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vestigating the murder of Curt Vallain-

court, who was about to marry Veronica

Bigelow, heiress to thirty million dollars.

McCale obtains some important clues

from Shari Lynn, Vallaincourt's former

wife, and from Victoria, Veronica's sis-

called again to headquarters. McCale

questions the members of the family.

Stephen, Veronica's brother, tells how

he met Vallaincourt in Chicago, when

his sister, Victoria, was running around

with the handsome adventurer. It was

Victoria who introduced Vallaincourt to

Veronica. McCale considers this signif-

feant. Stephen also reveals that he knew

CHAPTER XII

know." He shut his mouth, and his

at McCale with an expression that

said as plainly as words could,

"And that's all you'll get from me."

McCale changed the direction of

his next questions strategically and

said with the suddenness of a cata-

pult, "You were spying on your wife

and Curt Vallaincourt at The White

enough, Bigelow was ready for it.

Bigelow laughed hollowly, the

McCale thought-he has been ly-

he was so sure I would ask first,

He shrugged. "You haven't a

the growing case against Veronica,

Stephen rose, well aware that he

had acquitted himself, in his own

mind anyway, with some success-

that the interview was over. He

"Who is next for the inquisition?"

"You might ask your mother to

step in for a moment," McCale an-

swered, wrapped in sudden fury.

she sighed. "It's all so sordidly

Abbey the night before last?" he

"You were seen, you know," he

"I've got a right to go anywhere

want. As for my daughter-in-law,

I often have to be a bit harsh with

A hard, beady look came into her

eyes. Her face sagged as if the

"Did you see him?" McCale prod-

"You didn't see Curt Vallaincourt

"I tell you I didn't go upstairs.

Besides, I went there to get my

son. He had quarreled with Karen

and I was afraid he had started out

on a-a binge." She said it very

McCale wondered what her an-

pointment. "What did you see, yes-

front of this house at the time of

The blow of it visibly staggered

her. Again there was the automat-

ic reaching out for her glass of sher-

ry. She gasped. Her eyes were

filled with sheer terror. Her mouth

"Oh, no," she whimpered. "I was

not there. I wasn't. You're mis-

His voice became hard, his look

insistent. "You wore a gray rain-

coat," he said. "Both Miss Ade-

'No, no-she couldn't have. She

aide and I saw you."

't-hasn't-"

as you had planned, then?"

Stephen had been there.

veneer were about to crack.

Sybil Admits She

Saw the Shooting

turned home."

defiantly.

the murder?"

grew slack.

taken."

her. She neglects my son."

went on. "Your altercation with

your daughter-in-law and your en-

asked without preliminary.

trance into the club."

gave you that absurd idea?"

him to collect himself.

in his question

"Nothing at all."

paused at the door.

he asked mockingly.

tled.

necessary."

into a chair.

not there."

she pleases."

"I'd met her. We all met once or

Sharl Lynn in Chicago.

Veronica, the No. 1 suspect, is

Murder in Plain Sign

"She would not tell you. You those letters though. You even to me. But I saw you, Mrs Bigelow. I know it was you." He waited, tense, as she pulled herself slowly together. She arose

with cold determination.

"Very well, then," she said at last. "I was going to protect her. God knows why. I didn't actually see the shooting. It was foggy, slippery, you know. I have very small feet and sometimes lose my balance. I was picking my way. I had my head down when the shot came. I was so frightened-and for a moment dazed. I didn't know it was Curt. I only saw a man stagger a moment. He seemed to recover himself and walk on-toward me. In my shock I stepped off the twice. But he divorced her, you sidewalk and crossed the street. It was only when he fell to his knees brooding eyes half closed. He looked on our steps that I knew something terrible had happened. It was then I saw Veronica running across

> she drew herself up majestically. "Why didn't you immediately come into the house? I should have

the Common path. Veronica-"

"Oh, but I couldn't. Don't you



"A hard nut to crack," was McCale made of her.

