter," said the manager of the inn. "Why? Is there something wrong?"

"Nothing vital, thanks," I said. I didn't want to tell him about the murder. "Oh, by the way do you happen to know if anyone left without paying his check last night?"

"I believe there was one man who did," said the manager. "He took the check with him. The waiter was quite excited about it. I don't remember the customer's name offhand. Will that be all, Mr. Carter?"

"Yes, thanks," I said and hung up.

I HURRIED back in to the other room. The professor, the sheriff and John Hill were still there.

"When the electric lights are on this house can they be seen from the Mountain Inn?" I asked.

"They can," said Larkin. "I've noticed it when I've eaten at the inn. It is up on the mountain about a half mile from here to the east as you know."

"I guess I'll run along," said Hill.

"Can't spend all day fooling around. I'm a busy man."

"A little too busy, Mr. Hill," I said. "Late last night you were having dinner at the inn. You saw the lights go on here in this house. You knew the house was vacant, and you decided you had better investigate. You were so excited about it that you left the inn without paying your check. You must have just thrust the check into your pocket."

"Splendid, Dan," said the professor. "That was the angle that has been puzzling me. Go on!"

"You came here to the house," I went on, still speaking directly to Hill. "You thought there might be a prowler inside, so you used your key and sneaked inside. Then you saw Stilson examining the collection of diamonds that he kept hidden beneath the tobacco in that skull-shaped tobacco jar—"

"That's a lie!" shouted Hill wildly.

The sheriff stepped forward and grabbed the real estate agent by the arm.

"Why you were carrying the knife I don't know," I went on. "But that collection of diamonds was too much temptation for you. You murdered Stilson, and in the struggle the tobacco from the jar and the diamonds must have spilled all over the floor. Some of the tobacco is still on the floor."

"There are no brooms or whisk brooms

in any of the closets here," said the professor. "Hill must have got that whisk broom out of his car."

"He did," I said. "To sweep up the tobacco and put it back in the jar. He needed something to use as a sort of dust-pan so he pulled the waiter's check from the inn out of his pocket and used that. Then he must have had the bright idea of leaving the skull, the whisk broom and the check as clues that he was sure would only baffle the Law."

"But they didn't fool us at all," said the professor. "Did they, Dan?"

Hill was struggling and cursing, but the sheriff held him while I searched him. The idiot was still carrying the unset diamonds in his pocket and that cinched the case against him, so far as Sheriff Larkin was concerned.

"I knew we could clear this murder up in a hurry," said the professor. "In fact it struck me as so simple that I decided to let my assistant handle it, and he did."

You know I'm still wondering whether Professor Wheeler is as good a criminologist as he claims or just an old faker. It sure has got me guessing. Too bad we weren't in New York though, clearing a case like that would have made some nice headlines.

I can just see them and the clues, and so can you if you look back at the picture at the start of this story.

The First Vigilance Committee



EIGHTEEN hundred years ago Rome had its organized criminals just as our own large cities had them until a very short while ago. These gangs of hoodlums waylaid unarmed men in dark narrow streets after nightfall, or exacted money under threat of damage to person or goods from shopkeepers and others.

Other gangs used young men and women to involve the rich and prominent in embarrassing positions. For long periods they reaped large sums of blackmail in consequence.

Between A.D. 147 and 149 these traitors to society disappeared almost entirely, thanks to the efforts of what may have been the very first vigilance committee, organized by young citizens under the leadership of a Julius Doramus, a merchant's son studying law.

Assuming the roles of easy victims, these young men frequented dark streets where crimes were common; or else spent money unwisely to attract the blackmailing gangs. One of their techniques was for one of them to walk along a narrow alley, the golden coins in his pouch clicking invitingly. Meanwhile three or more well armed comrades hid nearby. Where blackmail was suspected the victim always had friends concealed either in the room or just beyond ready to spring on the blackmailer. In the two years that the league operated they are said to have been responsible for the apprehension of more than 300 persons. Doramus, and two of his friends, in recognition of their fine work, were appointed police officials.

—Simpson M. Ritter.

Uttering a gurgled
scream of pain, the
man went down on
his knees



Nothing to Lose

Being bodyguard to Old Man

*Wayne proved more of a chore
than Jim Trevor bargained for!*

JIM TREVOR slowed his coupe and turned the spotlight on a road sign. He swung left, following the macadam paved fork until he reached a knoll. Topping this he came to a stop and blinked his head lights twice. Then he lighted a cigarette, relaxed and wondered why most people think a private detective has to work like an espionage agent. Signaling

By ANTHONY TOMPKINS

with headlights gave him a laugh.

From the knoll he could look down into a valley and see the lights of the Wayne house, a great ugly place of gables and turrets and sweeping lawns. It was presided over by old Frank Wayne, probably the most inrascible, cantankerous man in the state.

A sedan, driving without lights, came from a sideroad, headed Trevor's way and finally pulled over. A tall young man with black shell rimmed spectacles got out. He was as nervous as a cat.

He opened the door of Trevor's coupe and climbed in. He wiped his face with a handkerchief, although the night was crisp and cool. Then he exhaled slowly in vast relief.

"I wasn't certain you'd come," he said.

Trevor scaled his cigarette butt into the night. "You paid me a hundred-dollar retainer. I said I'd be here and I never meant anything else. Now give me the set-up."

The tall young man nodded. "As I told you at your office, I am Will Randall, one of Frank Wayne's two grandsons. His daughter was my mother. His other grandson is Richard Wayne. Frank Wayne's other son is Richard Wayne's father. Our parents are all dead. Only Frank remains. You—ah—know about him I suppose?"

"I guess everyone does," Trevor said. "I don't believe I ever read a favorable line of publicity concerning him. He's rich and he got his money by whacking people on the head. Legally, of course. The wily old scoundrel made certain not to leave himself open to prosecution."

Will Randall managed a weak smile. "All right, I admit it. He was a hell-roarer in his day, handsome, witty and rich. I guess there wasn't a thing he didn't try. Women, gambling, drinking. He lived, Mr. Trevor. He's half dead now but he certainly must have memories enough to last him."

"If you can enjoy those kind," Trevor said glumly. "Get on with it."

"Richard and I are his heirs. Not in equal proportions. Grandfather Wayne never liked me. I didn't follow in his footsteps. I have a steady job and a steady girl. I don't drink nor carouse. I'm quiet—maybe a mousy sort. Richard is like Grandfather Wayne—a hell-raiser too, and Grandpa is crazy about him. Richard gets two-thirds of half the estate. I get the other third."

TREVOR nodded, absorbing these seemingly irrelevant facts.

"From what I've learned about Richard, he'll need two thirds of the fortune and at that it probably won't last him long," Trevor said. "Let's get down to business. You told me someone tried to kill the old boy."

"Yes. Last night. It happened about nine o'clock. Grandfather Wayne was dozing. He can't get out of bed you know—he's paralyzed. Anyway I heard the shot.

I ran upstairs. Max Alvin was there ahead of me—"

"Who is Max Alvin."

"He and Grandfather were in business together. I guess Max was a trifle more sedate. Anyway when Max's wife died seven years ago he came to our home to live, an arrangement Grandfather Wayne hoped to profit from. You see they both made new wills. If Grandfather Wayne dies first, half the estate goes to Max. Richard and I share in the proportions I told you about, in the other half. But if Max dies first, Grandfather gets all his money.

"That's what Grandpa was driving at. Max is older, never has been too well and Grandpa figured he'd die before him."

"There was a shot?" Trevor said patiently.

"Yes. I ran upstairs. The bedroom door was closed but Max opened it as I approached. Grandpa was in bed, his head covered by the blankets. He said he didn't know exactly what happened. The shot had awakened him too. And he wasn't lying, Mr. Trevor. An inch above his head we found a bullet hole through the headboard of the bed."

"And where was the favorite grandson at that time?"

"I don't know. I guess he told Grandpa but when Max and I asked him he told us to go to—well, he wasn't very nice about it."

Trevor rubbed the side of his face. "I'm beginning to get the picture. The old man doesn't want an investigation or there'd have been cops here. But you do and you figure he might go for a private eye hanging around to guard him."

"Yes, that's it. He'll be hard to handle but I understand you're somewhat tough yourself, Mr. Trevor. That's why I hired you."

"Nobody was seen or heard around the estate when the shooting happened?"

"No. There are two gardeners who live over the garage. They didn't even hear the shot."

"Anyone could have sneaked into the house, slipped up the stairs, fired at the old man and gotten clear before you or Max reached the room?"

"I—suppose so. Max has the room next to Grandpa's. But Max said he'd been dozing too and when the gun went off he didn't quite know what it was. That's why it took him so long to get into the hallway and over to Grandpa's door."

Trevor reached for the ignition switch. "Well, let's get it over with. If your grandfather gets sassy about this, I may have to shout him down. Follow my car and, when we get there, take me to see the old boy."

Will Randall, a few moments later, pointed to the closed door of Frank Wayne's bedroom. "I won't go in, if you don't mind. He isn't going to like this and he'd take it out on me. But, Trevor, I can't just do nothing while someone tries to kill him. I don't like the old man very much, I admit that, but I don't want to see him shot to death."

"It's a natural reaction," Trevor said. "Especially since you live under the same roof and might get in the way of a bullet. Also, if the old boy is killed, you're a pretty logical suspect so hiring me is just a form of insurance. I'll do what I can."

Trevor didn't knock. He opened the door, stepped into the dimly lighted room and looked thoughtfully at the massive bed in which the old man was lying, propped up by half a dozen pillows. It was a strange bed, disregarding its size. From a framework fastened to its sides hung a small trapeze, the bar quite close to the bed. At the foot a large mirror had been attached to the footboards in such a manner that old Frank Wayne always saw his own reflection.

WHY he should want that, Trevor couldn't understand. Frank Wayne had never been handsome after he passed middle age. Now he was ugly. He had a skull-like head, a face with sunken cheeks and bulging eyes, large ears that stuck out too far, and thin lips framing an uncompromising mouth. His hands, outside the covers, were gnarled and greyish with dark splotches on the skin.

He was staring at Trevor. His lips drew back in a snarl.

"Who the devil are you?" he asked.

Trevor pulled a chair over and sat down. He indicated the trapeze. "I didn't think you went in for that sort of thing, Mr. Wayne. How are you on swinging by your toes?"

Wayne struggled to sit up more. Trevor leaned over, got his arms around the bony old man and hoisted him up. Wayne didn't offer any thanks. In his sixty-odd years he'd never been known to thank anyone.

"I use that contraption to hoist myself up for exercise," he said bleakly. "If it's

any of your business. Who are you—before I have you thrown out of here."

"The name is Trevor. I'm a private detective. A private eye . . . a peep. You've heard of the breed, I suppose. Your grandson hired me to find out who took a pot shot at you."

"Well he can dis-hire you," Wayne growled. "It was that sissy, Will, of course. Richard wouldn't do it. He knows I can take care of myself. Richard is a man."

"Uh-huh," Trevor said easily. "I've heard rumors to the effect that he's a rat, but we'll skip that. What's the big mirror for?"

Wayne gave a grunt of exasperation. "You ask too many questions. I'll answer this one. If you had to lie here twenty-four hours a day, you'd want to look out of the window too. But if a fat-headed fool of a doctor says the bed can't be close to the window, you'd want to look at the grass and the rain and snow and sunlight anyhow. So I rigged the mirror. If that's all, you can consider the investigation closed. I'm tired. Get out!"

"I don't believe there actually was an attempt on your life," Trevor said.

The old man bristled. "You don't, eh? Well, look behind these pillows and you'll see where the slug went through the bed-head and smashed into the wall. I had Max dig it out. It was a thirty-two caliber steel jacketed bullet. Who are you to call me a liar?"

Trevor arose, eased the old man forward and pulled some of the pillows away. There'd been a bullet fired all right. The neat hole through the bed and the larger one in the wall, were ample evidence of that. He eased Wayne back again.

Wayne said, "Now you've seen it. Now get up and walk out of here. Don't stop until you hit New York. And don't come back. When I want to hire a bodyguard, I'll do my own hiring."

"But you didn't hire me or pay me," Trevor said. "Your grandson did and he's the only man who can fire me. So I'm staying."

"Get Will. Get that overgrown mama's boy in here and I'll blast him until his ears ring. Go get him, do you hear me?"

"I think the neighbors, a mile up the road heard you," Trevor said. "Look, I don't especially like you. In fact I'll make it stronger. I definitely dislike you. It doesn't matter to me if somebody blows your head off before morning. But I'm staying."

"Oh, you are." Wayne smiled from one side of his mouth. "You're staying! Just like that. In my house—when I demand that you get out. Trevor, I'll have you thrown out."

"Will you now." Trevor lit a cigarette and blew smoke at him. "To do that it will be necessary to call in the State Police. You're way out of city limits. And the State Police are friends of mine. I'll tell them about the shot being fired. They'll overrun the place. You can have your choice—only me hanging around, or a flock of state cops. I hope you take the cops."

Wayne laughed. It was more of a cackle but the grin accompanying it was of glee.

He said, "I like you, Trevor. You're a tough baby. A regular lallapaloosa. Yes sir, I like a man who won't back down. You can stay, and maybe find out who is trying to knock off a man who is ready to die anyway. I'll pay your fee and add five thousand if you show me who fired that shot."

"You couldn't hire me for any amount," Trevor said. "If you were my client, my heart wouldn't be in the case. I'd keep hoping someone would bump you off. Got any ideas who tried?"

THE old man pursed his lips, then shook his head.

"No. I have lots of enemies. People who hate me enough to do that, but what's the sense to it when I'm dying already and a bullet would only be a merciful act? Money is always behind murder. My money goes to my two grandsons and my lifelong friend Max, if I die before he does."

"Maybe Max got impatient," Trevor suggested.

"Shows what you know," Wayne derided. "Max has more money than me. Also he's older and he can't live long enough to spend what he has. Handing him my estate is like throwing a life preserver to a man on the deck of the Queen Mary. He doesn't need it."

"Richard then?" Trevor asked. "Your harum-scarum grandson? I happen to know that he owes everybody money, that he drinks too much, cheats at cards and is just about as well liked as you used to be. Which means the general public would like to see him die of slow poison."

"Ain't he a rootin', tootin' humdinger though?" Wayne wagged his head. "You known, he might kill me for my money at

that. I wouldn't put it past him. Only I don't think so. He values his neck too highly."

"Will, then?" Trevor asked. "Murderers have been known to hire private detectives and inveigle them into pinning the rap on someone else."

"Will?" Wayne laughed harshly. "He's got the soul of a two day old lamb and the courage of a butterfly. No, it can't be anyone in this house. The servants are all right. A woman who has cooked for me more than eighteen years. Two gardeners who will automatically lose their jobs when I die. Anyway they like me because I like their flowers. No sir, it's somebody from outside."

Trevor arose. "I'm going to look around. For the rest of the night I'll be somewhere about the premises. Where can I find Max?"

"He's in the next room," Wayne said. "You can't use that big door at the foot of the bed. It's locked. And don't feel too badly about an old man who is on his death bed."

Trevor grinned at him. "The trouble with you, Wayne, is that you've lived too long and someone doesn't like it."

"What am I supposed to do?" Wayne shouted. "Turn up my toes and kick off to satisfy a killer? Get out of here before I lose my temper and start throwing things."

Trevor went to the next room and knocked on the door. There was no answer so he walked in. The room was identical with Wayne's. Except for the unique bed, of course. The window, like Wayne's, overlooked the estate and the view should be good by daylight.

Trevor prowled the place without finding anything interesting until he came to the wall opposite the door. It was a paneled wall and the wooden surface seemed to be pocked by a hundred tiny indentations. He bent to study them at closer range.

"Do you find my wall that interesting?" a voice asked.

Trevor straightened and turned around. Max Alvin approached him with a broad smile and an extended hand. "Will told me about you, Mr. Trevor. I'm glad you're here though I can't understand how you've lasted this long. Didn't the old boy kick you out?"

Trevor chuckled. "He tried to." Trevor liked this white-haired, sturdy old man who knew how to hide at least fifteen

years of his age. "I shouted him down. You're Max, of course. Can you help me with this?"

Max sat down. "I'm afraid not. I wish I could, because while I may be the only man alive who can make this statement in genuine honesty—I like Frank Wayne. Got used to him, I imagine."

"He has his points, I suppose," Trevor admitted. "But during this long acquaintance with him, haven't you heard of anyone who might want to kill him?"

Max said, "I imagine that a hundred people would have liked to kill him at one time or another. People who let their wishful thinking do their murdering for them. Of course, there might be one man who never stopped hating. If there is, I can't point him out. There are too many who could fill the bill."

JIM TREVOR said, "We're up against a situation in which murder has been attempted. There isn't a clue, we have no suspects and therefore our only course of action is a passive one. We wait until the killer strikes again and then nab him. It's risky business but there is nothing else."

