

THE DESERT MOON MYSTERY

BY KAY CLEAVER STRAHAN

It was a bracelet charm of Gaby's, a gold monkey, about the size of a large almond, with blue eyes. The minute Martha had seen it she had begun to beg for it. There weren't any monkeys in the jewelry catalogs, but Sam sent off and got her a bear and a turtle. She wouldn't have any truck with them. She wanted that one, particular monkey. Gaby would not give it to her; would not so much as allow her to wear it for a few hours at a time. As usual, this evening she refused to let Martha touch it.

"Yes, and you'll be sorry," Martha threatened. She went upstairs and emptied a can of pepper in Gaby's handkerchief box. She was always playing tricks of the sort on Gaby, if we did not watch her. For my own part, I wouldn't have bothered with watching her but for the fact that, more than often, she got the two girls mixed up and it was Danny whose pretty dress would be tied to the chair to tear, instead of Gaby's; or Danny's hair would receive the contents of Chad's paste-pot; and then Martha, discovering her mistake, would make herself ill with crying and remorse. Just as she had hated Gaby from the start, she had loved Danny; but she could not tell them apart.

It seemed incredible even Martha could be confused about the two girls; because, if ever girls were opposite, those girls were. Of course, they were the same size, about five feet and two inches tall, I should judge, and the same weight—both of them too skinny to my way of thinking, flat as bread-boards. Their faces, just their faces, did look alike. They both had long brown eyes, straight noses, small mouths—Gaby painted her lips until they looked much fuller and more curved than Danny's—pointed chins, and complexions the color of real light caramel frosting. Danny's cheeks showed a faint pink, coming and going. Gaby painted her cheek-bones, clear back to her ears, with a deep orange-pink color. They both had wavy, dark brown hair cut just the same in the back, real close fitting and down to a point. But Gaby brushed her hair straight back from her forehead, and put varnish stuff on it till it was as sleek and shining as patent leather. She left all of her ears showing, and she always wore big earrings, dangling from them. Danny parted her hair on the side, and allowed it to wave, loose and soft and pretty. She never wore earrings. Gaby's clothes were all loud colored, or seemed to be—black turned gaudy when she put it on—and they were all insecure appearing, too defiant of paper patterns to be quite moral. Danny's clothes were as neat and quite as a pigeon's.

No wonder that these frequent mistakes of Martha's made me decide that she was losing her eyesight. I spoke to Sam about it, suggesting that Mrs. Ricker would better take her to San Francisco to visit an oculist. According to his usual custom, Sam laughed at me. He said that he had about concluded that Martha was the only one on the place who could use her eyes to see deeper than gee-gaws and fol-de-rols. "If you are insinuating," I said, "that those two girls are alike in any respect, inside or outside, you've lost your senses." "Why shouldn't they be alike?" Sam questioned. "They are twin sisters. They were brought up together; they have had the same friends, the

same teaching, the same environments. Of course they are alike. One of them is play-acting. I don't know which one. I suspect Danielle, on account of John."

I may as well state, right here, that all of this remark of Sam's, with the exception of the girls being twin sisters, was a mistake from beginning to end. I didn't, at that time, know much of anything about their past lives. I did know their present characters. I told him so.

He laughed again, and wanted to know what had become of all my theories concerning our modern young girls. Ever since the war, I had been standing up for them, through thick and thin.

"It takes a pretty stout theory," I admitted, "to hear a young lady called a 'damn good sport,' and see her receive it as a compliment."

"Who said that to who?" Sam wanted to know.

"Who do you suppose? Hubert Hand to Gaby, of course."

"Hubert Hand," Sam said, "had better behave himself." Since Hubert Hand was too selfish ever to love anything that his Roman nose wasn't attached to, his carryings on, with Gaby should be classed. I think, not in the center ring, but as the main attraction of the third ring. And he almost old enough to be her father, with white coming into his hair at his temples!