misunderstood, rejected. "If I'd gone right in, everyone would have known, wouldn't they? I'd have had to say I'd seen Veronica. I couldn't do that-I couldn't." McCale wondered why, if she

"Sorry to bother you, Mrs. Bigelow," he said, somewhat disgruncouldn't face telling it then, she was able to be so glib about it now. "I slipped down the other side "Oh, no, I mustn't be spared," of the street to the drugstore for cigarettes. I met Stephen there.

you know-or don't you?" "Why did you go to the White "Yes. I have seen the police re-

ports," he said gravely. "Will you send your daughter in please?" She accepted her dismissal with

"Why, I-I wasn't there . . . I-" The unexpectedness of the attack the air of an actress taking a curmade her forget momentarily her Dostevski role. Quickly she sank tain call. "You're making your farewell

tour." McCale chuckled to himself, his mind busy with her treachery. You never would have guessed that Victoria had been up most of the previous night. The circles under her eyes were no darker than usual. She slunk in, her mouth the same insolent gash of red.

"A hard nut to crack," was all "But you were heard not to be-McCale made of her, as he smiled | The Ugly Plot lieve her when she assured you that the man you came to see was to himself.

"Too bad you weren't able to find your letters in Vallaincourt's apartment last night," he opened. She did not seem startled. She

tossed her dark head. "Oh, you know that, do you? How did that get out?"

"My assistant, who helped you search. He was quite smitten by your charms."

"I told you I did not go to-that "That ox." Her lip curled. "So is, I did go inside the lobby, but he works for you. He told me he decided not to go upstairs. I rewas a policeman."

"Well, he'd make a good one, at that." McCale chuckled. "You'd have recognized him if you'd been home the night before. He was on duty here all that night. Where were you, by the way?" "That's my business."

Those Letters Could Be Damaging swer would have been if she had

not known already that he knew "Perhaps it's mine. Or at least the police may want an explana-He felt he would get nothing of tion. Were you at the Vallaincourt importance from her now that she apartment, by any chance?" was back in the groove of the tragic "My little romp with Curt was role she was determined to play.

over long ago." "One more question, then," he "Was it?" he asked quietly, hard said, to her surprise and disapbunches showing along his jaw. "Yes. Who says it wasn't?" terday afternoon, when you were in

"The red wig you wore when you impersonated your stepsister, Veronica, each time you went there." "You'll have to prove that." Her eyes grew hooded and he saw

her hands tremble. His shot in the dark had been a good one. "Proof?" he said, smiling. don't need to prove it. It's selfevident. I know a lot more about the woman that Curt Vallaincourt |

knew than you can imagine in your wildest dreams." A crooked little smile curled the edges of her mouth.

"Oh, what does it matter, anyhow? We're all sunk. I did want

know that. She has not admitted it what I think? I think you know where they are. I think you could get them for me. Why won't you work for me? I said I'd pay you well. I've got enough money." Her eyes were bright. "What good would that do?"

> the window, and made a quick, pleading gesture. "Shari Lynn has them. She must. You hinted at it the other night. You can act as intermediary-get your cut-anything. Only I've got to have them."

She got up, turned her back to

"Why?" She was impatient in her anxiety, few hundred thouboldly took another task.

"See here"-she came close to him, dropping her voice conspiratorily-"you're working all out for Veronica, aren't you? Now listen. If those letters come out, it will put her in a worse spot than she's baseball. His assistant is Charlie

"I'm sorry, but I don't follow

"Oh, Lord. I thought you said you were a detective. Look. Veronica found out, somehow, that I had known Curt rather well. Don't ask me how. I don't know that. We had a whale of a row over it, but I denied it. Do you see? Now, if they get her for his-his death, and the letters are found, it will prove she was right. Don't you get it? It will give them a motive. If I can get them back, I can destroy them."

He chuckled cynically, striking his hands together with a muttered exclamation. "No," he barked, "not really! Don't tell me, in all seriousness, that you want to protect Veronica?"