Max thought that over. "Mr. Trevor," he said seriously, "I have a plan. I've broached it to Wayne already and he nearly ate my head off. The killer, to get at Wayne, must come through the house. That's an easy task because it's an old place, the locks are none too good, and there are four separate entrances. But once inside he must work fast. As he did last night. He simply threw open the bedroom door and fired. He'll repeat that if he tries again."

"And so?"

"We're not certain who wants Frank Wayne dead. Maybe Richard—or even Will, who has taken more browbeating from Wayne than I'd have stood for. However, we can't take chances. Lying there in bed, Wayne is a helpless target. He can't move from the waist down and has only limited movement in the upper part of his body."

"What are you driving at?" Trevor wanted to know.

"Suppose Wayne and I change rooms. His big bed can be wheeled into my room. That door was remodeled big to accommodate the bed. If a killer comes, he won't expect that and when he opens the door, he'll find me instead of Wayne. And I'll have a gun and I'm fit enough

to move about and give him a battle."

"It isn't a bad idea," Trevor admitted. "Dangerous for you but at least you'll have some sort of chance. Wayne has none. Go ahead and arrange it that way if you like, but don't tell Will or Richard."

Trevor went downstairs. On the way he met a short, dapper little man carrying a professional bag. He had a Van Dyke, an unruly mop of hair and he wasn't going to move aside for Trevor's descent.

Trevor stopped him by merely extending both arms and blocking the stairway. "Who might you be?" he asked.

"I'm Doctor Goff. Mr. Wayne's physician. Stand aside, please."

"In just a moment," Trevor said. "I'm a detective and it's my business to ask questions. How long has Wayne been paralyzed, is there any hope of his recovery and could he get out of bed by using Herculean efforts?"

"You're an ignoramus," Dr. Goff said tightly. "Wayne was paralyzed from shock over a year ago. He will not get better, never get out of that bed. His lower limbs are completely paralyzed. He couldn't even swing them off the side of the bed. His arms are in fair condition, his torso not so good. For him to do any more than sit up is incredible, as he needs that bar to hold onto whenever he moves."

Trevor dropped his extended arms. "Thanks, Doc. You can run along now."

Will Randall was in the enormous living room, reading some thick volume, bent over it like a student cramming for an exam. Trevor didn't bother him. He went on out onto the estate and looked up the gardeners. After talking to them for half an hour he was convinced that they knew nothing. They were even very willing to help, and he posted them so that they could watch both sides of the house. All approaches would be under their observation.

Trevor continued to inspect the property, looking for a place where a killer might hide until it was time to strike. He discovered nothing definite, though the shrubbery and trees could have concealed a small army of men.

He reached a path, arboresced over with rose bushes, and walked along this toward the house. He was trying to figure the angles. Max, Will and Richard all had motives it was true, but they were also all intelligent men. If one of them was after Wayne's fortune, he only had to wait. The old man couldn't possibly live

much longer.

Therefore, it seemed, the money motive wasn't much good. Then the only motive was that induced by sheer hatred so great that the killer couldn't abide merely waiting for Wayne to die. To satisfy that hate, he'd have to kill him, be the direct cause of Wayne's suffering and death. Many people hated him, Trevor knew, but it was impossible to investigate each one or even sort out the more logical ones. All he could do was wait and hope the murderer would make some slip before he opened fire on the old man again.

FINALLY the rose arbor ended. As Trevor was crossing a cleared space, he heard—simultaneously with the zing of the bullet—the explosion of a gun. Trevor clapped a hand to his left forearm, groaned and then did a nose dive for the nearest bush.

The slug had passed through the soft part of the arm, barely missing the bone. It was painful but neither serious nor incapacitating. He tried to figure out where the shot had come from. He'd been watching the side of the house, studying the lighted windows, when a hidden killer had fired. Certainly nobody had been in any of those lighted windows with a gun.

Trevor heard a grinding of gears. A car was rolling away from in front of the house. He got up and started running. He was traveling under a full head of steam when he spotted the man in the gray topcoat who was also running in Trevor's direction.

The man in the gray coat veered and came at him. At the last minute Trevor ducked to one side, stuck out a foot and let the man trip over it. He went down heavily but had the resiliency of a rubber ball. He bounced to his feet and came at Trevor in a full attack.

Trevor only had one arm but he used it. Fighting that way was unwieldy at first and the man he fought spotted him by ten years and thirty pounds, but he was a sucker for leaving himself open.

Trevor took a couple of hard ones to the face, absorbed half a dozen punches to his stomach and only winced and grew dizzy when his assailant accidentally struck the wounded arm. The pain cleared Trevor's wits and angered him.

He dodged a long swing, stepped in right after the fist whistled past him and slammed the man in the gray coat, squarely on the throat. It was a vicious, hard

punch, scientifically planned and delivered. Only one of these, properly landed, was necessary in any fight and this was no exception. With a gurgled scream of pain, the man went down on his knees.

Trevor hoisted him up, swung him around and searched him. He found no gun. The man had recovered his breath now but he was no longer in a fighting mood.

"Who the devil are you?" he croaked. "What are you doing here?"

"Maybe you ought to answer those questions yourself," Trevor countered, half convinced what the answer would be.

"I'm Richard Wayne. This is my house. My grandfather's, that is. There was a shot. Last night someone tried to kill him. Did they—did they—tonight?"

"No. I'm the guy who inhaled that slug," Trevor said and showed his bloody arm. "My name is Trevor. I'm a private detective. When did you get here?"

"Just—just a moment or two after I heard the shot."

"Was that car moving away from here the one you came in?"

"Yes, a taxi. I—uh—prefer taxicabs to driving my own cars."

Trevor bowed slightly. "The general public thanks you, Mr. Richard Wayne. Their lives are a lot safer with you not behind any wheel, though I will admit you scrap pretty well for a man with a martini breath as strong as yours. Let's go inside."

Trevor had Richard help him clean and bandage the arm. Then he talked to them all, saving old Wayne for last. No one knew a thing. Max had been in his room. Will was reading in the living room and Richard had just returned. Old man Wayne could offer no help beyond a grin of derision.

"No, I don't know who took a pot shot at you but whoever he was, he's a slouch. I'd have put the slug through your head."

"I think you would have at that," Trevor said. "How many guns are in this house?"

Wayne's grin faded. "Three that I know of. A thirty-two rifle, a shotgun and an air pistol. That's all."

"It wasn't any of those." Trevor shook his head.

"Why were you the target?" Wayne demanded. "What makes you so important?"

"Someone is afraid of what I may have found out or will find out."

"Afraid of you?" Wayne's laugh was

raucous and loud. "A careless fool who lets himself get shot at?"

A SLIGHT smile curved Trevor's lip. "You're wrong when a man is shot at the first time, he can't be classed as a fool for making himself a target. After that—yes—he is a fool if he lets a killer try again. There will be no next time, Wayne. I carry a gun too and I'm pretty good with it."

"I'll bet. And what's all this about my changing rooms with Max? Your idea, I suppose?"

"No. Max made the suggestion and I think it's a good one and if he is willing to take the risk," Trevor said, "it's up to Max."

"I won't let him do it," Wayne thundered. "Max is my friend. If somebody is out to get me, let them. I'm half dead anyway. But Max has a few more years. I—oh, Richard, come on in! Never mind this flatfoot. He doesn't mean anything. How did you make out tonight?"

Richard winked and made a circle of thumb and forefinger. "I played number twelve all night. Just like you told me. I doubled my bet three times when it won and then I quit."

"Good. And they say a roulette wheel can't be licked." Wayne chuckled. "What about that blonde? The one who phoned here a couple of days ago and said you were either going to marry her or—pay through the nose?"

Richard grinned broadly. "Now she thinks I'm going to marry her again. Say, maybe this private dick can help us. All I need is something on her. Then she won't dare—"

"I don't handle that sort of garbage," Trevor growled and walked out.

He found a small study where there was a comfortable chair and he sat down to do some thinking. One thing was more than apparent. Old Man Wayne was living again through his favorite grandson. What Richard went through, the old buzzard enjoyed, smacking his lips over conquests of gambling houses and blondes. He whetted his appetite on the escapades of Richard. Will, studious and hard working, was just an attachment to the house, like the bannister of the stairway.

This wasn't solving two shootings though, and Trevor concentrated on them. Finally he got up and searched the room. There wasn't much in the desk. Some bills, mostly unpaid, a few business let-

ters. He picked up a large magnet that was used as a paper weight and idly held it over some paper clips which were instantly snapped up by the magnetism in the red and silver horseshoe.

Trevor heard Richard leave the old man's room. Shortly afterwards he heard the squeal of the wheels on the old man's bed. Max was switching him to the next room. Trevor went downstairs and then on out to the estate. He checked on the gardeners who were still on post and who swore nobody had passed by them after the shot.

Trevor was halfway back to the house when he heard two quick shots. They came from inside the house. He raced around to the front, his own gun in his fist. The door was closed. He opened it, stood in the hallway a moment and then raced upstairs.

Suddenly old man Wayne began shouting. His bellow rang through the house. As Trevor reached the second floor landing, he saw Will Randall come out of his room. Will's hair was tousled, his eyes sleepy looking. He wore only the bottoms of his pajamas.

Richard came out too, but Richard was still dressed. All three hurried to the old man's room. Trevor opened the door and told Wayne to stop his bellowing.

"I'll yell all I like," Wayne retorted. "You stupid fool! Somebody shot Max. I know he's been hit because he won't answer me. He's in the next room where I ought to be—"

Trevor stepped through the open doorway. Max lay on his face, head toward the window. He'd been shot twice in the back. Either slug would have been fatal for they were spaced so closely together that both must have ripped through the heart.

Trevor's eyes went cold and hard. He paid no attention to Will or Richard who followed him into the room. He made a quick check of Max's pulse, knowing there could be none. He studied the wounds again and the position of the body. Max must have been facing the window, maybe even looking out of it, when death came. Very apparently he'd been shot by someone who quietly opened the door to his room, leveled the gun and fired before Max even knew anyone was there.

QUICKLY Trevor went over to the door and pulled it open. The hinges

squealed just the slightest and were in need of a little oil. He'd noticed that before and merely wanted to check on it. Then he went into the next room and sat down beside Wayne's bed.

"All right," he said, "the cops have got to be in on this now. Did you see anyone? Hear anything?"

"I was half asleep," Wayne protested. "The shots woke me up. But I think I heard someone running around the back of the house. My ears are pretty good. Unless—that was you."

"No, it couldn't have been me," Trevor explained. "I was at the west side of the estate, not directly behind the house. I'll go have a look."

Before he left, however, he called Richard and Will into the room and searched them. He studied their fingertips and even sniffed of them for traces of powder smoke. Finally he pulled off the blanket on Wayne's bed and searched that too.

"Now what's the meaning of that?" Wayne demanded. "Do you think I got out of bed and shot him?"

"I know you can't get out of bed," Trevor said. "But you might have been slipped the murder gun by Richard while I was in the next room. You'd hide Richard's guilt, even if you knew Richard had murdered Max and that he really meant those bullets to be for you."

"I'd hide him," Wayne agreed, "in the face of anything or anyone."

Trevor hurried out of the house. He should have called the State Police before this but there wasn't time. He was hot on the trail of something. The facts were there, if he could only recognize them. He circled the house and found the gun under a bush. It had apparently been thrown there for it had knocked off some of the leaves from the bush as it crashed on through. Trevor left it there.

He reached the front porch and sat down on the steps. For ten minutes he sat there and then he went into the reception hall and yelled for Will Randall. The young man came running down the steps. He was still an ashy color and his hands shook.

"It-it's awful," he said. "I can't understand it. Oh, I don't blame you, Trevor. You did everything possible, but Max—taking Grandpa's place and getting himself killed—"

"Tell me something," Trevor said. "Last night, when that first shot was fired at the old boy, what was he wearing?"

"Who?" Will gaped.

"Your grandfather. Was it a robe, or just pajamas or what?"

"A—robe. I gave it to him for Christmas last year. I remember because he took it off and made me hang it up."

"Good," Trevor said. "Show me where it is. Then bring me the air pistol that's somewhere around this place, and any ammunition for it you can find. Let's go!"

The robe was light in weight and color. Trevor carefully rolled it up and carried it downstairs. Will arrived with the long barreled air pistol and a box of shot. Trevor examined the weapon and the pellets. After rolling one between his fingers, he finally put it between his teeth and bit hard. There were no indentations in the tiny ball. It was made of steel.

Trevor walked upstairs. Richard was standing beside the old man's bed and talking in a whisper. He stopped when Trevor came in. The detective picked up a chair, carried it over to the bedside and sat down. He looked at Richard.

"You've been nicely unuseful so far, so do something to help. Go downstairs and call Captain Burke of the State Police Barracks in Knowlton. Tell him you're calling for me and to come here and pick up a murder victim—and his murderer."

"His murderer!" Richard gasped. "You know who did it?"

"The faster you get the State Cops here, the quicker you'll learn the truth," Trevor said. "And close the door on your way out."

Old Man Wayne was propped up against the pillows. His head looked more like a skull than ever. He managed a weak smile.

"How did you find out?" he asked. "Oh, I'm not going to deny it. I knew you were dangerously smart the moment you came into my room. Yes, I killed Max—the old fool. I'm only sorry I haven't got the gun so I could kill you too."

JIM TREVOR nodded his head in agreement.

"I think you would. I found the gun on the lawn. You threw it out of the window, judging your aim by the reflection in the mirror. That mirror is a mighty useful thing, for a killer who can't get out of bed and yet who schemes to murder his best friend."

Wayne said, "Where did I slip? Tell me or I won't say another word. I'll have me a shock that'll paralyze my tongue

and throat. Think I can't fake that?"

"You'd be good at it," Trevor said. "Of course I know how you killed him. By inference and double talk you got Max to consider changing rooms with you. Max, of course, wanted to accept the risk for an old man who was crippled and unable to defend himself. That's why you fired a shot into your own bedhead last night. To create the impression you were in danger. To set the stage for murder. But in firing over your shoulder, some of the powder smeared the robe you were wearing."

"Max fell into your trap. I'll bet the poor guy didn't even realize you had opened the subject of switching rooms. After it was accomplished, you waited until I was out of the house and then fired at me by using that mirror which you can tilt or move around by pulling cords hidden under your bedclothes. I saw them when I pretended to search for a gun. You wanted to kill me because you were afraid of what I might find out. But you didn't succeed."

"Yes, yes," Wayne was speaking in a hoarse whisper. "Just as I pulled the trigger you moved. Go on—tell me how I slipped."

"Max was in the next room. The door between this room and Max's was open. Your bed was against the wall with the foot of it just beyond the door. By moving the mirror, you could see Max. He was standing at the window. You reached up, grasped that trapeze outfit which is hooked to the sides of the bed. You pulled yourself into a sitting position, thrust the gun around the corner of the door and aimed by means of the mirror. You shot him twice. But you should have made him turn around, you old buzzard."

"Why? Why should he have been turned around?"

"Because any other murderer but you would have had to open the door to Max's room. That door squeaked a little. Max's nerves were on edge. He'd have heard the door opening and swung around. He didn't—so he heard nothing, suspected nothing. You've been planning this for weeks. The first step was to become proficient in aiming a gun with only a mirror

to show your target. You used the air pistol for that, firing around the edge of the door between these rooms. The wall in here is marked from the little shot. They had to be made of steel too, so you could gather them up by using a magnet on a string which you also directed by means of the mirror."

WAYNE licked his lips. "I wouldn't have made those mistakes ten years ago. That shock I had did something to my brain. . . ."

"You did all right, though I think you'd have murdered anyone any time if it had suited your purpose. I imagine you figured Will would be blamed for it. Then Richard would get everything. Because you did all this for Richard."

"You knew Max would outlive you and under the terms of your will, he'd get half of your estate. When Max died, all this money would go to his heirs and Richard needed it. He was spending it so fast your fortune was dwindling. Richard would have received two thirds of the half that was left after you died. Not enough. But if Max died first and all his money became yours to be passed on to Richard, then that no-good grandson of yours would have plenty."

Wayne said, "I'll give you fifty thousand if you don't talk and convince the cops it was someone from outside."

"I wouldn't take a dime," Trevor said. "I know you won't live long enough to pay any sort of a penalty for what you did. In this case, a killer knew there could be no punishment. You're half dead now. You had nothing to lose. But I hope you live long enough to read what people think of you, and to hear yourself called a murderer who'd kill his lifelong friend so his rat of a grandson would have more money to throw away."

"Call your blasted police in," Wayne said weakly. "I'm not afraid of them nor what they'll try to do to me."

"Wouldn't it be funny though," Trevor said coldly, "if you did live? Just long enough for them to carry you to the chair?"

Wayne's screech bordered on madness. He died the following morning.