To this day I have never understood those two, during those months. Gaby was in love with John. Hubert Hand was in love with Hubert Hand. Yet they hugged and kissed, and seemed to think that calling it "necking" made it respectable. It wasn't a flirtation, with them. It was more like a fight, where each of them was fighting for something they did not want. A perfectly footless, none too wholesome performance.

"You make him behave himself, Sam," I urged.

"He is free, white and twenty-one. And she sure can take care of herself, if ever a girl could. It's none of my put-in."

"What about the rest of us?" I said, "forced to watch such goings on?"

"Don't watch. If you watch Belle, and Sadie and Goldie, that is watching enough for one woman."

Belle, Sadie and Goldie were the Indian women I had, at that time, to help me around the place. I suppose they were pretty good girls. They did all the actual work there was to do around the house, except the cooking, with me directing them every step they took. But when I remember how they all deserted me, in the time of our terrible trouble, it makes me so fighting mad that I don't like to give them credit for anything, nor think about them at all, even yet.

CHAPTER VIII Atmosphere

The girls had been on the Desert Moon a little better than six weeks when, one evening Sam came out into my kitchen where I was setting bread. Belle, Sadie and Goldie had gone home, and I had tidied up after them, as usual, and everything in the kitchen was sweet, and clean, and shining. I had the doors tight shut, so I couldn't hear the radio screeching away in the livingroom, and the windows open, and the evening breeze fresh from the deserts came in, blowing back my ruffled white curtains and purifying the air.

"Mary," Sam began, real solemn for him, "the ancients used to have cities that they called cities of refuge. No

matter what a fellow had done, if he could get inside into one of those cities, he was safe. Your kitchen always kinda seems like that to me—a city of refuge."

"Lands, Sam," I said, "what have you been up to that you are heading this safety first movement?"

To tell the truth, I was a little put out with him for moseying in there when I was setting bread. Like most men I've known, Sam never had any particular hankering for my company unless he thought I could be of some use to him. Generally, I am glad and proud to help Sam, anyway I can; but not when I am setting bread. There is something about setting bread that gives any moral woman a contented, uplifted feeling that she likes to indulge in, undisturbed.

"I haven't been up to anything," Sam answered, "and I don't aim to be. But, Mary, some time ago you came to me with some suspicions. I laughed them off. I am not laughing now. I'm worried. Queer things are going on around here. What I want to know, now, is what do you know?"

"Nothing. What do you know?"

"Nothing."

"What do you suspect, then, Sam?"

"Nothing. What do you?"

"Nothing."

"That, I see now, wouldn't have been a bad place for us both to laugh. Neither of us did."

"Have you any idea," Sam questioned, "why the girls go prowling all over the place, afoot and horseback, day-times, and night-times, too, when they should be in their beds?"

I unfolded a dishtowel and spread it over my pan of bread. It was ready for rising and I had not got a bit of uplift out of it.

"If I told you," I said, "you'd only speak your little memory-gem, about so much good in the worst of us."

"No, I won't, Mary. I'm all set for listening."

"Well, all I know is just what I've known all along. They are hunting for something."

"Sure they are hunting for something. But what?"

"I don't know. But, whatever it is, they are going to use it to get revenge, to injure maliciously somebody."

"Revenge, hell!" Sam said. "Have it your own way. Only I happened one night to hear Gaby say to Danny that they had come to this ranch for the purpose of revenge."

"Revenge, hell! Sam repeated himself. "Unless they are sore at me about Cannoziano."

"It doesn't make sense. They hate Cannoziano. I've about decided that they have come here to get revenge on, maliciously injure, someone who isn't on the place."

"Brighten the corner where you are," Sam scoffed. "But never mind. What else did they say, when you happened to overhear this revenge remark?"

If he was ready, at last, to listen, I was sure more than ready to tell what little I knew. I told; even to confessing about hiding in the clothes closet.

"Well, well," he drawled, when I had finished my story, "we are probably making a mountain out of a molehill. I wouldn't go pussy-footing around after them, any more, if I were you, Mary. There's a screw loose somewhere, that's sure; but it is not in the Desert Moon's machinery. We've got nothing on our conscience. We don't need to worry."