"Of course. Why?" "Because it just occurred to me, being a detective, that if you had those letters you might just possibly not destroy them. They make such a swell motive."

He bowed. "Not only that, my loyal young lady, but you seem to think-as a matter of fact, you're practically convinced yourself that Shari Lynn has possession of those letters. Suppose I tell you that the police have them safe under lock and key. Evidence, you know." "It's a lie!"

"Yes," he said, "so far as I know, it is a lie, but how did you know?" She shut her lips together and just glared at him. "You may go," he said uncon-

cernedly. "I'll talk to your sisterquest." A few minutes later, the sound of the piano playing stopped abruptly.

Shortly afterward, the door opened and Karen Bigelow came in. "I think," he observed, "that of The Army-Navy Game all the Bigelows, you belong least

of all to this house." "You mean, perhaps, that I am an acquisition-let us say-an or-

nament?" "Exactly. You can tell me more about them than anyone."

"Oh, but I couldn't." She made a slow, somnolent motion, not so much in horror or disloyalty as of

deadly indifference. "I think you can," he persisted. "Let me tell you what I know to be true. You all were acquainted with Curt Vallaincourt in Chicago-at about the same time Stephen Bigelow was, shall I say, rushing you into matrimony? You knew his wife, too, Sarah Linsky, wasn't itthe present Shari Lynn?"

She was watching him covertly from under her long lashes.

Begins to Show

"I know you finally consented to marry Stephen," he continued. "I'll confess, I've wondered why." She shifted her position imperceptibly, placing her long white hands on her knees. "I had suffered all winter with a

pain here." She touched her arm. "A nervous ailment. I thought then that I would never play again. I thought-" She had thought, of course, that she could forget her music in the bosom of a rich social life. How wrong she had been. She found herself embroiled between a jealous mother-in-law and a jealous husband. She had withdrawn, therefore, to her Nordic hauteur, until boredom and unhappiness had driven her back to the keyboard to find that sheer necessity enabled her to overcome her illness, forced her to play again.

McCale stood very straight and still before the glacial Karen Bigelow. Her hauteur and boredom and complete indifference was beginning to get him.

"Look, Mrs. Bigelow," he said very quietly, "I know that Victoria knew Vallaincourt and that was still going on even after his engagement to Veronica, and that he still saw Shari Lynn as well. I know, too, that you once had some connection with him, because you went to the White Abbey the night before last to buy back some letters from Miss Lynn. They must have been old letters or Vallaincourt would have had them and you would have had to deal with him. The fact that he showed surprise when you made the exchange with his ex-wife proved that."

"What else do you know?" she asked wearily, her voice toneless. "Well-" he hesitated. "I know that your husband also saw the exchange. Did you know that?" (TO BE CONTINUED)



THE hot spot of baseball in 1947 will be the Yankees—the Yankees and Larry MacPhail. For both are hot spots.

Even with a team that finished third last season, the Yankees smashed all past attendance records by

an incredible margin. They were the first major league team in history to pass the two million mark with a sand to spare. But what about 1947? The new man-

ager of the Yankees, Bucky Harris, Bucky Harris is one of the best in

Dressen of the Dodgers, who, among the insiders, is given almost equal credit with Leo Durocher for the remarkable showing of the Dodgers last season. Dressen is one of the most under-

rated men in baseball. He has proved in the past to be an able manager and he has proved with Brooklyn's nimble Dodgers that he could slip into the second slot and still be a star.

The combination of Harris and Dressen should give the Yankees ranking class at the top. Their next problem will be a ball club that can handle the Red Sox-Tiger threat in

MacPhail is not the type to accept a third-place brand with what you might call equanimity. Mac-Phail is too fiery and keen a personage to accept the general verdict that it will take two or three years to bring the Yankees from the barren lands into the uplands, which they held and defended for so long a time.