NEXT ISSUE

THE MAN BEHIND THE PADLOCKED DOOR, a Murder Frame Mystery

Novelet by PETER REID—and Many Other Stories and Features!

a novelet by



set a place for DEATH

CHAPTER I

A PLAYBOY BOWS OUT

DETEKTIVE-LIEUTENANT Patrick Edward McCreary was scowling. "This," he said, "is one of them jobs where everybody connected with the killing is strictly Social Register, which means they look down their nose at you like you was dirt under their feet, even with a murder rap hanging over them."

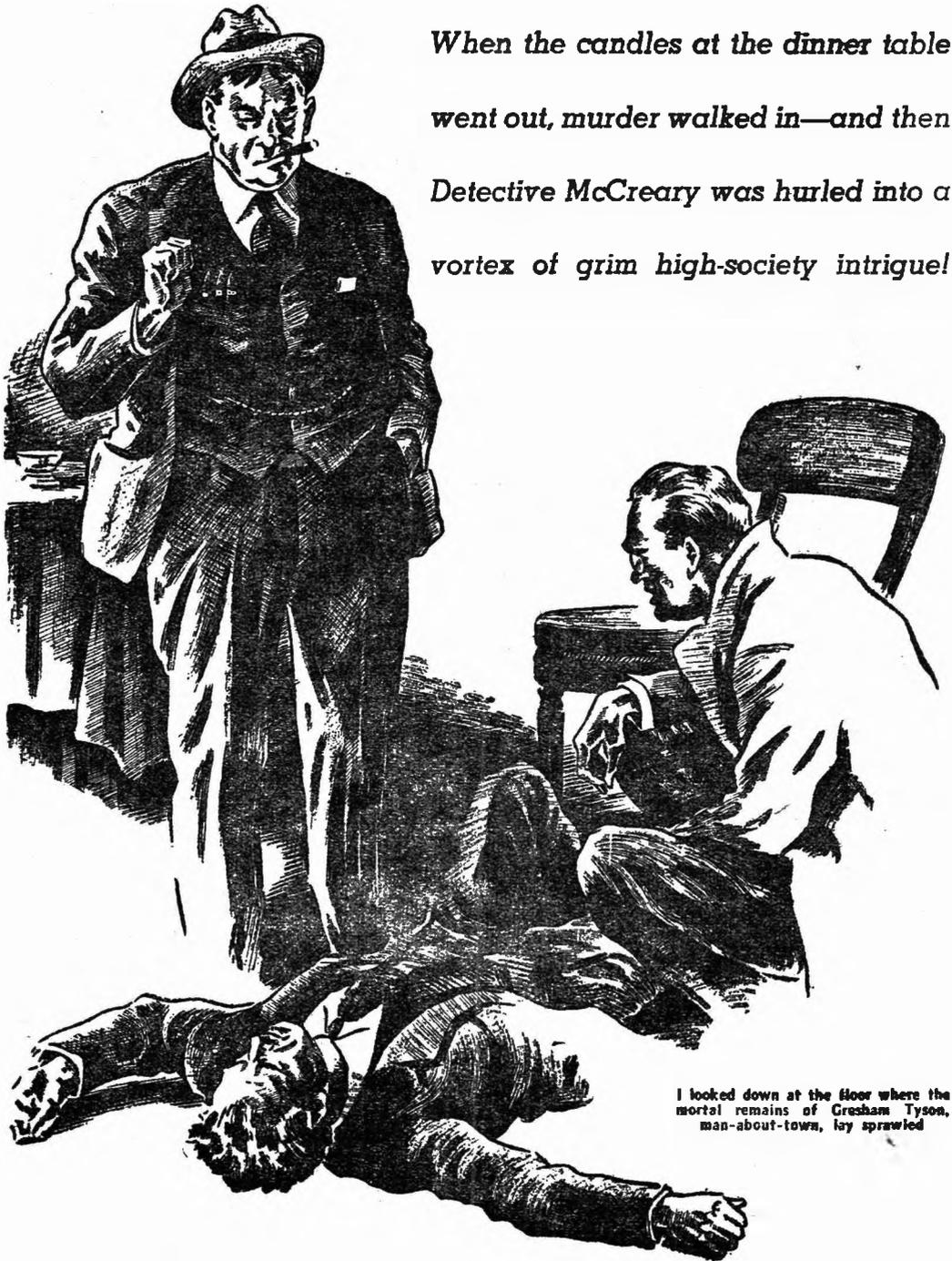
My fat friend might have been a lieutenant in Homicide, but he still mangled the English language, he still affected villainously black cigars, and persisted in his belief that he got handed all the tough cases.

"There was at least four people around that dinner table," McCreary said, "that would've loved to have stuck a shiv into this here Gresham Tyson. And in the whole city, there must be four hundred people who would have got a kick out of the same thing."

I looked down at the floor where the mortal remains of Gresham Tyson, man-about-town, lay sprawled. It was curious, I thought, that Tyson, who had always been so suavely graceful in life could be so awkward in death. Alive, Tyson had been almost incredibly handsome. Dead,

ROGER FULLER

When the candles at the dinner table went out, murder walked in—and then Detective McCreary was hurled into a vortex of grim high-society intrigue!



I looked down at the floor where the mortal remains of Gresham Tyson, man-about-town, lay sprawled

he was anything but.

The Bureau men were going through their routine with the unnatural calm of men who regarded murdered bodies as just so many new folders in the Homicide Bureau's files.

"Stabbed twice," the Medical Examiner had said. "Thin blade, with almost no bleeding. Look for something like a stiletto, or an ice pick."

McCreary frowned, and turned his little eyes toward the library where the guests at Madeleine Fourson's dinner party waited, under guard.

"Did it take a lot of strength to shove that shiv into that guy?" he asked the Medical Examiner.

The doctor shook his head. "Not at all. A child could have done this, considering the obvious sharpness of the weapon."

"Or a woman," McCreary grunted.

"Or a woman, certainly," the Medical Examiner agreed. "The knife, stiletto, ice pick—whatever it was—was slipped into this man's chest with no more force than would be required in pushing a darning needle, say, into a slab of cheese."

I LOOKED around the dining room. The Fourson house was big enough to be called a mansion and the dining room reflected its elegance. The long table was set with gleaming silver and spotless linen. Candelabra held long, white tapers. Those candles had failed, and given the killer his chance. Seven places were set, the chairs still pushed away in the same positions they had been when somebody had clicked on the electric lights and dis-closed—murder.

I had been in the Police Headquarters press room when McCreary had phoned me from upstairs.

"That playboy, Gresham Tyson," he had told me, "has just been knocked off at Madeleine Fourson's little cottage out on North Drive. You want to go along with me?"

I phoned my office the flash and grabbed my hat. McCreary broke the rules again by letting me go with him in the big black sedan to the big house on North Hill where Madeleine Fourson lived with her brother, Jerry, and her stepfather, Hector Griggs.

It was a funny set-up, that Fourson household. When Madeleine's mother had been killed in a hunting accident a couple of years before, Madeleine had let it be known that her stepfather would continue

to live in the big house. It was common gossip that Madeleine's mother had sacrificed her share in the huge Fourson fortune when she had married Griggs and that Madeleine got all the Fourson dough. Jerry had been cut off with just a couple of stray bucks and, knowing Jerry, I could see where that had been a smart move on Old Man Fourson's part. Jerry could hold onto a dollar about as long as he could hold onto a red-hot poker.

Hector didn't have a dime of his own. He was a pleasant-enough guy, prominent in the hunting set, and he was generally well-liked, even though some did say he'd married Madeleine's mother to get his hands on the Fourson dough. If he was given a nasty turn by the discovery that the minute Madeleine's ma said "I do", the Fourson money automatically reverted to his stepdaughter, he never showed it. And Madeleine liked her stepfather well enough to keep him pretty well heeled.

Madeleine was tops in her blue-blooded circle and there had been a great to-do when her engagement to Ronny Sieger was announced. Ronny could almost match Madeleine in the dough department and he certainly was even-up as far as family went. But that furore was nothing compared with the outburst that came when Madeleine broke her engagement to Sieger and announced that Gresham Tyson was the man of her choice, after all.

Gresham always seemed to have plenty of money, even though he toiled not, neither did he spin. If he was a fortune hunter, he certainly hit the jackpot when he convinced Madeleine Fourson that he was a better buy than Ronny Sieger. Sieger seemed to take it like a little man, although one night at the Country Club bar he told Tyson if he didn't treat Madeleine right he would kill him.

That was why it was easy to jump to conclusions when Ronny Sieger opened the door of Madeleine's house for us that night. Ronny was a tall, broad-shouldered gent with curly blond hair. He never had been as handsome as Gresham Tyson, but I preferred his looks to Tyson's.

Sieger's face was pale and drawn as he said:

"My name's Sieger, Lieutenant. This is a terrible thing that's happened."

"You here when it happened?" my fat detective friend asked bluntly.

Sieger nodded. If McCreary wanted to ask Ronny just why he, the discarded boy

friend, should be having dinner with his ex-gal and her new intended, he suppressed the question. He shouldered past Sieger and went into the dining room, where the corpse was waiting on the floor. Just as we were turning into the dining room, we were hailed from the doorway that led to the library. Leaning up against the door frame was a dark-haired fellow with a sullen look and a smeary mouth.

"How long you guys going to keep us cooped up in here?" he asked belligerently. "I got a date."

I recognized him then. It was Madeleine Fourson's brother, Jerry, and he was slopped to the eyebrows—as usual.

"You'd better call your date off," McCreary said shortly. "This might take a little while."

Somebody reached out a hand and pulled Jerry Fourson back into the library. I followed McCreary into the dining room.

ONE of the two precinct men who had reached the house first gave McCreary the picture:

Dinner at eight at Miss Madeleine Fourson's. Just an informal little affair; don't dress, please. Cocktails in the library, starting at seven-thirty, with Jerry Fourson gulping down his drinks too fast and too plentifully, and Gresham exuding charm, smilingly secure in his knowledge that within a couple of weeks he'd have beautiful Madeleine Fourson as his bride, and the Fourson bank account to smooth over any of the rough spots along life's highway.

Looking through the dining room door, into the library, I saw Hector Griggs cross the room, bend over an end table and strike a match. He straightened up to hold the light to his long, thick cigar.

Hector was very much the whiskey-ad gentleman. Automatically I associated him with big hunting horses, Tatersall vests, Irish setters, fine guns, good food and excellent wines. I wondered vaguely whether Hector Griggs might have wondered about his own position in Madeleine's menage, after she married Tyson. Would Madeleine, as Mrs. Tyson Gresham, still have supported her stepfather in the manner to which he had become accustomed?

"Then," said the precinct man, "another dinner guest, beside Ronny, Jerry, Tyson, and Miss Fourson's stepfather, Hector Griggs, was this Miss Alicia

Greeves, from out of town."

"Who's she?" McCreary asked.

The precinct man shrugged. "I don't know. She's a looker, though. Comes from out West. An old friend of Tyson's, the way I get it. I was told that this Miss Greeves just stopped off in town and called up Tyson and he brought her along to this dinner party."

"Uh-huh," McCreary said. "Go on."

Then there had been Miss Marks. She'd been Madeleine's nurse, governess and chaperon until now she was a member of the family. I'd seen her with Madeleine. Lavender and old lace, with buttoned boots and a way of looking at anybody she didn't think was worthy of Madeleine—and that included most of the population—as though she were smelling something unpleasant.

CHAPTER II

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED



HERE they were, the seven of them—Madeleine, Tyson, Jerry, Hector Griggs, Ronny Sieger, this Alicia Greeves, and Miss Marks. Dinner is served. Hector at one end of the long table, Madeleine at the other, Tyson at Madeleine's right, Jerry at her left, where Madeleine, perhaps, can keep him in bounds. Miss Marks at Tyson's right, Alicia Greeves across the table from Miss Marks, and Ronny Sieger at Alicia's right. The table doesn't balance, but this is an informal affair and, besides, the fair Alicia apparently was rung in at the last minute.

There's the soup course. Then the fish. When the roast is served Miss Marks begins to feel faint.

"The old lady has a heart condition," the precinct man said, "and sometimes she passes out cold. Miss Fourson noticed her getting ready to pull a flop. So she spoke to her stepfather."

"Hector," I could hear Madeleine Fourson saying sharply. "The French windows, please. Miss Marks—"

Hector probably flung the doors wide, and the wind that made the trees outside sound like churning surf swept over the table, and the candles went out as though snuffing caps had been placed over each flame.

Pitch blackness and the sound of chairs being pushed back from the table. Why

had they stood up, instead of waiting for Allen to come in and click on the overhead lights? Or why hadn't one of the men tried to find the switch? Why did they all begin milling about in the dark room?

If they had kept sitting where they were, the killer would not have been given the perfect chance he or she had to drive a knife, stiletto—whatever it was—into Gresham Tyson's heart, and get away from the body before Allen flooded the room with a brightness that showed every gruesome detail.

Gresham Tyson was on the floor, dead. Beside him, slumped in her chair, was Miss Marks. That little old governess might have been another body, except for her faint breathing and her lips were bluish, instead of bloodless, as Tyson's were.

Somebody must have screamed, then, and the men must have gone to Tyson to make sure he was dead. Then the question must have formed: "Who did it—and where's the knife?"

"We haven't really gone over the place, Lieutenant," the precinct man said, "but that knife is hid real good. Of course the killer might still have it on his person, but I thought we'd better wait for you before we ran the rule over the men."

"Uh-huh," McCreary nodded. "And we'll need a policewoman. They've had no chance to get rid of the shiv since you arrived?"

"Not a chance," the precinct man said. "And unless they're all lyin' to cover each other up, that knife's got to be on one of them or in this room. Griggs and this Sieger both say nobody got out of anybody else's sight from the time the lights went up and they found the body."

"Uh-huh," McCreary said, noncommittally. "But it's ten to one this bunch would protect each other with any kind of lie they thought would do any good."

McCreary didn't go into the library to question the people herded there, until after Tyson's body was removed. He searched the dead man's pockets, but brought up absolutely nothing of importance.

Before he walked into the library, the fat detective gave a few brief orders to the men who had come with us.

"Go over this room with a vacuum cleaner," he directed. "I want that shiv. Until we get it, this job will be just that much tougher."

The Bureau men began moving about

the dining room purposefully. I knew it would take a mighty clever hiding place to escape their prying eyes. Another detail moved through the French windows to examine the terrace, on the possibility that the killer had thrown the knife through the open doors. A Homicide sergeant headed for the kitchen to talk to the servants. I stayed close to Patrick Edward McCreary.

"Have you stopped to think," I asked my fat friend, "that the killer was a lucky guy?"

"You mean because the old lady took a faintin' spell so's the windows were opened and the candles were blew out?" he asked.

I nodded, feeling a bit deflated.

"Well, I'll tell you," McCreary said. "I got a coupla theories about that. Maybe the killer was plannin' to use the shiv at some other time and just took advantage of the candles goin' out. Or maybe the faintin' spell was an act and somebody wanted the windows opened and the candles blew out."

"Then if—" I began.

"If the faintin' business was a phony," McCreary said thoughtfully, "then Miss Marks knows who the killer was, if it wasn't her, herself. And in that case, we might get somewhere, though I ain't much good at browbeatin' old ladies."

BUT if McCreary hoped to prove the old governess's fainting spell an act, he was doomed to disappointment. We were crossing to the library when the chimes at the front door tolled softly. A uniformed cop admitted a tall man with a Vandyke beard and a black satchel.

"I'm Dr. Featherstone, Officer," he said. "I was called by Miss Fourson and told Miss Lucia Marks had suffered an attack, coupled, I believe, with some tragedy here. I was told to see Lieutenant McCreary."

"That's me," my fat friend said. "And the tragedy is murder, Doc."

The man in the Vandyke stared. "Murder? But who—what—"

"Man by the name of Gresham Tyson," McCreary said bluntly, "and he was stabbed while he was at the dinner table, settin' right beside your patient, Miss Marks, Doc. You know him?"

Dr. Featherstone shook his head.

"No," he said. "That is—er—I've heard of him. But stabbed! And Miss Marks was right there to see it. No wonder she

had an attack."

"Funny thing about it, Doc," McCreary said calmly, "is that she had the spell before Tyson was killed. Y'might say her spell give the killer his chance to . . . This old lady's heart condition is on the up-and-up, huh?"

"Up-and-up?" the doctor asked, his brow wrinkling. "If you mean to ask if Miss Marks really is suffering from a heart ailment, the answer is yes, emphatically. I've been treating her for years. Aortic and mitral valvular endocarditis, plus—"

"Sure, sure," McCreary broke in. "Well, can you examine Miss Marks now and tell for sure whether or not she had an attack within the last hour or so?"

Dr. Featherstone regarded McCreary with a puzzled expression before he shrugged and twisted his bearded lips in a wry smile.

