

BLACK SOMBRERO

by CLIFFORD KNIGHT

Elsa Chatfield is disinherited by her Aunt Kitty who died of an overdose of morphine. Hunt Rogers and Barry Madison go to Mexico to solve what they believe to be Aunt Kitty's murder. On arriving they find that Elsa's party has preceded them by plane. James Chesebro is murdered, Elsa's father, Sam, meets death from the sword of a marlin when his chair breaks, toppling him into the sea, and George Rumble is murdered and thrown into the sea near the dock. Rogers questions Berta, Sam's wife, and on examining the quilt with which Elsa had beaten Chesebro discovers by twisting the knob that it conceals the knife that killed Chesebro.

Now Continue.

CHAPTER XVIII

"In the presence of Senor Lombardo and realizing the implication in it that you killed Chesebro?"

For only a fraction of a second did she hesitate, then she answered calmly, "Yes."

Senor Otilio Lombardo, jefe del policia, came up the Orizaba's ladder the next day but one, followed by Dr. Miguel Cruz. On the heels of the doctor came the barefooted, ragged mariachis, Felipe and Pancho.

"I have puzzled much, gentlemen," remarked Lombardo in English after cigarettes had been lighted, "about the confession of Senorita Chatfield that she killed Senor Chesebro. I do not understand it, and I take no action. I had come that evening persuaded that it was better, despite your promise, that I keep Senor Barton in jail for the murder of Senor Rumble. But when Senorita Chatfield speak I am confused, senor, and do not know what is best to do."

A faint smile twitched at Rogers' lips and he looked away across the bay to the shore where the coco palms seemed to shoot like bursting green rockets into the sky.

"There are many confusing things in this affair, senor," he remarked. "They have puzzled me too, but I believe that I can explain them all now."

"I would be very glad if you would."

"Four persons have died, Senor Lombardo—Katherine Chatfield in California; James Chesebro, Sam Chatfield and George Rumble, in Mexico. The explanation must include all four. It must be logical and there must be proof."

"Yes, of course," said Rogers.

"Sam Chatfield and his wife, Berta, arrived in California for their annual visit a year ago last winter. They stopped at a hotel in Pasadena, and, uninvited, went to spend the night with his sister, Katherine—Elsa's Aunt Kitty. That night Katherine Chatfield was murdered. The method used was an overdose of morphine, to which drug she was an addict, taking it hypodermically. A very faint odor of chloroform detected the next morning by only one investigator furnishes the single clue to what happened. A few drops of chloroform on a handkerchief, I believe, suddenly held to the unsuspecting victim's nose, and kept in place during the brief and violent struggle which probably followed, and the victim was unconscious. There was necessary only to load the hypodermic with an overdose of morphine and shoot it into the unconscious victim, wipe away all fingerprints from the syringe and the supply bottle, and press the prints of the victim on these things. Simple?"

"It is most simple, Senor Rogers," said Lombardo, a serious expression upon his round, brown face.

"Either a man or a woman could have done that, senor," Rogers began again. "Now, consider these facts: Present in the house, besides the servants, who do not figure in it at all, was Sam Chatfield. He knew that his sister was the mother of a child. He knew that she not only had refused to acknowledge the fact, but had permitted his daughter, Elsa, to be cruelly slandered, and not only had done nothing to quiet the gossip, but most likely had been instrumental in circulating it."

"Also in the house that night was Elsa, who openly and frankly at all times, as you heard the other night, has admitted that she hated her aunt. Besides these two there was Senora Berta Chatfield, who ever since she married Sam had resented the treatment given her by her sister-in-law, and who, as a wife, knew how her husband felt toward Katherine Chatfield."

"There, Senor Lombardo," Rogers continued, "I have named three persons with motives to kill and obviously with the opportunity to do so. But there were others that night who came and went. George Rumble, who had done some publicity work for Katherine Chatfield, came to receive his pay, which was refused him. There was an argument and hot words, and Rumble left. But he remained in the neighborhood uncertain whether or not he should return. Did he go back and kill her?"

Rogers was developing very logically the facts in that first slaying, and Lombardo followed his words closely. Doctor Cruz sat smoking cornhusk cigarettes endlessly, his eyelids making mere slits for his eyes. Neither spoke.

"That night, also," Rogers went on evenly, "Reed Barton was at Katherine Chatfield's home to give her a book sent by Chesebro. Reed has been very frank to admit that

his father's death—a suicide—can be laid at the dead woman's door. A little leniency shown in a critical time would have saved his property for him. Did Reed Barton kill her?"

"James Chesebro arrived and departed that night; we do not know why, the reason for his visit never having been explained before his death. Did he have some motive to kill the woman? Next came Dwight Nichols." Rogers nodded in Dwight's direction. The latter merely sat and smoked calmly, listening without offering to interrupt.