A team that has Robinson as catcher, plus an able infield-Heinrich at first, Stirnweiss at second, Rizzuto at short and Brown at third-plus DiMaggio, Keller and others in the outfield, can't go badly two years in a row.

What about the pitching? One answer is that Yankee pitching allowed fewer earned runs last season than any other club except the Cardinals. New men will be added and the

present guess is that the Yankees of 1947 will be a long leap beyond the Yankees of 1946. Their hitless postwar dip should be over by now. especially with such normally good hitters as DiMaggio, Rizzuto, Stirnweiss and Heinrich.

Pomp and pageant still mean a lot to this country. Army and Navy at Philadelphia will be a sellout for 104,000 spectators, even if Army figures to win by 40 to 0. Which Army won't do.

While it appears as though there has never been an Army-Navy game that looked as one-sided, it must be remembered that Navy still has good football players. Navy has had a rough road this season, but so has Army. It will be different after 1946. Navy next fall probably will return better material than Army will have.

Navy is taking her postwar sheltacking now. Navy already is passing through her major depression. Army still has one to face, as far as anyone can see. Any team that loses Blanchard, Davis, Foldberg, Poole, Tucker, Fuson and Enos, with only two replacements left from the 1946 starting team, must stare into the shadows for some time to come.

Army-Navy games are always closer than they figure to be. A year ago, Army ran up 21 points against Navy in the early going. Everyone looked for a 40 to 0 count. But after that first crash, Navy had the better of the argument in the last two periods.

So there not only will be an Army-Navy game, but also 104,000 spectators will be on hand to see it. And it can be a much closer meeting than one might predict.

Football vs. Baseball

No matter how peaceful the skyline seems to be, there is always someone taking the joy out of life. Now an inquisitive correspondent wants to know which game draws the greater number of people-football or baseball. He also asks for an exact check on this count. For one thing, baseball has a far

longer season-five and a half months against two and a half months. For another thing there are close to 200 football teams with varying degrees of real drawing power as compared to a considerable less number of baseball teams that can match this collection at the

Big league baseball last season drew close to 18 million customers through the turnstiles. The Yankees drew well over two million admissions in 154 games. No college or pro football team can match this count in nine or 10 games.

Army, Notre Dame, Michigan, Navy, Pennsylvania and Ohio State are among the leaders this fall. They should average around 400,000 spectators each. For example, Army drew 86,000 at Michigan, 80,000 against Notre Dame, 75,000 against Pennsylvania, and will play before 100,000 against Navy.

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ASK ME ANOTHER A General Quiz

1. On what date is the sun far-

thest from the earth? 2. Who made the remark "There is always room at the top" when his father told him his chosen pro-

3. The "widow's mite" spoken of in the Bible was worth how much in our money? 4. The common name for Sagit-

tarius, the ninth sign of the zodiac, is what? 5. How large is the area of Ja-

pan proper? 6. Where is Dutch Harbor? 7. How many rivers are there in the United States that are over

fession was crowded?

1,000 miles long? The Answers

1. On approximately July 4th the sun is farthest from the earth. 2. Daniel Webster.

One-fifth of a cent. 4. The archer.

5. It is 148,756 square miles. 6. Alaska. 7. Ten rivers in the U.S. are over 1,000 miles long.

Your Christmas shopping problem is eased considerably if you have smokers on your list! Select a carton of mild cigarettes or a package of choice smoking tobacco for these friends-practical gifts they are sure to use and enjoy. If you want to be assured your gifts meet ready acceptance, choose Camel Cigarettes or Prince Albert Smoking Tobacco. Each of these long-famous brands are highly respected by discriminating smokers everywhere. Both Camels and Prince Albert are offered in attractive, gay holiday gift wrappings. Right now, dealers are featuring Camels in a popular Christmas carton containing 200 mild, mellow Camels. And Prince Albert -the National Joy Smoke - is available in handy one-pound tins. See them at your dealers.-Adv.

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