"I should be able to," he said. "But, good heavens, Lieutenant, you don't mean to say you suspect little Miss Marks of having anything to do with this—this murder, do you?"

"You know how cops are, Doc," McCreary said. "Dumb. We just get so much to work on and we have to go as far as we can with what we got. You give Miss Marks an examination, Doc, and let me know what you find out." He started away and turned back. "And if you find a stiletto or any other kind of a shiv on the old lady," he added, "you let me know that, too."

Dr. Featherstone snorted as he followed us into the library. Everybody swung their eyes on us. Madeleine had been crying, but even tears had failed to spoil her good looks. The Greeves gal was a looker, all right, but she couldn't touch Madeleine. Miss Greeves had a hard kind of blond beauty that seemed to emphasize Madeleine Fourson's softness.

McCreary turned his moon face to the old lady who stood beside Madeleine's chair.

"The doctor's here to see you, Miss Marks," he said, his voice gentle. "You just go along with him and later, if you feel up to it, why, I'd like to talk to you a few minutes."

Miss Marks looked down at Madeleine. It was easy to see that she hated to leave

[Turn page]

BE A WINNER AT ANYTHING YOU TACKLE WITH PROGRESSIVE POWER!



WHAAM!

LOOKING THAT BUILT WON'T RICK ON YOU AGAIN!

FOR YOUR NEW ENERGY AND VIGOR—WANT TO BE SURE DO A GOOD JOB—YOU EARNED YOUR PROMOTION!

ALL 5 FAMOUS JOWETT COURSES 1 Volume 25c

Let's Go, Pal! I'll prove I can make YOU an "ALL-AROUND" HE-MAN

Fast—or No Cost! says George F. Jowett, World's Greatest Body Builder.



George F. Jowett

"The Jowett System is the greatest in the world!" says E. F. Kelly, Physical Director, Athletic City.

whom experts call **Champion of Champions**—World's wrestling and weight lifting champ at 17 and 19.—World's Strongest Arms—4 times World's Perfect Body—plus other records.

10 DAY TRIAL! Think of it—all five of these famous muscle building courses now in one picture-packed volume for only 25c. If you don't actually feel results within ONE WEEK, send it back and your money will be promptly refunded. Photo Book of Famous Strong Men!

Enjoy my "Progressive Power" Strength Secret! Give Me 10 Easy Minutes a Day—Without Strain!

I'll teach you the "Progressive Power Method" through which I retait myself from a physical wreck that doctors condemned to die at 15, to the holder of more strength records than any other living athlete or teacher! "Progressive Power" has proven its ability to build the strongest, handsomest men in the world. And I stand ready to show you on a money back basis—that no matter how dabby or puny you are I can do the same for you right in your own home. Let me prove I can add inches to your arms, broaden your shoulders, give you a muscled chest, powerful legs and a Rock-like back—in fact, power pack your whole body so quickly it will amaze you! Yes, I'll jam you with power and confidence to master any situation—to win popularity—and to get ahead on the job! Through my proven secrets I bring to life new power in you inside and out, until YOU are fully satisfied you are the man you want to be.

PROVE IT TO YOURSELF IN ONE NIGHT! Send only 25c for my 5 easy-to-follow, picture-packed courses now in 1 complete volume "How to Become a Muscular He-Man." Try it for one night! Experience the thrilling strength that curves through your muscles.

I am making a drive for thousands of new friends fast—REGARDLESS OF COST!

SO GET NOW MY 5 Muscle COURSES

All in 1 Great Complete Volume Packed With How-To-Do-It Pictures! Now, this "get-acquainted" Far extremely low price of only 25c is your chance to build Only 25c a body you'll be proud of! Follow Jowett's easy method of muscle building NOW!

FREE!

Photos that inspire you to fight and muscle. Free with order.



How to BECOME a MUSCULAR HE-MAN

FREE GIFT COUPON!

Jowett Institute of Physical Culture Dept. TP-93
230 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N. Y.

Dear George:—Please send by return mail, prepaid, FREE Jowett's Photo Book of Strong Men, along with all 5 Muscle Building Courses: 1. Molding a Mighty Chest. 2. Molding a Mighty Arm. 3. Molding a Mighty Grip. 4. Molding a Mighty Back. 5. Molding Mighty Legs—Now all in One Volume "How to Become a Muscular He-Man." Enclosed find 25c, NO C.O.D.'S.

NAME _____ AGE _____
(Please Print Plainly, Include Zone Number)

ADDRESS _____

the girl who had been her charge all her life. Madeleine laid a hand over the wrinkled one.

"Go ahead, Marksey," the girl said softly. "You really shouldn't be up, anyway. Your attack—the shock—"

Miss Marks looked at McCreary, her eyes bright.

"I don't want you policemen bullying Madeleine," she said. Her voice was amazingly deep for so frail a creature. "She—she's n. t. well, and—"

There was a guffaw from the deep wing chair where Jerry Fourson sprawled. Miss Marks' eyes switched in his direction and blazed for a second before the fire faded.

"Not well!" Jerry Fourson burred. "She's as healthy as a horse. She'll outlive a lot of people besides Gresham Tyson."

"Jerry!" Ronny Sieger barked. "Cut it out!"

Jerry Fourson lolled back and stared up at Ronny with foggy eyes.

"I didn't like the guy any better than you did, Ron," he said, "but what's the idea of messin' up our dinin' room with his carcass? Why didn't you wait till you got him on some dark road?"

RONNY SIEGER'S face was dead-white as he made a stride toward where Jerry sat.

"Curse you!" he grated. "Are you trying to hint that I killed him?"

"Take it easy, Ronny," Hector Griggs put in, his voice smooth and unhurried. "You know Jerry's tight."

"Sure," Jerry agreed. "And ain't I lucky I'm such a bottle baby that I don't go in for huntin' and fishin'?"

"What do you mean by that crack?" McCreary butted in.

Jerry tried to focus his gaze on the fat detective-lieutenant and failed.

"Tyson was stabbed, wasn't he?" he asked, waving a hand limply. "Well, my esteemed stepfather here has got one of the greatest li'l collection of huntin' knives y'ever saw. Better check up on 'em and see if one of 'em ain't missin'."

Hector Griggs' face went white. He clenched his hands and made a half move toward Jerry's chair, then restrained himself and turned back to McCreary.

"I get the drift," he said evenly. "It so

happens, Inspector—"

"Lieutenant," McCreary interrupted impassively.

"Lieutenant. It so happens that one of my collection of knives is missing, and has been for several days. It's odd, isn't it, that while I've mentioned the loss to no one, this—young man mentions the fact so promptly."

McCreary shifted the dead cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other.

"What kind of a knife would it be, that's missin'?" he asked.

"It's not a hunting knife at all," Griggs said. "It's an antique piece, Italian. Thin blade, Damascus steel, carved ivory handle."

"A stiletto?" McCreary asked stolidly.

Hector Griggs nodded. If McCreary was elated at being given a description at least, of the murder weapon, he gave no sign. He turned toward Dr. Featherstone.

"Suppose you take your patient upstairs now, Doc," he said quietly.

Miss Marks dealt Jerry Fourson another look of pure contempt, then looked at the girl huddled in the chair beside her. Her hand touched the heiress' shoulder.

"Don't you worry, Madeleine," she said. "I'll be right back."

Madeleine Fourson gave her a grateful glance.

"I'll be all right, Marksey," she said. Her voice was low and rich and thrilling.

CHAPTER III

WHO TOOK THE SHIV?



MADELEINE FOURSON was a looker, all right. Even without all those bucks, she was a prize package. Brunette, with brown eyes, a generous mouth and a perfect skin, she would have been a standout anywhere, Fourson millions or no Fourson millions. She was wearing a green outfit which accented all the grace of her young body.

She had everything, that girl—looks, money, position—and yet I had never seen anyone more forlorn. But after all, a girl couldn't be expected to be vivaciously gay a couple of minutes after the man she was to have married had been knocked off,

and with her ex-boy friend, her brother, and her stepfather the Number One-Two-Three suspects!

Her eyes were steady as she met McCreary's quizzical gaze.

"I've told the other officers everything I know," she said. "Must you ask me a lot of questions, Lieutenant? I'm all mixed up. I—I don't know what to think."

"I'm afraid I gotta, Miss Fourson," McCreary said. "Just routine, y'understand. Maybe there's a room somewhere, where we could be alone."

Wearily, Madeleine Fourson indicated a door that led off the library.

"There's Hector's den," she said. "We could go in there."

As she got up from her chair, her shoulders sagging despite her effort to keep them straight, the fat detective looked at the others.

"I wouldn't like it if any of you was to do any whisperin' or low-talkin'. If you got somethin' to say, speak right up so's the officer at the door can hear you. And I wouldn't like anybody to leave this room, neither, unless I tell them they can."

He followed Madeleine Fourson out of the library, into the small den.

There was silence, then Ronny Sieger said something beneath his breath and walked to a table where bottles, glasses, a soda siphon and an ice bucket stood. As he mixed himself a stiff drink the hissing of the siphon roused Jerry Fourson from the scowling reverie that had followed his outburst.

"Mix me one, too, Ron," he said. "The condemned man drank a hearty last meal."

"For heaven's sake, Jerry!" Hector Griggs burst out. "Try to sober up, instead of getting more plastered. You—all of us—will need all our wits about us before this thing's over."

"Don' you worry about havin' to use your wits," Jerry said, with a sweeping gesture of one hand. "Li'l Jerry's the boy who's gonna take this rap."

"What do you mean?" Ronny asked.

"Mean? Why, jus' that the cops'll land on me with loud cheers after they dig up a few things about me and the late lamented"—his voice was heavy with scorn—"Gresham Tyson."

[Turn page]

TO PEOPLE Who Want To Write but can't get started

Do you have that constant urge to write but the fear that a beginner hasn't a chance? Then listen to what the former editor of Liberty said on this subject:

"There is more room for newcomers in the writing field today than ever before. Some of the greatest of writing men and women have passed from the scene in recent years. Who will take their places? Who will be the new Robert W. Chambers, Edgar Wallace, Rudyard Kipling? Fame, riches and the happiness of achievement await the new men and women of power."

Sells 95 Stories and Novelettes



"The introduction you gave me to your editor friend, resulting in my present assignment to do a complete novel for him monthly, is doubly appreciated, especially since I finished my N.I.A. training some time ago, and, consequently, have no call on your service. Here is concrete evidence that interest in your students continues indefinitely. To date now, I have sold 95 stories and novelettes to 20 national magazines."—Darrel Jordan, P.O. Box 279, Friendship, N. Y.

Writing Aptitude Test — FREE!

THE Newspaper Institute of America offers a free Writing Aptitude Test. Its object is to discover new recruits for the army of men and women who add to their income by fiction and article writing. The Writing Aptitude Test is a simple but expert analysis of your latent ability, your powers of imagination, logic, etc. Not all applicants pass this test. Those who do are qualified to take the famous N. I. A. course based on the practical training given by big metropolitan dailies.

This is the New York Copy Desk Method which teaches you to write by writing. You develop your individual style instead of trying to copy that of others. You "cover" actual assignments such as metropolitan reporters get. Although you work at home, on your own time, you are constantly guided by experienced writers. It is really fascinating work. Each week you see new progress. In a matter of months you can acquire the coveted "professional" touch. Then you're ready for market with greatly improved chances of making sales.

Mail the Coupon Now

But the first step is to take the Writing Aptitude Test. It requires but a few minutes and costs nothing. So mail the coupon now. Make the first move towards the most enjoyable and profitable occupation—writing for publication! Newspaper Institute of America, One Park Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. (Founded 1925)

Free

Newspaper Institute of America
One Park Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

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

Mr. _____
Mrs. _____
Miss _____

Address _____

() Check here if you are eligible under the G.I. Bill of Rights. (All correspondence confidential. No salesman will call on you.) 94-2-292

Copyrights 1949, Newspaper Institute of America

Learn this Profitable Profession



IN 90 DAYS AT HOME

MONEY-MAKING CAREER OPEN to MEN and WOMEN, 18 to 50

Hundreds of men and women between 18 and 50 make \$10 to \$20 in a single day giving Scientific Swedish Massage and Hydro-Therapy treatments. There is big demand from doctors, hospitals, sanatoriums and clubs. Graduates earn large full time incomes from these or in private practice in their own offices. Others make good money from home treatments given in spare time. Learn this interesting, money-making profession in your own home, through our home study course. Same instructors as in our nationally known resident school. You can win independence and prepare for future security by qualifying for our Diploma. Course can be completed in 8 to 4 months. Many earn while they learn. Begin your training at once.



Anatomy Charts & Booklet FREE

Enroll now and we will include, at no extra cost, many needed supplies. Fit yourself to help meet growing demand for Scientific Swedish Massage. Send the coupon at once for complete details. Anatomy Charts and 32-page Illustrated Booklet. FREE, postpaid.

THE COLLEGE OF SWEDISH MASSAGE
Dept. 963C, 41 E. Pearson, Chicago 11, Illinois
Please send me FREE and postpaid, Anatomy Charts, 32-page Booklet and complete details on Home Training.

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

OWN a Business



Clean and Mothproof rugs and upholstery "in the home." Patented equipment. No shop needed. Duraclean dealer's gross profits up to \$20 a day on EACH serviceman. These Nationally Advertised services create repeat customers. Easy to learn. Quickly established. Easy terms. Send today for Free Booklet—Full details.

DURACLEAN CO., 69-3PL., DEERFIELD, ILL.

USE YOUR SECRET POWER!

Get your share of good things of life you've wanted but missed through uncertainty, shyness, inhibitions. Happiness, bigger income, love, confidence, come to those who use secrets of NATURLAW. Write postcard for inspiring, eye-opening FREE 16-Page book. INSTITUTE OF NATURLAW, Dept. 12, 2208 Main, Dallas, Texas.

AMAZING OFFER — \$50 IS YOURS

FOR SELLING ONLY 100 BOXES

of entirely different, new De Luxe All-Occasion cards. Patented feature television card included. Each box sells for \$1.00, your profit 50c. Surprise items. It costs nothing to try. Write today.

CHEERFUL CARD CO., Dept. AM-1, White Plains, N.Y.

WRITE FOR SAMPLES

CARBURETOR TOO RICH MAKES MOTORIST TOO POOR



Car owners who are wasting money and not getting proper gas mileage due to over-rich mixtures will be pleased to learn how to save gasoline by VACU-MATING over-rich mixtures. VACU-MATIC fits all cars, trucks and tractors. It is automatic and operates on the supercharge principle. Easily installed in a few minutes.

SALESMEN WANTED! Big Profits! Send name, address on penny postcard for free particulars and how to get yours for introducing.

VACU-MATIC CO., 7917-1433 W. State St., WAUWATOSA, WIS.

"Oh-oh," I thought, "I wish McCreary could hear this."

The cop at the library doorway perked up his ears and saw Hector and Ronny cast him a worried glance.

"Shut up, Jerry," Ronny said rudely. "You're drunk."

"Sure," young Fourson said agreeably. "But that don't mean the police won't dig up the fact that I'm the most logical suspect for the killin' of Tyson—the skunk!"

Hector Griggs crossed the room to where Jerry half lay in the chair.

"Get hold of yourself," he commanded sharply. "The authorities will get the wrong impression."

"Hah!" Jerry Fourson jeered. "You mean the cops will get the right impression. That everybody in this room—pardon me, Miss Greeves, I don't know about *you*—hated Gresham Tyson for the punk he was."

"You can't say that!" Alicia said sharply, the first word I'd heard her say. "You mustn't talk about Gresh that way!"

Jerry bowed drunkenly and elaborately at the blonde.

"Sorry," he said. "I'm jus' talkin' about the rest of us. We all hated him. And that goes f'r Madeleine, too."

"What are you saying, man?" Ronny asked.

"Sure," Jerry said. "Y'think she loved that skunk, Ron? Well, she didn't. Y'wanta know why she was gonna marry him? Well—"

Before anybody had the least idea of what was going to happen Hector Griggs planted a hook on Jerry's chin that threw the kid about fourteen miles inside the borders of Never-Never Land.

The cop at the doorway jumped on Hector and wrestled him away.

"Y'shouldn't have done that," the cop panted. "Now I'll get the devil from the Lieutenant."

Griggs didn't resist. He permitted himself to be dragged away from where the unconscious Jerry slumped limply, and there was the suggestion of a smile on the man's lean face as he looked down at his stepson.

"I'm sorry," he said.

THE door to the den opened and the fat detective-lieutenant popped his head into the library. His little eyes took in the

scene at a glance and his brow darkened. "Who slugged him?" he asked, his tone bitter.

"I did," Hector Griggs said calmly.

"The kid," McCreary said heavily, "was likkered up and runnin' off at the mouth. You didn't want him to talk, huh, because you were afraid he'd spill something, so you knocked him out. When he comes to, it's a good bet he'll clam up."