"Dwight Nichols profited by some two hundred thousand dollars at the death of Katherine Chatfield, because of some jointly owned property. Dwight has stated that he was summoned, for some reason unknown to him, to advise with Miss Chatfield. Margaret Nichols was jealous of Katherine Chatfield, because she feared her husband's love was being stolen from her. She, also, made a visit that night. However, Mrs. Nichols says she got only as far as the entrance hall when someone dashed out of the house in panic, someone who, she says, did not see her concealed behind some drapery. That person admittedly



"And finally, there is Elsa," said Rogers thoughtfully.

was her husband. Dwight Nichols says that he arrived only to find Katherine Chatfield dead. Is he telling the truth? Is his wife telling the truth; did either, or both, of them kill the woman?" Rogers halted to sip from his frothy glass.

"It is all very strange, Senor Rogers," said Lombardo, stirring uneasily in his chair. "How can you discover the truth in so complicated a case?"

Rogers smiled faintly, and I thought that there was the merest twinkle in his mild blue eyes. "If," he began again, "we exclude from suspicion all those persons who subsequently died by violence—Chesebro, Sam Chatfield, George Rumble—as victims of and not themselves the probable killer, whom have we left?" He glanced from Doctor Cruz to Lombardo, then named them: "Elsa Chatfield, Senora Berta Chatfield, Margaret Nichols, Dwight Nichols, and Reed Barton. Those five."

"Now, then," Rogers said, a crispness coming into his voice, "we come to the death of James Chesebro. Of these five who could possibly wish him to die? Senora Berta Chatfield? I can think of no reason; I know of no motive, in fact. On the other hand, Reed Barton and Chesebro quarreled with each other over the love of Elsa Chatfield. Chesebro had discharged Barton from his employ. An excellent motive," he commented. "But—Dwight Nichols had been defrauded by Chesebro of fifty thousand dollars in a mining deal. That is a lot of money. Men have been murdered before now for much less, Senor Lombardo. And how about Margaret Nichols, the wife? Again fifty thousand dollars is a lot of money—to a woman."

"Yes, of course, much money," murmured Lombardo, absorbed in his own mental processes.

"And, finally, there is Elsa," said Rogers thoughtfully. "Hers is a stronger motive than all the others put together, senor. A young woman's good name is her most valuable possession. You are Mexican, and can understand the word revenge. Elsa was willing night before last to permit the inference that she had killed Chesebro. Senor, is Pedro, the pulque seller, a lying scoundrel who seeks to protect a woman, or does he tell the truth when he says that Dwight Nichols is the one who killed?"

Lombardo's face was puzzled; he was now hopelessly at sea. A frown had gathered on the forehead between the slitted eyes of Doctor Cruz as he followed the intricacies of the problem as set forth by Rogers. As for Rogers, I could not

escape the conviction that he was enjoying himself hugely at the expense of Lombardo. His face, however, was more solemn than that of a judge. Lombardo started slightly at Rogers' question.

"Yo no se, senor," he admitted, reverting to Spanish in his confusion.

"I think, Senor Lombardo," said Rogers, dropping with a smile into Spanish, "you will let Pedro out of jail when I finish telling you who is the guilty person." Lombardo's only response was an involuntary lifting of the eyebrows.

"However," Rogers took up again in English in a more serious vein, "the name of the guilty one must wait a few minutes longer. I will come to it at the proper time. But now let us look for a moment at the death of Sam Chatfield. His is the most puzzling in the entire series. So much seems accident, so little may have been the handiwork of a murderer. A nut had come unscrewed from the swivel mechanism of the chair in which Sam sat in the launch. If the chair had not collapsed, there is little likelihood that he would have fallen overboard, probably none at all. Did somebody remove the nut? There was opportunity to do so for everybody who went on the fishing excursion, and even for George Rumble, who did not go. All of us, except the women members of the party, knew beforehand that Sam Chatfield would sit in that chair when we went after marlin.

"And, yet, I know of no motive upon the part of anyone for the death of Sam Chatfield. Of course, one never knows what's between a husband and a wife. Did Senora Chatfield have some motive unknown to us, and did she learn in some manner which seat her husband would occupy on that fatal excursion in the launch? But—let's drop Sam Chatfield's death for the moment, and go on to George Rumble's. I think that in it we will find something of interest—perhaps the key we are seeking."

Lombardo shifted in his chair and looked away for a moment to the tall towers of the church. Doctor Cruz crushed out the spark in his cigarette under his heel, and for a moment his hands were idle. The mariachis were growing restless, understanding nothing that had been said in English. Reed Barton sat easily with legs crossed, and Dwight continued calmly to smoke.

