

# MURDER By An ARISTOCRAT

Mignon G. Eberhart

Adela looked troubled. I suppose it did not seem fitting—the doctor shouting in that hushed room above the dead body. It was indecorous. She said gently:

"Let me ask her, Daniel. She understands me. Emmeline, how did you happen to find him? Tell us about it."

"I'd been in the summer kitchen all afternoon," said the woman. "I'd been making grape jelly. I wasn't sure the last batch was ready to jell, and I brought some in on a silver spoon to see what you thought. I knew you'd be back from the Benevolent Society by that time. I looked in here as I went past, and I saw him and looked. There he was—all shot to pieces. I ran out on the porch. And there you were. See, I dropped the spoon there."

I suppose all of us looked at the slender silver spoon on the floor near the table, upside down with a little sticky pool of purple under it.

"Did you see anybody during the afternoon? Did anybody enter the house by the back way?"

"Nary a soul all afternoon. Nobody but Higby was near all afternoon."

"Then the thief didn't come that way," said Hilary. "Emmeline's got eyes like a cat. She never misses anything."

"What time was it, Emmeline?" asked Adela, and as Emmeline hesitated she repeated, "Time—what time was it?"

"Just after five. I had just looked at the clock and thought that Florrie ought to be getting back to help with dinner. She knew I was busy with jelly," added Emmeline resentfully.

"Oh, yes," said Adela to Dr. Bouigny. "I forgot Florrie. But it's her afternoon out."

"Can't you tell exactly what time he died, Dan?" asked Hilary. "I thought you doctors could come pretty close to it in such cases."

"Not as close as that," said Dr. Bouigny with honesty. "We can tell within a few hours. But today I only know that he's not been dead more than a few hours at most, and I can't limit the time by the condition of the body. The heat, you see, has kept the body at near its normal heat and has prevented—"

"Hush, Daniel!" It was Adela. "Don't ask such things. Hilary. It's enough if Daniel says so, without going further into the matter. Daniel knows. Now, what else is apt to be covered at the inquest? You know where we all were. What we were doing. Who found the body. The thief must have shot Bayard with—his own revolver and fled. It's all perfectly clear. We all know exactly what happened. There's only the family here, and Emmeline, who is one of us. We all know why it is—"

She stopped abruptly. She was looking at me as if she'd forgotten my existence until that very moment.

Everyone was looking at me. It was very still. Gradually I became aware of the meaning back of that combined look. It was as if they, all of them, stood definitely opposed to me. It was a look of suspicion, of doubt, of apprehension—it was faintly inimical and tinged with defiance, and all these meanings were veiled in polite, cold stillness. I was the outsider. I was the stranger within the walls. Did I threaten them?

The silence was vastly uncomfortable. I said:

"I was about to say, Miss Thatcher, that since my patient—no longer needs me, I shall return at once to the hospital. Is there anything you want me to do before I leave, Dr. Bouigny?"

"Eh? Oh—no. No. Nothing. Nothing at all."

"Very well, then. I'll go at once."

"Oh, yes. Yes, of course. Yes, certainly, Miss Keate. Miss Thatcher will mail you your check."

"No. Wait, please, Miss Keate," said Adela suddenly. "Won't you stay on with me a few days? This—has been a great shock to me. I should be so grateful for your help. We have liked you very much, haven't we, Janice?—Evelyn? It will be a great favor, really, if you find you can stay with me for a few days. There will be so much to see to—such a strain—I am not in the best of health. Daniel—"

"Certainly, Adela. By all means," Dr. Bouigny answered the half command, half appeal, in her voice very promptly. "Certainly. Miss Thatcher is not at all well, Miss Keate. She will need someone like you for a few days. It would be so much better to have you who already—er—know the circumstances. That is—well, won't you stay on?"

In the end I consented, of course, though I did so reluctantly. I felt, too, somewhat vague as to my prospective duties. Only one thing was clear to me and that was that they wanted me there. In the house.

And I did not dream how desperately I was to regret that decision.

"Now then, Hilary," said Dr. Bouigny. "You'd better call the sheriff. It's been almost an hour since—"

"Sheriff! What's wrong? What's that about the sheriff? What—?" Allen Carick came rapidly in from the hall. Tall, lean, brown, his shirt sleeves rolled up, his collar open, his bright hair wavy and wet as if he'd been swimming, his dark blue eyes remarkably like Evelyn's as he looked swiftly around the group. Dave Thatcher followed him closely, and it was Dave who first saw the huddle under the scarf and lunged forward with an incoherent cry and jerked the scarf back before Hilary could stop him.

For a moment he stood there looking; his face became ghastly pale, the hand with which he held the scarf began to tremble. Then he let it fall and dropped into a chair and covered his face with his hands.