"Which, combined with the fact that my knife probably was used to kill Tyson, probably makes me Suspect Number One, eh?" Hector asked. He didn't seem much perturbed. He lit a cigarette with a steady hand. "Am I under arrest, Lieutenant?"

If there was anything McCreary hated, it was theatrics and Griggs was certainly going through Act Two, Scene Two, now. The fat detective scowled.

"Not yet," he said bluntly, "but maybe soon . . . Suppose you take this battler into the other room, Milligan, and see if you can keep him from knocking out any more people I might want to talk to."

Milligan, the cop, escorted Hector Griggs out of the library.

"The rest of you," McCreary said balefully, "sit tight and don't talk. I got a few more things to ask Miss Fourson, then I'll be ready for you."

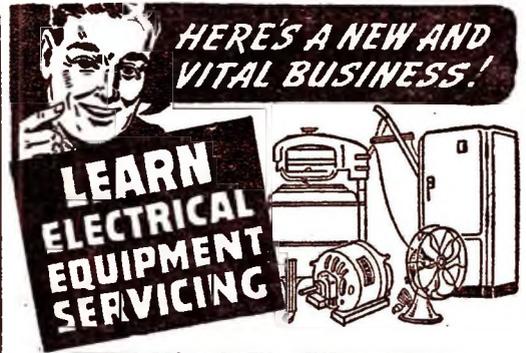
"Oh, Lieutenant," Dr. Featherstone said, from the doorway. "I'd like to speak to you for a moment."

McCreary crossed to the hallway and the physician spoke to him in tones so low I couldn't catch what he said. I saw McCreary scowl and then I heard him ask the doc: "Are you positive?" Featherstone nodded forcibly and added something more in the low tone.

McCreary pulled at his underlip and muttered something. He didn't like what Dr. Featherstone had told him and that meant that Miss Marks had suffered a real heart attack at the dinner table, an attack that brought on the opening of the French windows, the snuffing out of the candles, the opportunity for the killer to leap on Gresham Tyson and bury that missing stiletto deep into Gresham's heart.

Knowing the fat detective-lieutenant as long as I had, I knew he was basing his investigation on the theory that the murder of Tyson had been planned to the second, and that Miss Marks necessarily had

[Turn page]



HERE'S A NEW AND VITAL BUSINESS!

LEARN ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT SERVICING

OFFERS BIG MONEY — INDEPENDENCE

Learn in spare time at home. NEW Shop Method Training System. Work as many hours as you wish—the Electrical Equipment Technician is his own boss. It is not unusual for a technician to charge on the basis of \$5.00 to \$6.00 an hour!

NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NEEDED

We furnish everything! Tool kits, training kits, including the famous Christy trouble-detecting ELECTRONIC KIT. Plus illustrated instructions written in simple, easy-to-understand language, check full of photographs and drawings. Shows you how to repair factory and household electrical units. Power machinery, refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, irons, etc. Gives you a working knowledge of electricity, welding, nickel plating, etc. Shows how to build power tools you need, how to solicit business and what to charge. Many report paying for their entire course, tools, etc. on earnings made at home while learning!

FREE BOOK SENT TO YOU

Send your name for FREE booklet on Electrical Equipment Servicing and instructions for paying us later from your EARNINGS WHILE LEARNING!

CHRISTY TRADES SCHOOL

Dept. D-2504 2835 N. Central Ave., Chicago 34, Ill.

BE A DETECTIVE

WORK HOME or TRAVEL. Experience unnecessary. DETECTIVE Particulars FREE. Write to GEO. R. H. WAGNER, 125 W. 86th St., N. Y.



Here's a Profitable BUSINESS FREE

MONEY MAKING OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU WITHOUT INVESTMENT!

No experience needed to act as our Local Dealer for MASTER Work Uniform garments. Every business concerns a prospect. Advertising embroidered on garments is a big sales feature. Easy, pleasant work. You receive cash commissions daily. You can easily earn up to many thousands of dollars per year. We supply all Sales Equipment FREE. Write

GEO. MASTER GARMENT CO., Dept. 303
Elgin, Indiana



She Got \$400.00 for a Half Dollar

I will pay CASH for OLD COINS, BILLS and STAMPS

POST YOURSELF! It pays!
I paid \$400.00 to Mrs. Dowry of Texas, for one Half Dollar; J.D. Martin of Virginia \$200.00 for a single Copper Cent. Mr. Manning of New York, \$2,500.00 for one Silver Dollar. Mrs. C. P. Adams, Ohio, received \$700.00 for a few old coins. I will pay big prices for all kinds of old coins, medals, bills and stamps.

I WILL PAY \$100.00 FOR A DIME!
1804 S. Mint; \$50.00 for 1913 Liberty Head Nickel (not Buffalo) and hundreds of other amazing prices for coins. Send 4c for Large Illustrated Coin Folder and particulars. It may mean much profit to you. Write today to

B. MAX MEHL, 133 Mehl Bldg., Fort Worth, Tex.
(Largest Rare Coin Establishment in U.S.)

PROTECT YOURSELF
 In case you enter a hospital on account of
SICKNESS or ACCIDENT.

The New Family Mutual Hospitalization Plan gives you protection that is high in value but low in cost—only **\$1.00** per month for each adult, 50c per month for each child.



FOR SICKNESS OR ACCIDENT

Hospital Room and Board up to 30 days	\$6.00
Operating Room up to 1 day	\$10.00
X-Ray Examinations up to	\$10.00
Laboratory Examinations up to	\$10.00

FOR ACCIDENT

Amulance up to	\$10.00
Emergency Accident—Dispensary up to	\$6.00
Loss of Limbs, sight, etc., or loss of life up to	\$500.00
Maternity Indemnity up to	\$35.00

The policy provides indemnities for actual expense incurred at the time of hospitalization but will in no case exceed the amounts shown above.

Be protected against hospital bills, in case sickness or accident strikes you, by allowing the Family Mutual Life Insurance Company to aid you in meeting your hospital expenses. You may choose any hospital. Benefits for children are one-half those paid to adults.

DON'T DELAY—MAIL THE COUPON TODAY

FAMILY MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE CO., WILMINGTON 99, DEL.

Family Mutual Life Insurance Co. Dept. R-2
 601 Shipley St., Wilmington 99, Del.
 Please send me, without obligation, complete information on your Economical Hospitalization Plan.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____

1c A Penny May Bring You **HAPPINESS!**

Would you gamble a penny to win Happiness, Companionship, Love, Financial Success, through the help of a mysterious International Secret Organization? Then just send name and address on a post-card TODAY for your FREE Copy of great Book "Mayan Mysteries". It can change your whole life! Address: Rose Gawn, The Mayan order, Dept. 603, P. O. Box 2710, San Antonio, Tex.

LEARN MEAT CUTTING
 At Home—In Spare Time



Get into the vital meat industry. Concise, practical Home Training based on 25 years proven instruction method used at National's famous resident school. Prepares you for blazer pay as Meat Cutter, supervisor, market manager or more money in your own store. Go as rapidly as your spare time permits. Diploma. Start NOW to turn your spare hours into money. Send for FREE bulletin today. No obligation. National School of Meat Cutting, Inc., Div. TG-24, Toledo 4, Ohio

RUPTURED?

Get Relief This Proven Way

Why try to worry along with trusses that gouge your flesh—press heavily on hips and spine—enlarge opening—fail to hold rupture? You need the Cluthe. No leg-straps or cutting belts. Automatic adjustable pad holds at real opening—follows every body movement with instant increased support in case of strain. Cannot slip whether at work or play. Light. Waterproof. Can be worn in bath. Send for amazing FREE book, "Advice To Ruptured," and details of liberal truthful 60-day trial offer. Also endorsements from grateful users in your neighborhood. Write:

Cluthe Sons, Dept. 33, Bloomfield, New Jersey

had a part to play in those plans. Yet here was one of our town's foremost physicians telling him that the old lady *had* suffered a heart attack.

That meant that the killer had merely taken advantage of an unforeseen opportunity to wield the knife. But just what kind of killer would carry a stiletto at all times, just waiting for a chance to bury it deep in its intended target.

And where, oh, where, was the murder weapon?

We got part of the answer to that after Madeleine Fourson, pale and shaken, was let go, and her place taken by the blonde, Alicia Greeves. The detective-sergeant in charge of hunt for the knife burst into the library with his excitement barely concealed. He went straight to the den, knocked, and went inside. When McCreary came out with the sergeant he was holding a white tubular object I couldn't identify from where I sat.

"Anybody here recognize this?" he asked abruptly. He held it up.

There was a gasp from Madeleine.

"I think—" she began, then closed her lips firmly.

"I think you think right," McCreary said. "It's a carved ivory knife handle and it looks like the one your stepfather described as bein' stole from his collection. Bring in Griggs, Sergeant."

Hector Griggs needed only one brief glance at the ivory object McCreary held up to nod, his lips tightening.

"That's the handle," he said simply. "Where did you find it?"

"Where you stashed it," McCreary barked. "Right outside the French windows, in the bushes, covered with old leaves."

"I suppose it's useless for me to tell you I haven't seen that stiletto, handle or blade, for four or five days," he said. He stared at the ivory handle, and actually winced. "Believe me, Lieutenant," he said, "if I were going to use a knife in a murder, I'd never use the only really priceless piece I've got—had—in my collection, and I certainly wouldn't ruin it by snapping off the blade, like that."

I MANAGED to get close enough to get a good look at the stiletto handle. Somebody had gone to considerable trouble to snap that blade off at the handle. The

mellow old ivory of the hilt was nicked and scarred by marks that could have been made by somebody pounding on the blade to break it off.

McCreary looked down at the stiletto handle thoughtfully, his scowl still intact. Something was bothering him—something big. Finally, while we all waited, he shook himself loose from his reverie and tossed the handle to the detective-sergeant who had found it.

"Get the blade," he directed curtly. "That handle's no good. Them carvings wouldn't give us a print, even if it hadn't been handled by half a dozen people. But I wonder why—" He shook his head again, leaving the sentence unfinished, and shrugged.

I got the idea. Why had the killer snapped off the blade? That carved handle permitted no clear fingerprints and to leave the weapon intact in Tyson's body would point the well-known finger of guilt directly at Hector Griggs. As it was—

[Turn page]

America's Most
ENTERTAINING
Picture Magazine!



NOW ON SALE AT ALL STANDS
ONLY 15c PER COPY

FALSE TEETH FOR LIFE
FIT TIGHT OF PLATE
With One Application
OF YOUR MONEY BACK
Professionally Developed **AMAZING**
LINO-DENT

REAL COMFORT INSTANTLY FOR ALL PLATE WEARERS At last — with no fuss or bother—looseness and slipping vanish—gum soreness melts and disappears—forever.

NOT MESSY • NOT STICKY
Not a paste—not a powder—Lino-Dent is an amazing development in the field of plastics. It is the same material modern dentures are made of. That's why we can guarantee perfect plate comfort not for just a month but permanently with one application.

ABSOLUTELY SAFE

Lino-Dent is pure, non-toxic, non-irritating, harmless, odorless, tasteless, pleasant, simple to use. Needs no heat.

EASY AS A B C TO USE

A. Apply to Plate.
B. Insert in Mouth.
C. Bite for Perfect Fit.

It's professionally developed **YOUR MONEY BACK IF NOT COMPLETELY SATISFIED**

We guarantee perfect plate comfort permanently with only one application.

SEND NO MONEY Full size packages only \$1.25 plus postage. Specify upper or lower. Or send \$1.25 and we will pay postage.

LINO-DENT, Inc. 1199 Broadway New York 1, N. Y.

LINO-DENT, INC., Dept. T-3
1199 Broadway, New York 1, N. Y.

Send LINO-DENT for:

Upper **\$1.25** Both — **\$2.25**

I will pay postman \$1.25 . . . \$2.25 plus postage. My money will be cheerfully refunded if I am not satisfied.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____

Enclose payment and you save postage!

AGENTS WANTED!

Make Sensational Profits with our sell-on-sight Household Merchandise Line! Plastic Tablecloths, Aprons, Raincoats, Combination Shopping Bags, Bridge Covers—Embroidered Pillow Case Sets, Towels, Hankies; Shower, Cottage Curtain Sets; Bibles; many other fast-selling, big-profit items, novelties; Postal brings free details, special money-making deals. **Write today. HURRY!**

Royalty Sales Co., Box 748, Passaic 5, New Jersey

Write Stories that SELL

Mrs. Grace Blanchard had an **1800%** for a story. We criticized her story, gave it a new title and told her **WHERE TO SEND IT**. She got a substantial check **THE FIRST TIME OUT**. That is a **TWENTY** percent of our graduates have each month. Let 30 years of experience guide YOU. Endorsed by Jack London. **FREE BOOKLET "THE ART OF STORY WRITING"** with explanation of our personal criticism and manuscript sales service. No obligation. Write! Hoosier Institute, Dept. 171, 120 S. LaSalle St., Chic. 3, Ill.

INVENTORS

Learn how to protect your invention. Specially prepared "Patent Guide" containing detailed information concerning patent protection and procedure with "Record of Invention" form will be forwarded to you upon request—without obligation. **CLARENCE A. O'BRIEN & HARVEY JACOBSON** Registered Patent Attorneys
98-A District National Bldg. Washington 5, D. C.

Get into BUSINESS for Yourself!

METALIZING BABY SHOES AT HOME IN SPARE TIME



Get facts now about amazing money making Warner Success Plan that shows you every easy step in completely charted path to personal independence—with your home as your headquarters... This proved and tested Plan is working like magic. It's backed by an old, reliable company... And we send it to you on a No-Risk Trial Money Back Guarantee.

QUICK CASH WAITING
Demand for METALIZED Baby Shoes and other keepsakes is growing bigger daily. Our Tested Plan Shows How to Do the Work, How to Bring in the Business, How to Make as much as \$5 an Hour. Spare or full time, big steady profits are waiting for you. Send penny postcard or mail coupon for FREE Facts. Act! Times precious.

FREE
offer of
**COMPLETE
MONEY
MAKING
PLAN**
•
**SEND NO
MONEY**
Just Mail
COUPON

Ray Brandell, Mgr., Warner Electric Co.,
1512 JARVIS AVE., DEPT. 243, CHICAGO 26, ILL.

Please rush complete details about your No-Risk Trial Money Back Plan for Metalizing Baby Shoes. Everything you send is FREE and costs me nothing—now or ever.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ TOWN _____ STATE _____

YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!



Help Bring Crooks to Justice Through Scientific
CRIME DETECTION!

We have taught thousands this exciting, profitable, pleasant profession. Let us teach you in your own home. Learn Fingerprinting, Firearms Identification, Police Photography, Secret Service Methods thoroughly, quickly, at small cost. Over 500 all American Bureau of Identification employ L. A. S. students or graduates. We can prepare you for this fascinating work, during spare time. Write today, stating age, for "Blue Book of Crime."

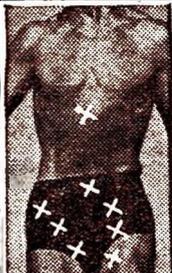
INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE, 1920 Samsyside Ave., Dept. 7963, Chicago 40, Ill.

OLD LEG TROUBLE



Easy to use Viscose Home Method. Heals many old leg sores caused by leg congestion, varicose veins, swollen legs and injuries or no cost for trial if it fails to show results in 10 days. Describe your trouble and get a FREE BOOK. T. G. VISCOSE COMPANY 140 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago 2, Illinois

LOOK for Rupture Help



Try a Brooks Patented Air Cushion appliance. This marvelous invention for most forms of reducible rupture is GUARANTEED to bring YOU heavenly comfort and security—day and night—at work and at play—or it costs you NOTHING! Thousands happy. Light, neat-fitting. No hard pads or springs. For men, women, and children. Durable, cheap. Sent on trial to prove it! Not sold in stores. Beware of imitations. Write for Free Book on Rupture, no-risk trial order plan, and Proof of Results. Ready for you NOW!

BROOKS APPLIANCE CO., 183-C State St., Marshall, Mich.

"Okay," McCreary said brusquely, turning toward the den. "You can come out now, Miss Greeves. I'll talk things over with the bunch of you. Is young Fourson showing any signs of life?"

Young Fourson was. He groaned and stirred in his chair, then raised his head. He moaned again as his hand sought the jaw Hector Griggs had slugged.

"What happened?" he asked feebly.

"Sorry, Jerry," Hector Griggs said. "It seemed necessary at the time."

"It probably was, Hector," Jerry Fourson said, humbly and surprisingly. "My apologies to anybody who thinks they need them."

McCreary planted himself in the middle of the library, his hands on his hips.

"When you get through with this little love feast," he said harshly, "maybe we can get on with the business we gotta do. First, Fourson, how'd you know the stiletto was missin' from Griggs' collection?"