"There are motives recognizable in the death of George Rumble," Rogers began once more. "For Margaret Nichols there was no opportunity. Senora Chatfield had admitted she went to the wharf that night to find someone to send for her husband's fishing equipment. Felipe and Pancho went on that errand for her. She returned to the yacht. She asserts, however, that she did not see Rumble, who was murdered on the wharf that night. There was a motive for the murder of Rumble on the part of Dwight Nichols; he and Rumble quarreled only a short time before Rumble died. Rumble knew that Dwight was the man who rushed in panic out of Katherine Chatfield's house the night she was murdered; he held it over him, as it were, and Dwight believed it was for the purpose of blackmail. After the two separated, Dwight, in the presence of Barry Madison, Sam Chatfield and me, made a remark which could be interpreted as a threat. He said that he would have to manage some way to quiet Rumble definitely."

Dwight was unmoved by this recital; he tapped the ash from his cigarette and continued to gaze calmly at Rogers. The latter paused to sip his glass of limeade before he went on.

"Another motive, not so strong, perhaps, is one that can be assigned to Reed Barton. George Rumble had fallen in love with Elsa. You know that didn't you, Reed?"

"Yes."

"Again, Senor Lombardo," said Rogers, turning back to the chief, "love is a possible motive. How strong? How shall it be evaluated?" He paused only briefly. "However, there's a very definite motive, and I think the real one, to account for Rumble's murder—Rumble knew too much. He boasted that he knew who the killer was. What, in that case, will a murderer do? He will strike at the first opportunity, for he prizes his safety above all else. And that's what happened."

Lombardo stirred uneasily in his chair. "Who, Senor Rogers," he asked, "heard Senor Rumble boast that he knew the murderer?"

"Barry Madison, Sam Chatfield, Dwight Nichols, and I."

"So?"

Reed Barton shifted his feet and cleared his throat lightly. "I shouldn't be left out, Hunt. Rumble hinted very broadly to me that he knew who killed Chesebro, then closed up like a clam when I asked him about it."

Rogers looked at him sharply, as if to determine whether the statement was made in a vein of bravado, or because he wished to be helpful. For a moment he was silent and then appeared to shift his approach to the problem of Rumble's murder.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

HOUSEHOLD MEMOS... by Lynn Chambers



Midwinter Jellies Pep Up Menus!

(See Recipes Below)

Get Your Spreads!

Are you low on brown points? Then set the jelly and jam kettles boiling with midwinter fruits and make some delicious spreads to save points.

Last summer when homemakers were putting up their fruits they discovered they did not have enough sugar for putting up all the jams and jellies they would like, but now they have probably caught up on the sugar and can boil the juices they saved into delicious, quivery jellies. Use the jellies and jams on biscuits and muffins when the butter is scarce. It spells first aid and appetite appeal to menus.

For those of you who did not put up juices for winter jelly-making, there are plenty of fruits in season now that make delightful spreads. Out with the kettles and colanders, with jelly glasses and paraffin and here we go:

Orange Marmalade.

(Makes 6 6-ounce glasses)

- 3½ cups prepared fruit (about 1½ pounds)
- 2½ cups sugar
- 1 3-ounce box powdered fruit pectin

Prepare fruit. Use peels from 6 medium-sized oranges and 2 lemons. Cut in quarters. Lay quarters flat; shave off and discard half of white part. Put peels through chopper twice. Add 1 cup sugar, 2½ cups water, juice from 1 medium-sized lemon and ¼ teaspoon soda. (This 1 cup sugar is in addition to measurement given above.) Cover. Heat to boiling. Simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Measure sugar into dry dish and set aside until needed. Measure prepared fruit into 3 to 4-quart kettle, filling up last cup or fraction of cup with water if necessary. Place over high heat. Add powdered pectin, mix well, and continue stirring until mixture comes to a hard boil. Pour in sugar at once, stirring constantly. Continue stirring, heat to a full, rolling boil and boil hard 2 minutes. Remove from heat, skim, pour quickly. Paraffin hot marmalade at once.

Honey Orange Jelly.

(Makes 6 6-ounce glasses)

- 1 cup juice
- 3 cups honey
- ½ bottle fruit pectin

To prepare juice, squeeze and strain juice from 2 medium oranges. Measure juice and honey into a large saucepan and mix well. Heat to boiling over high heat and at once add fruit pectin, stirring constantly. Then heat to a full rolling boil and

boil hard ½ minute. Remove from heat, skim, pour quickly. Paraffin hot jelly at once.

Cranberry Jam.

- 8 cups cranberries
- 1 cup each, water and vinegar
- 6 cups sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- ½ tablespoon ground cloves
- ½ tablespoon ground allspice

Mash cranberries lightly. Add vinegar and water and cook until soft. Put through a coarse strainer; add sugar and spices. Cook 8 minutes, stirring constantly. Pour into sterilized jars and seal immediately.

And now for those of you who have bottled grape juice on hand. Here is an excellent jelly that is quickly made with powdered fruit pectin:

Grape and Orange Jelly.