He said nothing, but Adela was at his side at once, touching him, talking to him, sending Emmeline for wine, and Hilary was beside him too, telling him over and over that there'd been a robbery, and the burglar had shot Bayard, repeating his words as if to impress them indelibly upon Dave's consciousness. From the study I could hear the doctor's heavy voice telephoning and was subconsciously aware he was calling the sheriff. During the little hubbub I happened to be standing quite near Janice, and I remember Allen Carick stood there, too, and he said in a low voice: "Is that true? Is that what happened?" And I saw the helpless way she turned to him and heard her reply: "I don't know. I don't know. Allen, what should I do?"

"Don't worry. Don't worry," he said, something in his eyes as he looked down at her which I was to remember later. "Dave was fishing with me, remember."

Evelyn touched him on the arm. Her competent brown hand rested there as she spoke.

"The sheriff will be along presently, Janice. I think we ought to get Adela to her room. She can't stand much more of this. Dr. Dan had better call Frank Whiting and

proceeded for. They are: Transportation over definite routes or between fixed termini; transportation between points within a designated area; from a town to other points in the state upon calls; and special certificates.

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have him take care of the body; he'll conduct the funeral, I suppose. I'll tell Emmeline to go ahead with dinner. After all, we have to eat."

"Evelyn," said Hilary from the group by the table, "Dan wants to know if you talked to Bayard when you stopped this afternoon."

I think only I saw that firm brown hand tighten slowly on Allen's arm. Perhaps he felt it.

"No," said Evelyn steadily. "I didn't talk to him. He didn't see me. I just looked into the library, saw Hilary wasn't with him, and left."

"Was Bayard alone, Evelyn?" asked Dr. Bouigny.

"Yes."

"I don't understand how—" Dr. Bouigny interrupted himself and said, "Where were you all this time, Miss Keate?"

"On the lawn," I could not resist adding, "in full view of the house."

"Did you see anyone enter the house?"

"Only Mr. Thatcher and Mrs. Thatcher. No one else. If there was a thief, I didn't see him, and I could see all the front and east side of the house."

Dr. Bouigny was looking thoughtfully at me.

"But—why, you must have heard the shot, Miss Keate. All the windows were open, and it was a quiet afternoon."

"No," I said slowly, "I heard nothing." I had not thought of the fact until his question, and it was with some perplexity that I considered it for a moment while they waited. Even Dave dropped his hands to hear the better what I was going to say. "No," I repeated honestly, "I did not hear the sound of the shot. I can't understand it. It was quiet this afternoon. I heard the front door bang, and from inside the house I heard the telephone ring. I think Bayard must have answered it, for no one else was in the house—I had left him upstairs in his own room, but—"

"He must have come down," interrupted Hilary. "I wonder who talked to him."

"Oh, I called him," said Miss Adela. "I stopped on my way to the Benevolent Society and telephoned from the drug store. I'd forgotten to tell Emmeline that there would be two extra for dinner—you and Evelyn, you know, Hilary—I knew Emmeline wouldn't hear the telephone, but I thought perhaps Miss Keate would reply. But Bayard was down here. He must have been near the telephone."

"I wonder what he was doing down here," said Hilary absently and was about to say more, I think, when there was a long peal at the door bell.

"That's the sheriff," said Dr. Bouigny. "Well, there's one thing. You've all got alibis."

"Why, no, not all," said Evelyn. "I don't seem to have, and I'm the one who saw him last. But I assure you I didn't—"

She tried to say, "Shoot him," I suppose, but she looked at the huddle under the scarf and choked.

Allen put his arm around her protectingly, and Hilary cried, "Don't be a perfect idiot, Evelyn, we all know you didn't kill him," and Emmeline appeared at the doorway with the sheriff. Hilary and the doctor and the sheriff all began to talk at once, and Evelyn and Janice were urging Adela toward the door. It was a good time, I thought to myself, to telephone to the hospital for the extra uniforms I would need. I had expected to be on the case only a day or so, and had made my preparations accordingly.

I turned toward the little study at the end of the library. The town boasted automatic telephones, and I had some difficulty in dialing and more difficulty in making the superintendent understand what I wanted. It was very quiet in the little room with the door to the library closed; quiet and tranquil. Impossible

to believe that in the next room lay a murdered man, dead on the rug, his eyes closed, his hands—Wait! His eyes closed!

His eyes closed—But the eyes of the dead do not close voluntarily. Someone must close them.

"Hello, hello!" shrilled a voice in my ear.

I gave my message somewhat incoherently and put down the telephone. Full of my discovery, I rose, and in the very act of rising my cap slid off of my head and I made another discovery which was almost to push the first from my mind.

I bent to pick up my cap and the pin which had slipped out from it. The cap had fallen on the rug—a handsome affair all in deep red with a touch of blue and gold; I believe it was called a Sarouk.

Strange that it was damp. That the one spot where my cap had fallen was wet to my touch.

I pushed my fingers down against the silky nap and brought them away again.

There was blood on the rug. It had soaked into the thick nap.

But it was the wrong rug.