"I happened to be passing the case and noticed it was gone," Jerry said, and his voice was pretty feeble.

"Passing the case, in my room?" Griggs asked, ironically.

Jerry glared. "All right, then," he said. "I went to the case to get the knife, if you must know."

"Jerry!" cried Madeleine.

"Oh, I wasn't going to use it on Tyson," her brother said, with a wave of his hand. "I was broke and you wouldn't come up with any dough. I remembered Hector saying the knife was worth plenty. I thought I could—could pawn it—"

His voice trickled off into miserable silence. His eyes were haggard as he looked at his stepfather.

"I would have got it back to you!" he cried. "I only wanted the loan of it for a couple of days, Hector!"

"What did you do with the shiv—the stiletto?" McCreary asked relentlessly.

"I never got it," Jerry said, in a falter-



THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR INFANTILE PARALYSIS

ing voice. "It was gone when I went to the case for it."

"When was that?"

"Last—Wednesday."

"No you don't," Alicia Greeves spoke up, her voice rasping. "Nobody tries to pin that stiletto on me!"

CHAPTER IV

CARDS ON THE TABLE



EVERYBODY looked at the Greeves gal, goggling. Everybody but McCreary, that is.

"What Miss Greeves is tryin' to say," he explained, "is that she visited the house last Wednesday—when she was supposed to be a coupla hundred miles away from here. Ain't that right, Miss Greeves?"

The blonde turned furious eyes on my fat friend.

"You know it's right!" she snapped. "I just told you that."

"I don't get it," Romny Sieger said, in a puzzled voice.

"It's simple," McCreary said. "Miss Greeves and Tyson were—er—friendly for a long time. They were in business together, in another town, before Gresham came here. The old badger game racket and they did right well—till Gresham dropped Miss Greeves flat and came here. When she heard Gresham was goin' to marry Miss Fourson, she came on here to let her know just what kind of a guy she was lettin' herself in for. That was last Wednesday. The two young ladies talked and then Miss Greeves dropped in on Gresham Tyson unexpectedly."

"But why—" Ronny began again.

"She knew Tyson would get a big kick outta takin' his ex-gal friend to dinner at his new gal's house," McCreary explained, "showin' off to the woman he jilted just how well fixed he was. That's why Miss Fourson gave the dinner party. It was her idea to lay the cards on the table, in front of Tyson, after the meal, knowing that Miss Greeves had some letters and things."

"The big bum could never resist a chance to hurt me," Alicia Greeves said. Then her hard face crumpled and tears

I'LL TRAIN YOU
AT HOME IN SPARE
HOURS TO BE A
**RADIO
SERVICE MAN!**

**I SEND YOU
8 BIG KITS
OF RADIO
PARTS!**

**FREE
MAIL COUPON
FOR CATALOG
and
Sample Lesson!**

**NOW!
TWO LOCATIONS
TO SERVE YOU BETTER
Mail coupon to
location nearest
your home.**

**LEARN by Working
with Your Hands Building,
Testing, Repairing Radios**

Get the facts about the Sprayberry Course ... find out why it's the best Radio Training for you. See how I train you by sending you 8 big kits of real, professional Radio parts—how I train you to build a powerful 6 tube superb radio, a 14 range test meter and perform over 175 interesting, instructive Radio experiments. My training is practical—it sticks with you, helps make money for you. You don't need previous schooling or experience. **YOU LEARN BY DOING**—following simple, easy lessons that teach you RADIO from the ground up.

Get Sample Lesson FREE

ACT TODAY! Fill out and rush the coupon to me—I'll send you my **FREE BOOK**, "How to Make Money in Radio, Electronics and Television," and also valuable Sample Lesson, "How to Read Radio Diagrams and Symbols." I'll also tell how you can Earn While You Learn. **VETERAN'S!** Approved for G. I. Training under Public Laws 16 and 244.

SPRAYBERRY ACADEMY OF RADIO, Dept. 51-P
Sprayberry Bldg., Pueblo, Colo., Or
20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago 8, Ill.
Rush my **FREE BOOK** and Sample Lesson.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY & Zone _____ STATE _____

**Watch Repairing Pays
Big Money Learn at home**

Watch makers in great demand. Train step-by-step, under experts. We furnish tools. No interference with present job. Opportunity to get in business for yourself. 10 easy lessons. Low cost. Send for **FREE** book today.

WATCH REPAIRING Dept. 51-3, 2870 Clifton Ave. Chicago 18, Ill.

ITCHY
Checked in a **JIFFY**

Relieve itching caused by eczema; athlete's foot, scabies, pimples and other itching conditions. Use cooling, medicated D. D. D. Prescription. Greaseless, stainless. Soothes, comforts and checks itching fast. 35¢ trial bottle proves it—or money back. Don't suffer. Ask your druggist today for D. D. D. Prescription.

RING for "WOLVES"

If you're a "wolf", you'll want to wear this unusual, emblematic ring. Handsomely formed from solid Sterling Silver. Girls. Give this ring to the wolves you know!

SEND NO MONEY! Just clip ad and mail with name, address, ring size and style. Pay postman only \$2.98 plus few cents postage on arrival. Or send cash and we mail postpaid. Wear for 5 days. If not delighted, return for refund.

\$2.98
POST PAID
(TAX PAID)

WESTERN CRAFTSMEN • Dept. 400C • Omaha 2, Nebraska

When PRAYER FAILS

The prayers of the most worthy people often fail. Why? The unworthy often have the greatest health, success, riches and happiness. The best, smartest, and most industrious people often have only pain, poverty and sorrow. Why? Thirty years ago, in Forbidden Tibet, behind the highest mountains in the world, a young Englishman found the answers to these questions. His eyes were opened by the strangest mystic he met during his twenty-one years of travels in the Far East. Sick then, he regained health. Poor then, he acquired wealth and worldwide professional honors. He wants to tell the whole world what he learned, and offers to send a 9,000-word treatise, FREE, to everyone who asks promptly. It is a first step to the POWER that KNOWLEDGE gives. There is no obligation. Write for YOUR FREE COPY today.

INSTITUTE of MENTALPHYSICS, Dept. 16-H
 213 South Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles 4, Calif.

Fit-Rite makes False Teeth TIGHT

Makes loose dental plates fit snugly and comfortably. LASTS for MONTHS!

Simply squeeze on dental plate and put it in your mouth. Bandens and becomes part of plate. Money-back guarantee.

FREE Generous package of Dental Plate Cleanser with each order. Send \$1.00 or mailed parcel post collect.

Fit-Rite Co., 1573 Milwaukee Ave.
 Dept. 3-82, Chicago, Ill.



DO YOU WANT TO STOP TOBACCO?

Banish the craving for tobacco as thousands have with Tobacco Redeemer. Write for free booklet telling of injurious effect of tobacco and of a treatment which has relieved many men.

35 Years in Business
 300,000 Satisfied Customers

FREE BOOK

THE NEWELL COMPANY
 153 Clayton Sta., St. Louis 5, Mo.



FREE BOOK

RAISE HAMSTERS

The new wonder animals from Syria. Often called Toy Bears. Delightful pets. Everyone wants them. Laboratories need thousands. Clean, odorless. Raise anywhere. A profitable and interesting hobby or business. We furnish breeders and instructions. Write today for free book.

GULF HAMSTERY, 1537 BASIL ST., MOBILE, ALA.



MEN! THIS FINE SUIT YOURS WITHOUT PAYING ONE CENT!

BIG CASH EARNINGS TOO!

Big news! Wear this fine tailored suit without paying one cent and earn big cash income too! It's easy! Just take orders from a few friends and neighbors. Show actual samples of dozens of rich new fabrics superbly tailored in choice or all the latest styles at low prices. Money back guarantee on every order.

WRITE FOR FREE SAMPLES! Rush letter or postcard giving your name and address, and telling us about yourself—age, etc. We'll send you big profit of actual samples FREE, and details of amazing new **BONUS SUIT** and money-making plans. No experience needed. Send no money!

W. Z. Gibson, Inc., 509 S. Throop St., Dept. Q-677, Chicago 7, Ill.



sprang to her eyes. "I won't deny I've thought about killing him, rather than let some other woman get him, but if I was going to kill Gresham Tyson, I'd shoot him down like the dog he was . . . Ah, no! He was sweet, when he wanted to be!"

McCreary was pulling at his underlip again, his eyes thoughtful as they looked at the girl with the brassy hair.

"Uh-huh," he said softly. "I know what you mean."

He looked around the room again, his eyes growing brighter as some idea began to grow inside that almost-bald head of his. He swung toward Jerry Fourson.

"Kid," he said mildly, "what was it about you that Gresham Tyson was using as a club over your sister?"

Jerry looked at him with wide eyes. "Me?" he asked. "I don't know what you're talking about!"

"Sure you do, kid," McCreary said gently. "It stands to reason Tyson had something he was using to make Miss Madeleine do what she did. Here we have a girl in love with a fine young man—you, Sieger—and all of a sudden she breaks the engagement and latches onto a Casanova like Tyson. From what I gathered in my little talk with Miss Fourson, she loved Tyson about as much as I did, and I didn't know the guy. So what? So there's the smell of blackmail, as strong as the city dump in summer.

"Was Tyson blackmailing Miss Madeleine for something she did? Uh-uh. Her record is clean. Yours ain't, Jerry. You've been in one jam after another since you were old enough to walk. One of them musta been a big one that you got away with—but Tyson knew about it. What was it?"

Jerry moved fast when he moved. He caught us by surprise when he made his first jump and he was halfway to the hallway door before McCreary went into action. The fat man fools everybody who thinks he's slow on his feet. In spite of all that bulk, he was like a cat as he made his leap. His hands moved faster than the eye could follow and when the tangle was over, there was Jerry doubled up with a hammer lock, bent over and helpless in the detective's grip.

"Uh-uh," McCreary grunted. "Don't be a dope, kid. You didn't have a chance of gettin' two blocks, even if you got outta

the house, which I doubt you could even have done. Now, set down and let's hear your story."

He half lowered, half flung, Jerry Fourson into the chair he had so recently vacated. The kid sank his head in his hands with a groan.

"Don't talk, Jerry," Hector Griggs said quietly. "Tyson's dead now."

"Sure," McCreary agreed pleasantly. "But blackmailers don't keep their stock in trade in their heads or on their persons, usually. Dollars to doughnuts the safe deposit box he's got or his desk or something will turn up what we want to know. I thought the kid would rather tell it his way."

There was a silence during which everybody in the room looked at Jerry Fourson. His sister's face was pale, and it was easy to see she was struggling with herself over whether she should advise Jerry to tell his story to McCreary or clam up. Hector Griggs looked the same way. I got the idea that Jerry's sister and his stepfather had protected Jerry for years, but that now they realized that it was time the kid made his own decision.

It was long in coming, but Jerry Fourson finally raised his head and looked

[Turn page]



Be on the lookout for cancer's danger signs—most cases can be cured if treated in time. Send for the free book that gives the facts on cancer.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY
47 BEAVER ST. N. Y. 4

LEARN ON REAL EQUIPMENT IN THE GREAT SHOPS OF COYNE

TRAIN QUICKLY for a GOOD PAYING JOB in ELECTRICITY

PRACTICAL SHOP TRAINING — NOT HOME STUDY!

Don't let opportunities pass you by! Get ready for a better job in **ELECTRICITY**. Learn by doing . . . no previous experience or advanced education needed. **HERE IN THE GREAT SHOPS OF COYNE** you train on real motors, generators, switchboards, etc. **G.I. APPROVED . . . Also Finance Plan for NON-VETERANS**. Don't let lack of cash hold you back. Send coupon today for Big **FREE** Book. Men of draft age—get details of our special plan for YOU! Act now! 50th Anniversary Year.

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

E. W. Cooke, Pres., COYNE Electrical and Radio School 500 S. Paulina St., Dept. 29-84, Chicago 12, Ill.

Please send Big **FREE** BOOK and details of special plan for men of draft age.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE

High School Course at Home Many Finish in 2 Years

Go as rapidly as your time and abilities permit. Course equivalent to resident school work—prepares for college entrance exams. Standard H.S. texts supplied. Diploma. Credit for H. S. subjects already completed. Single subjects if desired. High school education is very important for advancement in business and industry and socially. Don't be handicapped all your life. Be a High School graduate. Start your training now. Free Bulletin on request. No obligation.
American School, Dept. H355, Drexel, at 58th, Chicago 37

Learn to MOUNT BIRDS

Tan SKINS, make up FURS

Be a Taxidermist. Double your hunting fun. We teach you at Home. Mount Birds, Animals, Fish, Heads, common specimens. Fun and profits. Decorate home and **do MAKE MONEY**. Mount game, tan for others. Be profit in spare time. **WRITE TODAY.**

100 game pictures in FREE BOOK (Hurry, get your copy, it's FREE). State your AGE. Now Free. Send postcard. **NORTHWESTERN SCHOOL OF TAXIDERMY** Dept. 4403 Omaha, Nebraska

Free for Asthma

If you suffer with attacks of Asthma and choke and gasp for breath, if restless sleep is difficult because of the struggle to breathe, don't fail to send at once to the Frontier Asthma Company for a **FREE** trial of the **FRONTIER ASTHMA MEDICINE**, a preparation for temporary symptomatic relief of paroxysms of Bronchial Asthma. No matter where you live or whether you have faith in any medicine under the sun, send today for this free trial. It will cost you nothing.

FRONTIER ASTHMA CO.
462 NIAGARA ST.

496-C FRONTIER BLDG.
BUFFALO 1, N. Y.

EASY NEW METHOD SHOWS HOW TO



PLAY GUITAR IN 2 WEEKS

TRY IT ON

MONEY-BACK OFFER

45 PHOTOS show exactly where to put your fingers

101 SONGS words & music INCLUDED!

Now let Bob West, radio's favorite guitar player, show you how! Most "Courses" have only 6 or 8 pictures—but Bob's new method has 45 actual photographs! It not only teaches but shows exactly where and how to place your fingers, etc. Most others offer a few songs—Bob provides 101—chosen for their radio popularity so you can sing and play right along with your favorite radio program or records!

SEND NO MONEY: Just send name and address to Bob West and pay postman \$1.69 plus C&O and postage. Start playing beautiful chords the very first day. Be playing beautiful music in two weeks or get your money back.

BOB WEST, 1121 N. Paulina, Dept. 313, Chicago 32, Ill.

HOW to BREAK and TRAIN HORSES

SEND FOR THIS FREE!

Make money. Know how to break and train horses. Write today for this book FREE, together with special offer of a course in Animal Breeding. If you are interested in Gaiting and Riding the saddle horse, check here () Do it today—now.

BEERY SCHOOL OF HORSEMANSHIP
Dept. 623 Pleasant Hill, Ohio

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

on our capital. Always your own boss. Hundreds average \$4,000 to \$25,000 annual sales year after year. We supply stocks, equipment on credit, 200 home necessities. Selling experience unnecessary to start. Wonderful opportunity to own pleasant, profitable business backed by world-wide industry. Write RAWLEIGH CO., DEPT. C.U-TFG, Freeport, Illinois.

ARTIFICIAL EYES



Assortments mailed you from the world's largest, finest selection imported glass and all-plastic unbreakable eyes. Write for free booklet and color chart. Established 1906.

DENVER OPTIC COMPANY
1141 UNIVERSITY BLDG. DENVER 2, COLO.

Suffer Varicose LEG SORES?



If you suffer pain and misery of Varicose Ulcers, or Open Leg Sores, send away at once for FREE Booklet "THE LIEPE METHODS FOR HOME USE." Tells all about this 40-year-old method, praised and endorsed by thousands. Liepe Methods, Dept. C-19 3264 N. Green Bay Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MAKE EXTRA MONEY

SELL UNION LABEL BOOK MATCHES

Build Steady Repeat Business
No Investment—No Experience.

Direct from America's Largest Exclusive Union Label Book Match Manufacturers. We feature FIFTY Glamour Girls, Scenes, handsome Dog series and NEW AD-
DISPLAY DOUBLE BOOK MATCHES. Make BIG PROFIT QUICK. Write Today for SPECIAL OFFER and FREE POWERHOUSE selling kit.

SUPERIOR MATCH CO.
Dept. R-39, 7528 S. Greenwood, Chicago

McCreary straight in the eyes. It was as though the boy knew he was face to face with a showdown and, somehow, was glad it had arrived.

"I'll tell you," he said, and his voice was quiet and steady. "I should have told somebody a long time back, rather than let Madeleine go through with what she has. But I couldn't face it. Now I can. It's this: Gresham Tyson and I went out on the town one night a few months back. I got polluted. We went to a lot of joints I remember, then things got hazy. I remember a fight somewhere and a gun going off, then somebody knocked me out or I passed out. I—I woke up the next morning at Tyson's place. He showed me the morning papers. The headlines told all about a shooting—a killing—at a gambling joint on the outskirts of town, in the county. Tyson told me it had been me who had done the shooting. He said I'd wrestled a gun away from one of the gambling joint's guards and killed a man I got into an argument with. He had the gun there to prove it."