Don't need to worry! Sam and I, sitting in that peaceful kitchen, talking so smart and frivolous, and deciding that we did not need to worry is a memory I could well be shed of. We didn't need to worry a bit more than if I'd used arsenic in my covered pan of bread; not a bit more than if there had been a den of rattle-

snakes in the cupboard under the sink, or gasoline instead of water in the tank on the back of the stove. That is how safe and peaceful we really were, at that minute, if we had had sense enough to know it. When I realize that four weeks from that very evening, three people—

But I guess it would be better to tell things straight along, as they happened. It seems to me a good book can not be hurried, any more than a good cake can. "Mix and sift the dry ingredients," is the way all recipes for cakes begin.

However, since I suspect that I knew a sight more about making a good cake than I did about making a good book, and since the young man from back east—Indiana—in Nevada for his matrimonial health as are about half of the population here, happened in just after I had finished writing the above paragraph, I asked him whether he would, for a consideration, read and correct my manuscript.

He had said, when he had come in from his fishing on Boulder Creek, that afternoon, and asked to buy a meal, that he was an author by profession. The looks of him almost made me decide not to put myself in his class. I don't know why it is that easterners coming out here and buying the same sort of clothes that our men wear, look so ridiculous in them; but they do. Anyway, I invited him to stay to supper, and then, as I have said, made the proposition about the manuscript.

He said that he would be only too happy to edit the yarn, but that it would probably take him several days to do it efficiently. In other words, though he grandly refused the consideration, he got three full days of board and rooms and fishing on the Desert Moon in return for around two hours of work. And I got my clean pages all marked up with "whoms" and "whichs" and funny do-dad marks. It took me more than two hours to get them all erased.

"Now," he said, when he finally had read it, "I am going to be frank with you. You mention dry ingredients. In my opinion, you have far too many dry ingredients, and it is taking you much too long to accomplish the mixing process."

"A book, to be successful, has to move swiftly. This is particularly true of stories of crime and their detection. A properly constructed story of this sort, begins with the murder. The wisest thing for you to do, is to burn all of this that you have done, and make a fresh beginning, at the time of the first murder."

"In the new copy, do attempt to get in some atmosphere. You must make your readers feel the setting, as it were. Bring them across the wide multicolored deserts that lie between here and Telko, to this marvelous farm. Show them the massive mountain ranges surrounding it; let them breathe the rarefied air, drink deeply of the beauty. Give them the changing colors of the mountains, from their jade greens to their rich ruby hues, with the purpling cloud shadows swaying across them. Let them hear the scurrying of the desert rats, the calls of the owls, the howls of the coyotes. Paint for them the slender white trunks of your aspen trees, and the green quivering of their leaves. The harsh, rugged beauty, the color, the wonder of this northeastern Nevada of yours is marvelous beyond description. But for all of it that your manuscript shows, the action might have taken place on a chicken farm in Vermont."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Looked That Way From Die Musketeer, Vienna.

A woman and a man came round the corner in a car. He put out his hand to turn to the left; she to turn to the right.

Traffic Policeman: What do you want—a divorce?

judges and bar associations in all parts of the country.

The code is based upon practical experience in criminal procedure and actual cases and decisions observed in the past. Consideration is taken of the different disposition of local and state courts, and each statute in the code is supplemented by information as to what the various local courts have decided thereupon in the past. The code will thus be applicable throughout all parts of the country and should do much to aid and clarify the administration of justice.

O. W.

A. Vodka is a Russian distilled alcoholic liquor, commonly made from rye, sometimes from potatoes, and rarely from barley. Sometimes, in Russia, the term is applied to any kind of whisky or brandy.

Federal FARM FACTS

Farm wages on April 1 were the lowest for that date ever recorded by the United States bureau of agricultural economics. The bureau's index of farm wages stood at 162 per cent of the 1910-14 period, which is three points above the January index of 1930 and five below that of April, 1929. The reason given is the large supply of farm labor caused by the small volume of industrial employment at present.