(Makes 7 6-ounce glasses)

- 3½ cups sugar
- 1½ cups bottled grape juice
- 1½ cups canned orange juice
- 1 box powdered fruit pectin

Measure sugar into a dry dish and set aside until needed. Measure juice into a 3- or 4-quart saucepan and place over hottest fire. Add powdered fruit pectin, mix well, and continue stirring until mixture comes to a hard boil. Pour in sugar at once, stirring constantly. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard ½ minute. Remove from fire, skim, pour quickly. Paraffin hot jelly at once.

If you want sugar-saving suggestions, write to Lynn Chambers, Western Newspaper Union, 210 South Desplaines Street, Chicago 6, Illinois. Don't forget to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your reply.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Save Used Fats

PATTERNS SEWING CIRCLE



Barbara Bell Pattern No. 1903 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20; 40 and 42. Corresponding bust measurements 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42. Size 14 (32), with long sleeves, requires 5½ yards 35 or 30-inch material.

SEWING CIRCLE PATTERN DEPT.
530 South Wells St. Chicago
Enclose 20 cents in coins for each pattern desired.
Pattern No. Size

Next Question, Please!

During a question period following a lecture, a man arose and put a foolish query to the speaker. The latter replied:

"The logic of your question makes me think of another. Can you tell me why fire engines are always red? You can't? Well, fire-engines have four wheels and eight men. Four and eight are twelve. Twelve inches make a foot. A foot is a ruler. Queen Elizabeth was a ruler. The Queen Elizabeth is the largest ship that sails the seven seas. Ships have fish. Fish have fins. The Finns fight the Russians. The Russians are red. Fire-engines are always red. Therefore, fire-engines are always red."

"I hope this answers your question also."

Nose Must Drain

To Relieve Head Colds Miserably
When head colds strike, help nose drain, clear the way for breathing comfort. Use with Kordon's Nasal Jelly. Kordon acts quickly to open clogged passages, soothe inflamed, irritated tissue, reduce swelling. Amazingly simple. At all druggists. Used for over 53 years. Satisfaction of money back is guaranteed. Ask your druggist for KORDON'S NASAL JELLY today.

HARSH LAXATIVES UNNECESSARY?

Millions Find Simple Fresh Fruit Drink Gives Them All the Laxative Aid They Need

Don't form the habit of depending on harsh, gripping laxatives until you've tried this easy, healthful way millions now use to keep regular.

It's fresh lemon juice and water taken first thing in the morning—just as soon as you get up. The juice of one Sunkist Lemon in a glass of water. Taken thus, on an empty stomach, it stimulates normal bowel action, day after day, for most people.

And lemons are actively good for you. They're among the richest sources of Vitamin C, which combats fatigue, helps resist colds and infections. They supply vitamins B₁ and P, aid digestion and help alkalize the system.

Try this grand wake-up drink 10 mornings. See if it doesn't help you! Use California Sunkist Lemons.

Women Honored
Fifty-five Liberty ships have been named for women.

For Warmth, Comfort
GET the greatest good from this pajama pattern by making it twice—once in flannel or broadcloth as a sleeping suit, once in flannel or corduroy as a lounging suit. Both ways it will help keep you warm this winter.

Mexican Pan Holders, Towels and Curtains

THE corner shelf with towel rack screwed to the bottom and red cut-out scallops across the front is an idea for a kitchen brightener. The scalloped strip of wood over the stove with cup



hooks for pan holders is another. It is the Mexican pan holders, towels and curtains that will interest the gift maker with needle and thread.

A whole set of amusing Mexican figures may be embroidered in simple outline stitch in bright colors. Some of the transfer designs are large and some are small.

NOTE—You will enjoy making articles embroidered with these quaint colorful Mexican figures. There are more than twenty on this hot iron transfer sheet—all different and all easy to do. Price 15c. Order No. 203 and it will be mailed immediately upon receipt. Address:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS
Bedford Hills, New York
Drawer 10
Enclose 15 cents for Transfer No. 203.
Name

DON'T FORGET CLABBER GIRL
goes with the BEST OF EVERYTHING for BAKING

... how good ... and nutritious ... and economical, are those biscuits and quick breads—baked with Clabber Girl.

THE DOUBLE ACTING BAKING POWDER
HULMAN AND COMPANY
Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping

CLABBER GIRL Baking Powder

HULMAN AND COMPANY, TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

★ Invest in Liberty: Buy War Bonds

5 WARS

Smith Bros. has served the public since 1847. In that period America has fought five wars. Only during wartime has there ever been any shortage of Smith Bros. Cough Drops. Our production now is war-reduced but we're distributing it fairly to all. Still only 5¢. A nickel checks that tickle!

SMITH BROS. COUGH DROPS
BLACK OR MENTHOL—5¢