"That would be Blackie Rivers that was knocked off," McCreary said thoughtfully.

Young Fourson nodded dumbly. McCreary heaved a big sigh.

"So we can write that one off the books, huh?" the detective asked. He looked down at young Fourson and his face grew almost affectionate. "I wouldn't worry too much, Fourson. Maybe I shouldn't tell you this, but the Bureau has got a lot of stuff on one of Rivers' side-kicks that almost was enough to get an indictment against the guy, when the case first broke. But this guy claimed an alibi, said he wasn't near the club that night.

"Now if that gun you're supposed to have wrestled away from somebody turns out to be this guy's—well, I don't know, of course, but to me right now it looks like Tyson and this suspect of ours made a neat little deal to frame you, slopped the way you were. I ain't makin' any promises, understand, and I'll have to take you in, but I can say that if I was you, I wouldn't worry too much. And next time, if there is a next time, be a little man and turn yourself in."

Jerry Fourson looked as though a three-ton safe had been lifted from his shoulders. For the first time since I'd seen him that night, the kid looked de-haunted, if

there's such a word.

McCreary looked around the room again.

"So what have we got?" he asked. "Miss Fourson and her stepfather were protecting Jerry here. Miss Fourson even went so far as to say she'd marry Tyson to keep him shut up. Then Miss Greeves appears on the scene and Miss Fourson thinks that maybe with the stuff Miss Greeves can offer she can make an even trade with Tyson. He scrams and keeps shut up if she don't spill what Miss Greeves has told her.

"So Miss Fourson arranges the dinner party for the big scene, bankin' on Tyson to bring Miss Greeves to the dinner. It works out all right, but before the big scene can be staged, somebody opens a window, the candles go out and Tyson is stabbed."

He shifted on his splayed feet and gazed up at the ceiling.

"We find the handle of the shiv that done the job," he continued. "It's been broken off the blade some time ago, from the looks of it. Now why was that? Y'know, I think it was because the killer planted that blade in some place where the handle wouldn't fit and then hid it again where it was in the first place."

He pulled at his lower lip again.

"This killin'," he said, "was planned almost a week ago, when the knife disappeared from Mr. Griggs' room. That was the same day Miss Greeves was here, remember."

"I didn't—" the brassy blonde began.

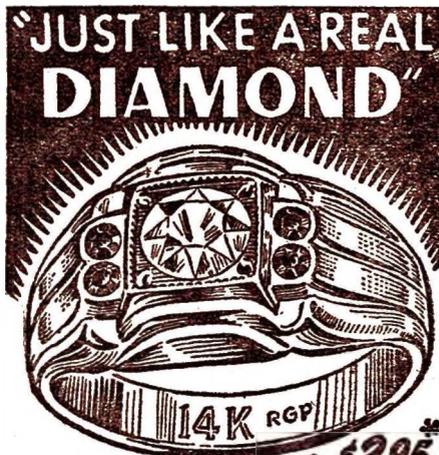
"No, I don't think you did," McCreary said agreeably. "But your bein' here that day had somethin' to do with this killin'. The dinner party was arranged that day, wasn't it? And the killer knew about that dinner party, got the knife, hammered or chiseled the handle loose from the blade, and planted it."

"Where?" Hector Griggs asked.

"Let's go in the dining room a minute," McCreary said. "I think I can show it to you."

We all trooped across the hallway to the dining room, still in the state I had first seen it in, with the exception that Tyson's body was gone. McCreary marched right up to the table and his pudgy hand reached out.

[Turn page]



APPROX. 2 KT.

only \$3.95*

This handsome ring has the style, beauty and appearance of a \$500 ring! It has 4 glowing Ruby-like side stones—a dazzling 2-Karat simulated diamond in the center—beautifully mounted in massive 14K R.G.P. A ring any man would be proud to wear. Now available at the unbelievable low price of only \$3.95* (plus tax) while supply lasts. Order now — wear 10 days at our risk!

Order on Trial Inspection 10 DAY WRITTEN GUARANTEE
Send name and address and \$1.00 deposit with C.O.D. order. Include ring size (or string you used around ring finger.) When ring arrives pay postman only \$2.95 plus tax and postage. **SAVE MONEY!** Send cash with order and we pay postage. This offer good only while limited supply lasts. (Written guarantee assures you full refund if not entirely satisfied.)

U. S. DIAMOND CO.
Dept. 15C, 225 N. Michigan, Chicago 1, Ill.

"How to Make Money with Simple Cartoons"



A book everyone who likes to draw should have. It is free; no obligation. Simply address

FREE BOOK

CARTOONISTS' EXCHANGE
Dept. 73 Pleasant Hill, Ohio

SUIT YOURS AS A BONUS

AND BIG MONEY IN SPARE TIME, TOO
We want you to wear this fine made-to-measure suit! Make it yours by sending a few orders, & earn big CASH PROFITS in spare time. Your suit will help you get more orders with scores of rich, quality fabrics, tailored-to-measure to newest styles. Also Ladies' Tailored Suits—complete line. Write today for **FREE SAMPLES** For quick action tell us about yourself.

J. C. FIELD & SON, INC.
Harrison and Throop Sts. Dept. Q-1877, Chic. 7, Ill.

Refit and Tighten



FALSE TEETH

With **AMAZING PLASTI-LINER**

If your plates are loose and slip or hurt; refit them better than new, with this pliable, non-porous strip. Just lay on plate, bite and it molds perfectly, hardens for lasting fit and comfort. Ends forever the mess, bother and expense of temporary applications that last only a few hours or few months. Will not injure plates, and guaranteed to give satisfaction or your money back. Write for Plasti-Liner today. Pay postman \$1.25 for one refiner; \$2.25 for both upper and lower—or send money now; save G.O.D. charges.

PLASTI-LINER CO., Dept. 47-F, Buffalo 15, N. Y.

500 Pages, 7000 Novelties



Send 10c for mammoth, amazing catalog of 7000 novelties. 1-inch thick, roto picture section, 6-color cover. Carnival, circus, world's fair & science exhibit rolled into one! Includes live animals & pets, scientific supplies, hobbies, funmakers, planes & boats, toms, magic tricks, joke articles, unusual seeds, gadget time-savers, cameras, optical goods, projectors, movies, lucky jewelry, religious novelties, telegraph sets, disguises, musical instruments, stamps, coins, puzzles, fortune tellers, radice, experimental sets, auto & bike accessories, Western wear, telescopes, magnifiers, compasses, banks, smokers' gadgets, artists' supplies, printing sets, engines, motors, shockers, knives, billiards, fireworks, guns, rifles, sports, money makers, swimming helps, 1000 fascinating books, games, locks, live chameleons, rings, exercisers, curious plants, etc., etc. (Deluxe Hard Bound Library Edition 25c Postpaid.) Regular paper covered edition 10c. (Stamps accepted.) Get Air Mail, \$1.00. JOHNSON SMITH & COMPANY, Dept. C-78, DETROIT 7, MICHIGAN

10c

Western wear, telescopes, magnifiers, compasses, banks, smokers' gadgets, artists' supplies, printing sets, engines, motors, shockers, knives, billiards, fireworks, guns, rifles, sports, money makers, swimming helps, 1000 fascinating books, games, locks, live chameleons, rings, exercisers, curious plants, etc., etc. (Deluxe Hard Bound Library Edition 25c Postpaid.) Regular paper covered edition 10c. (Stamps accepted.) Get Air Mail, \$1.00. JOHNSON SMITH & COMPANY, Dept. C-78, DETROIT 7, MICHIGAN



TOOTHACHE?

Quick relief with Dent's. Use Dent's Toom Gum or Dent's Tooth Drops for cavity toothaches. Use Dent's Dental Poultice for pain or soreness in gums or teeth. At all drug stores.

"Since 1888"

DENT'S

TOOTH GUM
TOOTH DROPS
DENTAL POULTICE

EXCLUSIVE! NEW!

MAKE MONEY FAST!

SELLING MARACLE CUSHIONED

SHOES . . . Complete line

entire family. New Spring styles:

Wayne, Burgundian, Cordovans, Triple

1 Sole, White, Hillfield, Adams

Commission, Bonus over \$3.00 pair.

From outfit. Samples. No investment.

PARAGON SHOE CO.

Dept. p21 716 Columbus Ave., Boston 20, Mass.



LEARN HOW TO HYPNOTIZE

Amazing self-study lessons . . . In simple, easy to understand language. How to select a subject—how to hypnotize by telephone—how to make money from hypnosis—mental telepathy—stage hypnosis—self-hypnosis: how modern hypnotism is used to conquer inferiority complex, fear, battle fatigue, dizziness, etc. Clear helpful pictures show operating positions, movements. Money-back guarantee, only \$1.95, postpaid—or C.O.D. plus postage. Write today!

Nelson-Hall Co., 1189 S. Wabash Ave., Dept. C-6, Chicago 5, Ill.

SHORTHAND in 6 Weeks at Home

Famous Speedwriting system. No signs; no symbols; no machines; uses ABC's. Easy to learn; easy to write and translate. Fast preparation for

a job. Surprisingly low cost. 100,000 taught by mail. Used in leading offices and Civil Service. Write for free booklet. SPEEDWRITING, Dept. 9003-9, 55 W. 42nd St., New York 18

FREE BOOK - On Chronic Ailments



40-page FREE BOOK explains the causes and effects of these ailments. Write today—Thornton & Minor Clinic, Suite 356, 926 McGee St., Kansas City, Mo.

"Of course," Ronny Sieger said softly. "The candles!"

"Sure," McCreary said. He twisted the four candles from the candelabra which had been nearest to the place Tyson had been sitting when he had been stabbed. The third candle let something slip from its center that landed on the tablecloth with a sharp tinkle as it struck a plate.

THERE was the stiletto blade that had killed Tyson, all right. Its slim length still held traces of red stuff that wasn't ketchup. McCreary gingerly held up the candle from which the thing had fallen. We all saw that it had been carefully hollowed out to provide a sheathe for the blade when it had finished its job.

"But who—" I began.

McCreary ignored me. He turned on his heel and called toward the hallway door.

"You can come in now, Miss Marks," he said gently.

There was a moment's hesitation and then the old lady, Madeleine Fourson's nurse, governess, companion, walked into the room. Her head was high and her eyes were steady as she looked at the fat detective. In one hand she held a sheet of paper that she offered McCreary.

"It's all there," she said, in that amazingly deep voice of hers. "I had the confession all written out in case—in case somebody was in danger of suffering for what I did."

McCreary took the paper, barely glanced at it, and stuck it in his pocket.

"Sure," he said, "and thanks. Suppose you sit down over here, Miss Marks. You tell me where I'm wrong—if I am wrong."

He led the old lady to a chair, as gently as though he were escorting his mother, and lowered her to a seat. Then he began talking, looking down at her.

"I thought it was you from the beginning, ma'am," he said. "The fainting spell, the candles goin' out—it was all too pat not to have been planned. You had access to that knife cabinet, all right. You knew the party was goin' to take place way back last Wednesday, when Miss Greeves was here, and you knew you'd be invited. And this dinner party was a good chance—maybe your only chance before it was too late—to get at Tyson. All the others could have knocked him off at almost any

time. But you had to use this dinner party. And only you could arrange to have the candles go out at the right time."

"But the motive!" Ronny Sieger said. "What possible—"

Miss Marks turned her bright eyes on the guy who was going to marry Madeleine.

"I had plenty of motive, Mr. Sieger," she said, in a steady voice. "I'm closer to Madeleine than any of you. I knew how she was tormented by nightmares, I heard her cry out in her sleep time and again. I knew this man was torturing her. I was determined to stop it. I did. I have no regrets."

Her smile was soft as she looked at Madeleine Fourson, weeping quietly beside her, the girl's arm encircling the thin shoulders.

"Don't cry, Maddy," she said. "You see, anything the police do to me won't make any difference. Dr. Featherstone told me tonight that I've got only a month—possibly six weeks—more to live. What can they do to me in that length of time?"

It was later, when we were leaving the Fourson mansion after I'd phoned in my story, that I put my question to McCreary.

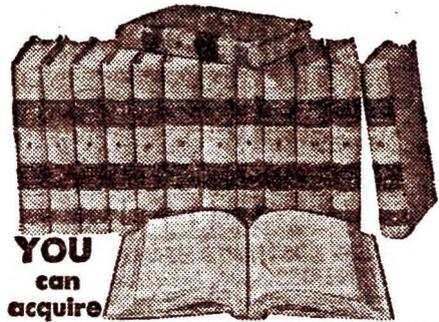
"Was Doc Featherstone protecting the old gal?" I asked. "It seems hard to believe a big-shot doctor like him would lie to shield a killer, even a killer like Miss Marks."

"Uh-uh," McCreary grunted, past another one of those villainous cigars. "He was tellin' the truth all right. Miss Marks had a genuwine heart attack. But what would you expect? D'you think a woman with a heart like hers could go through with a killin' without sufferin' some ill effects? She faked the faintin' spell, sure, but after she took the blade out of the candle, knocked off Tyson and hid the shiv back in the candle again. That's when she let herself go and gave herself an alibi that darned near had us all stopped."

He puffed at his cigar.

"I shoulda caught wise long before I did," he said. "You notice them place cards on the table? Miss Marks wrote them out, and she made sure she sat in front of the candle that had the hidden shiv in it, and right next to Tyson, too. When the lights went out, all she had to do was reach out about a foot in front of

[Turn page]



YOU can acquire LAW NIGHTS AT HOME! L. B. DEGREE

LaSalle's famous Law Library—used as reference in many Law libraries and Law offices—has enabled thousands to master Law surprisingly fast, in spare hours at home, for business and professional advancement.

These 14 remarkable volumes, compiled by leading professors and lawyers, cover the whole basic field of Law in condensed, orderly, simplified manner.

You advance rapidly with this great library, plus special lectures furnished. We guide you step-by-step with personalized Problem Method of instruction . . . you learn by doing—handling legal problems—not by memorizing rules.

Send for two FREE 48-page booklets, "Law Training for Leadership," and "Evidence," answering questions about Law and its value to you, and telling how LaSalle Law graduates are winning rapid advancement in business and public life. Mail coupon below. No obligation.

LA SALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY
A Correspondence Institution

417 S. Dearborn St. Dept. 3329-L Chicago 5, Ill.

Send me your two FREE booklets described above; without obligation.

Name.....Age.....

Street.....

City, Zone & State.....

Learn BAKING At Home

Baking is one of America's high industries in wages. Nearly depression-proof. Thorough basic home course lays sound foundation. If you have aptitude, write for FREE BOOKLET, "Opportunities in Commercial Baking." National Baking School, 1315 Mich. Ave., Dept.-1803, Chicago 6



Free Sample!

Be the first to sell amazing, new GLOW IN THE DARK house numbers, switch plates, pictures, decals, religious articles, etc., etc. Represent a large manufacturer. Wonderful opportunity. Big Profits. Write at once for FREE SAMPLE. MADISON MILLS, Dept. N-18 303 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N.Y.



LEARN AT HOME TO BE A PRACTICAL NURSE

You can learn practical nursing at home in spare time. Course endorsed by physicians. Thousands of graduates. HIGH SCHOOL NOT REQUIRED

50th year. One graduate has charge of 10-bed hospital. Another saved \$400 while learning. Equipment included. Men, women, 18 to 60. Easy tuition payments. Trial plan. CHICAGO SCHOOL OF NURSING

Dept. 423, 41 East Pearson Street, Chicago 11, Ill. Please send free booklet, and 16 sample lesson pages.

Name..... City..... State..... Age.....



Transforms Old, Loose, Cracked or Chipped Plates

Into NEW LUSTROUS BEAUTY-PINK PLASTIC PLATES... No Impression Needed

No need now to pay a high price for a new plate! Our new scientific "FALSE PLATE METHOD" saves you money and duplicates your old, unsightly and unsanitary plate into a new, light-weight, lustrous, beauty-pink plastic plate with your own teeth. Missing teeth are replaced with new, matching teeth. Simple instructions tell you how to make your LOOSE plate tight-fitting before duplication.

SEND NO MONEY Just write for our money saving False Plate Method that gives you a new plate within hours. Guaranteed.

WEST DENTAL LABORATORY
127 N. Dearborn St., Dept. 70 Chic. 2, Ill.

LOW AS 10

TOMBSTONES

DIRECT TO YOU \$9.95 up

Genuine Beautiful Rockdale Monuments, Markers. Satisfaction or MONEY BACK. Freight paid. Write for our FREE Catalog and compare prices.