The livestock industry must modernize and junk its obsolete methods, is the advice given by Dr. John R. Mohler, chief of the United States Bureau of Animal Industry. He urges livestock men to rid their herds of low production cattle, scrub and grade sires, and animals affected with communicable diseases.

The new 1930 department of agriculture yearbook of agriculture is off the press. It contains a wealth of material and instructions on scientific farming.

United States citizens consumed less meat in 1929 than in 1928, according to a recent survey taken by the department of agriculture. Consumption for 1929 totaled 16,803,000,000 pounds, while that of 1928 was 16,955,000,000 pounds.

Furthering its research work in foreign fields, the department of agriculture has H. L. Westover and W. E. Whitehouse, of the bureau of plant industry, surveying the plains of central Asia for new varieties of alfalfa, melons, apples, apricots and almonds.

A cotton fiber sorting machine developed by Dr. R. W. Webb of the bureau of agriculture economics, is said to be very accurate in separating cotton fibers according to length. It is a great improvement over other machines and over hand separation.

The shifting of the farm population to cities was less rapid in 1929 than it was in former years. According to the department of agriculture, 1,875,000 persons moved from farms to cities last year, as compared with 1,923,000 in 1928; 1,978,000 in 1927, and a peak of 2,155,000 in 1926.

Feed your dairy animals more protein in the form of legume hays, is the advice of the bureau of dairy industry. An acre of clover hay will furnish about three times as much digestible protein as one of timothy hay, and an acre of alfalfa hay nearly seven times as much.

The High Cost of War.

From Louisville Courier-Journal. In an address on Armistice day, 1927, in which he defended his policy of isolation and lectured Europe for its failure to understand the United States, President Coolidge vigorously disclaimed the charge that America had made a charge out of the World War, and declared that "up to the present time our own war costs, after allowing for our foreign debt expectations, are about \$36,500,000,000. The repercussions of that speech are fortunately now in the past. Its charge is forgotten. Its implication that Europe might stew in its own juice have left no lasting impressions. The figures emphasizing the high cost of warfare alone remain.

In a statement just issued by the treasury department they are re-sized. There is a slight difference due to the passage of time and the fact that Mr. Coolidge was dealing with approximate figures. The 36,500,000,000 has become \$37,573,950,000, or rather this was the net cost of the war on June 30, 1929. The gross cost is the appalling sum of \$51,400,000,000, which includes not only the outlay for carrying on the struggle and loans to the Allies, but adjusted compensation, insurance, vocational rehabilitation and hospitalization. As the treasury points out, the American people are paying more than \$1,000,000,000 this year as a result of the war. It also indicates that war costs and the annual bill for national defense make up about 66 per cent of all government expenditures.

Facts such as these must be taken into account in the recurring arguments in favor of war debt cancellation. In spite of its material prosperity the United States is shouldering a burden four times as great as that imposed on Germany by the Young plan. These facts also should be a forceful deterrent to war and an argument in favor of disarmament, but seemingly they are not.

Q. What is known as colonial architecture? B. W.

A. When speaking of colonial buildings, none should be included of a date later than 1776. In New England most of the building of colonial times were of wood and were built by carpenters who also were shipbuilders. These artisans developed a style that had a flavor of its own and differed in many respects as to detail from that done in New York, where the settlers had a Dutch background, which was again different from the English background of New England. The colonial style of Pennsylvania is characterized by sturdiness and solidity. Most of the buildings were of brick or stone and the detail was not so delicate as that of New England.

Slippery. From Tit-Bits.

Mr. Jones was going to town, so his wife asked him to call at the grocer's and order a pound of butter, two pounds of lard, and three gallons of oil.

"All right," said Jones, "but I'm sure all those greasy things will slip my mind."

O. W.

A. Vodka is a Russian distilled alcoholic liquor, commonly made from rye, sometimes from potatoes, and rarely from barley. Sometimes, in Russia, the term is applied to any kind of whisky or brandy.