EASY Terms

ROCKDALE MONUMENT CO.
Dept. 456 JOLIET, ILLINOIS

EVERYBODY BENEFITS!



ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY MILLION DOLLARS IS A LOT OF MONEY—but it will buy a lot of nursing for sick folks, clinics for babies, summer camps for boys and girls, assistance to travelers, help for families, homes for old people, and all those other twelve thousand Red Feather services which communities need.

The thousand American Community Chests are asking for \$180,000,000 this fall, from every one of us. When everybody gives to the Red Feather campaigns, according to his ability—everybody benefits!

Figure out how much you would give for each of the Red Feather services separately—for those children, and those old people, those babies, those worried folk. Then make your pledge to the Community Chest nearest your heart, for ALL the Red Feather services.

GIVE — GIVE ENOUGH!

her, take out the shiv, do her little job, slip the blade back into the hollowed-out candle and pass out. Her place cards set the people around the table, y'see, where she wanted 'em."

"She sure set a place for Death," I said. McCreary gave me a look of pure disgust.

"You sound like one of these here mystery story writers, huntin' for a title," he told me.

THE PHANTOM SPEAKS

(Continued from page 10)

any special rights or privileges. You do not have any police powers. We are merely making a tangible expression of our support of the duly constituted authorities.

OUT OF THE MAIL BAG

OUR pile of correspondence is top-heavy and the mail bag is overflowing. It is certainly a real pleasure to hear from all you folks. First we have a long letter from Nellie M. Wheeler of Washington, D. C. She says:

Dear Phantom:

Indeed I was much surprised, pleased and delighted and gratified, to find that my letter to you had been printed in the September number. I had been unable to get this magazine, although I tried at every newsstand and those in the hotels. To some of the clerks I had to explain all about THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE, some little girl clerks didn't know. Others were sold out.

I learned of being in the volume with my beloved Phantom through a postcard which was very complimentary. Then other letters came. A friend finally found the magazine for me. To be in the same magazine with the Phantom is an honor, deeply appreciated by me. My "fan" letters from other readers show that the magazine has a wide appeal, and it pleases me to know that both men and women go in for being spellbound by the world's greatest sleuth, even as I.

Aside from the enthralling plots, the splendidly-depicted scenes and characters, I was fascinated by Robert Wallace's choice of words, simple forceful sentences, his genius in arrangement, all working toward a thrilling, amazing, wonderful climax. Incidentally we learn much about different subjects, and especially New York.

I like the way he gives each of his characters a chance so that we may get better acquainted with his friends. Even Muriel has an opportunity at "detecting" and comes off with flying colors.

"Listening Eyes" held a new secret, secrets transpiring via lip-reading—that is the first time that idea has been used to my knowledge.

Richard Curtis Van Loan is certainly a "Phan-

tom of delight," and keeps us entertained—gives us food for thought and speculation, which incidentally keeps us all out of mischief. We can't think of two things at once, so if we are filled with Dick Van Loan's exploits, given us by Robert Wallace's exquisite writings, we can't think or do anything else.—*Nellie M. Wheeler, 2442 20th Street, N. W., Washington 9, D. C.*

After that very complimentary letter from Miss Wheeler, we turn over a few letters and come across several from folks who are inclined to think that we are human, too, and inclined to err. The first is from Herbert Osher out in Arizona. He writes:

Dear Phantom:

In the past four years I have been reading your magazine most ardently. Not only do the characters run true to form, but the character descriptions are implicit to the point where a clear picture formulates in the reader's mind.

What amazes me most is that the Phantom is an expert in almost everything he undertakes. The rest of us normal people take whole lifetimes to amass the knowledge the Phantom seems to have garnered in his comparative youth. In the latest Phantom Detective novel, "The Timber Tract Murders", the Phantom on page 60 right hand column said, "Buy war bonds with what you pick up here and there." The Phantom, expert that he is, should read up on the latest current events because the second World War is history and therefore war bonds are now security bonds.

I also found two grammatical mistakes overlooked by the proof reader. On page 51, right hand column, in the third and sixth paragraphs there are mixed singular and plural verbs.—*Herbert Osher, 1407 East 9th Street, Tucson, Arizona.*

Thanks, Herbert, for calling these errors to our attention. We are giving the author and the proofreaders the necessary boozing, and will try to avoid such errors in future stories. We hope they didn't interfere with your reading pleasure. Our next letter comes from California.

Dear Phantom:

While I regard your Phantom Detective novels as the best reading on Earth, I get almost mad every time I note your incorrect use of a word or a phrase. Some errors are doubtless typographic and due to incompetent workmen in the printing plants.

What has started me on this audacious complaint, however, is the fact that you misuse the word "cartridge" 5 times on 2 pages (46 and 48) of the July 1948 issue of THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE.

A cartridge is never empty. It consists of a shell filled with powder and a bullet with some sort of priming. After shooting, only the shell is

[Turn page]



AUTO BOOKS ON APPROVAL



SEND NO MONEY. Just mail the coupon for a complete set of 4 Big, Thick Auto Books, 20th Edition, Over 2700 Pages! Whether you are a mechanic or helper, expert or apprentice, auto owner or driver, take immediate advantage of this **FREE EXAMINATION OFFER.**

MAKE GOOD MONEY NOW HOLD A PERMANENT JOB

America wants its automobiles kept in good repair. Men with "know how" are in demand, at big pay. These books will help you get and hold an important job, or give you a chance to go into business for yourself now or later. Any man who half tries to improve himself can learn auto selecting and repairing by this quick reference method. Use the **JIFFY INDEX** to find easily understood answer to any auto problem. These wonder books prepared by **clever** America's great automobile engineers. Many hundreds of valuable illustrations. Send the coupon **TODAY.**

[A year's consulting privileges with our engineers now given with these books without extra charge. Publishers Since 1898.]

CAN YOU FIX IT? These wonder books tell step by step **HOW** to make difficult repairs and adjustments, how to keep a car at maximum efficiency, including latest improvements in car design and operation. Engine troubles and how to correct them well covered.

A BIG, THICK VOLUME Over 2700 pp., 2000 illustrations, wiring diagrams, etc. Beautiful modernistic, washable cloth binding.

AMERICAN TECHNICAL SOCIETY, Dept. A-349

830 N. Ave. at 28th St., Chicago 30, Ill.

I would like to examine your 4-Volume Set of Auto Books. I will pay the delivery charges only, but if I choose I may return them express collect. If after 10 days' use I prefer to keep them, I will send you \$2 and pay the balance at the rate of only \$3 a month until \$24.80 has been paid. Include consulting service as offered above.

Name
Address

City State
Please attach letter stating position, employer's name and address, and name and address of at least one business man as reference. Men in service, also please give home address.

Be a DETECTIVE

Learn at Home in Your Spare Time
Be your own boss! Earn good money in this interesting, respected profession. This is a recognized authoritative course of training. Includes crime detection, prevention and identification, shadowing, undercover work, etc. Write for **FREE BOOK** describing training and opportunities. State Age.

INTERNATIONAL DETECTIVE TRAINING SCHOOL
1701 Monroe St., N. E. Dept. 193C Washington 28, D. C.

LAW

STUDY AT HOME for Business Success and **LARGER PERSONAL EARNINGS.** 40 years expert instruction — over 114,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All texts furnished. Easy payment plan. Send for **FREE BOOK NOW** — "Law and Executive Guidance."

AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 12-T, 646 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

Send for this **FREE BOOK** on

RHEUMATISM

ARTHRITIS • NEURITIS • SCIATICA

If you suffer the agonizing pains of these diseases when the usual remedies have failed, learn about a specialized system proven for treating. This marvelous treatment is completely explained in the Ball Clinic's **FREE BOOK. No Obligation. Write Today.** Ball Clinic, Dept. 504, Excelsior Springs, Mo.

REDUCE FAT!

UP TO 5lbs. A WEEK

YET EAT PLENTY!

The New, Scientific Way to

LOSE WEIGHT

Feel full of pep and energy.
Overcome that tired feeling
this Doctor Approved Way!

REDUCE

10-20-30 LBS. AND IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH!

WE GUARANTEE THESE
STATEMENTS OR YOU

DON'T PAY A PENNY!

NO STARVING
NO EXERCISE
NO LAXATIVES
NO DRUGS
NO MASSAGE

Absolutely
HARMLESS
and Actually
GOOD FOR YOU!

Don't be denied a beautiful, attractive figure. Lose ugly excess fat easily, quickly, pleasantly, safely — we guarantee it! **KELPIDINE** does the work with little effort on your part, is **ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS** and supplies a food mineral which is **VITAL** for balanced nutrition. **KELPIDINE IS GOOD FOR YOU!** It decreases your appetite, gives you more energy, vitality and vigor. **YOU'LL ENJOY REDUCING THIS WAY!**

Proven results are shown quickly. Many report losing 15, 20, 30 lbs. and even more in a few short weeks. With **KELPIDINE**, ugly fat and extra inches seem to disappear like magic.

Kelpidine (fucus) is the only known food product listed in medical dictionaries as an **ANTI-FAT, FOR RELIEF OF OBESITY AND AS AN AID IN REDUCING.** An United States Government Agency classifies **KELPIDINE** as a food. It is safe and brings remarkable results quickly and easily.



"My grateful Thanks to Kelpidine. In just a few weeks I lost 3 inches thru the waist-line and hips. It's amazing." Joan Fleming, New York City.

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE WITH A 10-DAY FREE TRIAL!

\$2 If Kelpidine doesn't do the wonders for you as it has for others, if you don't lose as much weight as you want to lose, if you're not 100% delighted with results, **YOUR MONEY WILL BE RETURNED AT ONCE!**

FREE! The famous Dr. Phillips Reducing Plan which has helped many lose 20, 30 and up to 40 pounds, quickly and safely will be sent absolutely **FREE** with your order.

MAIL COUPON NOW!

**American Healthaids Co., Dept. 30
871 Broad Street, Newark, New Jersey**

Send me at once for \$2 cash, check or money order, one month's supply of Kelpidine Tablets, postpaid. If I am not 100% satisfied my money will be refunded.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

I enclose \$5. send three months' supply.

SENT ON APPROVAL!

left. The empty shell is not a cartridge.

It simply isn't patriotic persistently to mis-educate your readers. Let us try to avoid competition with the Cassites at the tower of Babel.—*Fred L. Barker, 615 8th Avenue, San Diego 1, Calif.*

Thanks for your comments, Mr. Barker. They have been brought to the attention of Mr. Wallace, and I'm sure that insofar as he may be responsible for any of the mistakes, he will make an effort to avoid these in future stories. Our next letter is interesting because it is a comment on one of the short stories appearing in a recent issue. It comes from up in the Nutmeg State.

Dear Phantom:

In your July issue of the magazine which I have just finished reading, will you please tell me whether the story that was written by O. B. Myers is by a man who was ever in Meriden or vicinity. I live in Meriden and everything about the story as to where the truck driver went is true. Is this just a coincidence or was he really there?—*Alfred E. Osborne, 76 Gale Terrace, Meriden, Conn.*

O. B. Myers lives up in Westchester, Mr. Osborne, and has been in and out of Meriden a good many times. Like a good many other authors, he is glad to hear that his authentic picture of activities in your locale pictured in "No Riders—Or Else" is recognized and appreciated by local folks. Thanks for your note.

Here is another comment from down in the Sunny South.

Dear Phantom:

I have read your magazines since 1943, and I like them better all the time. I live 20 miles from town and there are some stories I have missed. I have just finished the latest one, "The Timber Tract Murders", and it was one of the best I've read yet. I am sending along money for a subscription and for membership in **FRIENDS OF THE PHANTOM.**—*J. C. Osborn, Box 34, Creston, N. C. (R. F. D. #1).*

Glad to hear from all you folks, and to welcome the new members of the **FRIENDS OF THE PHANTOM** Club. If you people have any comments or criticisms, by all means send them along. You may be sure that they will receive prompt and sympathetic attention. Please address all communications to the Editor, **THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE**, 10 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y. Let's get together again here next issue!

—THE PHANTOM.



Free as a balloon!

RID YOURSELF of economic worries and that's how you feel.

I.C.S. can show you how. Greater job security, more responsible work, higher pay, a home of your own—whatever you want is attainable if you qualify as one of the *trained* men vital to business and industry.

In today's world, untrained talent doesn't have a chance against expert knowledge. That's the reason why so

many ambitious Americans are studying I. C. S. courses in 400 technical and commercial subjects — readying themselves for the big rewards.

I. C. S. receives more than 1500 letters a year from students reporting salary increases and promotions. Mark and mail the coupon as they did — and you, too, can be on the road to economic freedom. It's a grand and glorious feeling to join the successful!

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS



BOX 3968-N, SCRANTON 9, PENNA.

Without cost or obligation, please send me full particulars about the course BEFORE which I have marked X:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Business and Academic Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeping <input type="checkbox"/> Business Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Business Correspondence <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Public Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Art <input type="checkbox"/> Cost Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Tax <input type="checkbox"/> First Year College <input type="checkbox"/> Foremanship <input type="checkbox"/> Good English <input type="checkbox"/> Higher Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Motor Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Retailing <input type="checkbox"/> Salesmanship <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Lettering <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Management <input type="checkbox"/> Air Conditioning and Plumbing Courses <input type="checkbox"/> Air Conditioning <input type="checkbox"/> Heating <input type="checkbox"/> Refrigeration | <p>Chemistry Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry, Analytical <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry, Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry, Mfg. Iron & Steel <input type="checkbox"/> Petroleum Refining <input type="checkbox"/> Pulp and Paper Making <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Engineering, Architectural and Mining Courses <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Building Estimating <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Contracting and Building <input type="checkbox"/> Highway Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Lumber Dealer <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Structural Blueprints <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitary Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping <input type="checkbox"/> Communications Courses <input type="checkbox"/> Electronics <input type="checkbox"/> Practical Telephony <input type="checkbox"/> Radio, General <input type="checkbox"/> Radio Servicing | <p>Electrical Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Light and Power <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting Technician <input type="checkbox"/> Practical Electrician <input type="checkbox"/> Power House Electric <input type="checkbox"/> Ship Electrician <input type="checkbox"/> Telegraph Engineering <p>Internal Combustion Engines Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Technician <input type="checkbox"/> Diesel-Electric <input type="checkbox"/> Diesel Engines <input type="checkbox"/> Aviation <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engines <p>Mechanical Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Aeronautical Engineer's, Jr. <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Forging <input type="checkbox"/> Heat Treatment of Metals <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Metallurgy <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Inspection <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Engineering | <p>Mold-Loft Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Patternmaking—Wood, Metal <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Shop Blueprints <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker <input type="checkbox"/> Ship Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Designing <input type="checkbox"/> Welding—Gas and Electric <input type="checkbox"/> Welding Engineering <p>Railroad Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Air Brakes <input type="checkbox"/> Diesel Locomotive <input type="checkbox"/> Locomotive Engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Locomotive Fireman <input type="checkbox"/> Locomotive Mechanic <input type="checkbox"/> Railroad Section Foreman <p>Steam Engineering Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Boilermaking <input type="checkbox"/> Combustion Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Engine Running <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Steam Electric <p>Textile Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Loom Fixing <input type="checkbox"/> Rayon Weaving <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Designing <input type="checkbox"/> Woolen Manufacturing |
|--|--|---|---|

Name _____ Home Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Working Hours _____ A.M. to _____ P.M.
 Present Position _____ Employed by _____

Special tuition rates to members of the Armed Forces. Enrollment under G.I. Bill and P.L. 16 approved for World War II Veterans.
 Canadian residents send coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada.

"EVEREADY" the battery with "NINE LIVES"!

Just as an active cat...



... takes a cat nap  and ...



bounces back with new pep... so "Eveready" batteries bounce back for extra life!

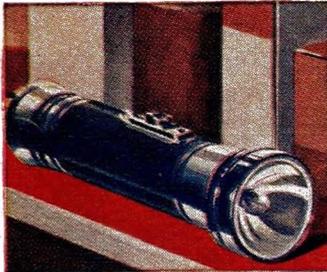


BOUNCE BACK gives

"EVEREADY" BATTERIES LONGER LIFE!



"Eveready" brand batteries give you fresh power when you use them; naturally, they use up some power when your flashlight is turned on ... but—



When your "Eveready" batteries cat nap between uses, the chemical elements in the cell develop fresh energy — recover power — so that...



When you snap on your flashlight again, the batteries *bounce back* with renewed power. That *bounce back* gives "Eveready" batteries *longer life!*

- Next time you buy batteries for your flashlight, be sure you get "Eveready"—the largest-selling brand in the world. Then you'll see what *bounce back* means ... why "Eveready" batteries are *the batteries with "Nine Lives"!*

'EVEREADY' FLASHLIGHT BATTERIES

The registered trade-mark "Eveready" distinguishes products of
NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY, INC.
30 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y.
Unit of Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation



PRINTED IN CANADA