NEW MEDICINE CABINET

THE IDEAL FAMILY LAXATIVE



Effective in Milder Doses Insist on the Genuine

Peenamint

FOR CONSTIPATION

The Affronted Mounjik Theodore Dreiser, talking at a Greenwich village tea about his Russian visit, said that the Russian government has instituted compulsory baths with a view to arresting the typhus scourge.

"Well," he went on, "the Russian peasants need baths; there can be no difference of opinion on that point. "I was talking one day to a white-whiskered old mounjik. "How old are you?" I asked him. "Sixty-six," said the mounjik. "Did you ever have a bath?" said I. "The old fellow drew himself up. He was affronted. "Plague take you, sir," he said. "I have had three baths in my time."

HEADACHE?

Why suffer when relief is prompt and harmless:



Millions of people have learned to depend on Bayer Aspirin to relieve a sudden headache. They know it eases the pain so quickly. And that it is so harmless. Genuine Bayer Aspirin never harms the heart. Look for the Bayer Cross stamped on every tablet.

BAYER ASPIRIN

Good Turns

Five hundred phonograph records were collected from the citizens of Laramie, Wyo., by the boy scouts of that municipality recently, and sent as a gift to the United States Veterans' hospital at Sheridan, where the ex-soldiers recently were the recipients of two fine phonographs, the gift of the Albany County Post No 14, American Legion Auxiliary.



Kill Rats Without Poison

A New Extremator that Won't Kill Livestock, Poultry, Dogs, Cats, or even Baby Chicks

K-R-O can be used about the home, barn or poultry yard with absolute safety as it contains no deadly poison. K-R-O is made of Squill, as recommended by U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, under the Comstock process which insures maximum strength. Two cans killed 578 rats at Arkansas State Farm. Hundreds of other testimonials.

K-R-O KILLS RATS ONLY

Meaning? "Do you know, professor, she has never had a lesson in her life."

"Why not?"—Collier's.

When romance ends only with death, there you have a man who is always happy in spots.

UGLY UPIMPLES?

Nature's warning—help nature clear your complexion and paint red roses in your cheeks, sailor cheeks. Truly wonderful results follow thorough use of N-O-T-O-NIGHT. Take N-O-NIGHT'S REMEDY—to regulate and strengthen your eliminative organs. Watch the transformation. Try N-O-NIGHT of more testifies.

N-O-T-O-NIGHT TOMORROW'S BRIGHT

DAISY FLY KILLER

Flies everywhere, DAISSY FLY KILLER attracts and kills all flies. Neat, clean, ornamental, convenient and cheap. Lasts all season. Made of metal, can't spill or tip over; will not soil or injure anything. Guaranteed.

Insist upon DAISSY FLY KILLER from your dealer.

HAROLD SOMERS, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

To Outline Criminal Code. Washington, D. C.—Approval of a new series of model statutes to correct defects in criminal procedure throughout the United States will be discussed at the annual meeting of the American Law Institute which convenes here May 8th.

The proposed new code, known as the code of criminal procedure, will be submitted by the institute council for consideration during the sessions which will continue through the week. This new code was prepared following the recommendation of a committee consisting of the late Herbert S. Hadley former governor of Missouri. Sec-

retary of State Henry L. Stimson, Judge Charles C. Nott, Jr., of New York City and William E. Mickel of Philadelphia. Mr. Mickel and Edwin R. Keedy, professors of law at the University of Pennsylvania have prepared the code which is designated to eliminate outworn technicalities in criminal law procedure and bring about greater uniformity and simplification among the various states.

It is expected that the entire code will be approved by the institute in its final form and that following its adoption by the institute the model statutes contained in the code will be accepted and enacted by legis-

latures in the states where reform in criminal procedure is particularly necessary. Defects in criminal procedure are not uniform and the institute believes that most states will follow this course in remedying specific defects in their procedure.

The proposed code marks the first completed step in the institute's program to correct the present uncertainty, complexity and delay in the American law. Following a plan established in 1925 the work has proceeded steadily since that date under the supervision of two experts and has received generous cooperation from individual lawyers,