CHAPTER V

That tragic figure lay on a rug in the library. If he'd been shot here, in the little study, he couldn't possibly have got to the library rug before he fell. I knew that he had died at once. Why, then, was there blood on the Sarouk? And why were his eyes closed? There wasn't any niche for either fact in the story as I had heard it; no conceivable relation to the sequence of events as they'd been rehearsed by the Thatchers and Dr. Bouigny. Yet there was blood on that rug.

The opening of the door and a strange voice—that of the sheriff, I found—saying, "Well, let's have a look at the safe," aroused me. Dr. Bouigny, Hilary, and the sheriff crowded into the small room and around the safe. The sheriff bent to examine it with what seemed to me a rather exaggerated air of professionalism, and I walked quietly back of them and into the library.

My footsteps on the rug were inaudible. Allen Carick did not look up until I stopped abruptly, and he became aware of my presence. He, the only one left in the room with the dead body, was kneeling beside it, going rapidly—feverishly, in fact—through the pockets of the dressing gown and trousers. And the curious thing about it was that even when he felt my astounded gaze and looked up at me he did not stop his search. He only gave me an abstractedly annoyed glance and shot a quick look at the door to the study and shifted the weight of the body a little so he could reach another pocket. Then, frowning and breathing rather quickly, he got to his feet, gave me another annoyed look, as if he didn't like my witnessing his occupation but was too engrossed with far more urgent anxieties to do anything about it, walked swiftly to the door into the hall, and disappeared.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

### DO YOU AGREE?

The Victor Dog, all tricked out now, Comes upon the stage; In radio ads he broadcasts o'er The advertising page.

Gone is the old time Victor horn, For lo: the little like Is up to date, and now is posed Before a trusty milke.

You well recall, "His master's voice," The dog with lifted ears And tilted head, all ecstasy At what he surely hears.

That pooch was real and all alive, Intent and Oh! so glad; The new one is, or so it seems, But just another ad.

—Sam Page.

### Germ, Not Gem.

From Sydney Bulletin. Hubby: You know, I don't like all this metaphorical stuff. I wonder what this writer means by "gems of thought?"

Wife: Oh, something like that ring you're always promising to buy me.

fall was found. The fall was 27 feet wide.

### Heading Him Off.

From Lustige Kolner Zeitung. "Jones is a rotten sort of chap. I asked him to lend me five dollars for a few days and he absolutely refused."

"My dear man, this club's full of men like that. I'm another of them."

The first bale of cotton exported from the United States to Europe was shipped from Charleston, S. C., in 1784.

## Preacher Finds "Magic" Aids in Church Work

A clergyman who employs magic to illustrate his sermons has been discovered at Philadelphia in Rev. Dr. John C. Bierl, pastor of the Columbia Avenue Methodist Episcopal church.

Doctor Bierl, whose collection of the "black art" numbers more than 300 tricks, is a member of the Philadelphia Ring No. 6, International Brotherhood of Magicians. At the annual conference of the Keystone State Federation of Magicians, held in Lancaster, Pa., he won second prize for a "handkerchief routine" in verse.

Magic is more than a hobby with this preacher of the gospel, who says the art is being used, though not from the pulpit, by an increasing number of ministers in club and church entertainments and especially for children's classes.

While the pastor's object lessons are designed for small children, he often finds them useful to persons "up to seventy." He illustrates the washing away of sin by placing a red silk handkerchief in a velvet bag, and extracting a handkerchief "white as snow." One of his tricks is to keep a tiny charge of toy gunpowder in a heavy ring and explode the charge during the process of hand-shaking.

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription makes weak women strong. No alcohol. Sold by druggists in tablets or liquid.—Adv.

### Unworthy Humans

Some do good, in order that they may do evil with impunity.

## NEW RADIO DEVICE

A new radio apparatus, especially designed for ships without wireless installation, gives the distress signal and the location of the ship by means of a spark transmitter supplied with current by a hand-driven dynamo.

### NASAL IRRITATION

Relieve all dryness and irritation by applying Mentholatum night and morning.

## MENTHOLATUM

### BRACE UP!

Try this "nightcap"

Lazy muscles mean that poisonous intestinal wastes are sapping your energy. Why continue feeling run-down and sluggish? A "nightcap" of Garfield Tea, for several weeks will put you "on your feet!" (At all druggists).

SAMPLE FREE: Garfield Tea Co., P. O. Brooklyn, N. Y.

## GARFIELD Tea

A Natural Laxative Drink

## HOW TO STOP A COLD QUICK AS YOU CAUGHT IT

A New Method Doctors Everywhere Are Advising

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS PICTURED BELOW



### Almost Instant Relief In This Way

If you have a cold—don't take chances with "cold killers" and nostrums. A cold is too dangerous to take chances on.

The simple method pictured above is the way doctors throughout the world now treat colds.

It is recognized as the QUICK-EST, safest, surest way. For it will check an ordinary cold almost as fast as you caught it.

That is because the real BAYER Aspirin embodies certain medical qualities that strike at the base of a cold almost INSTANTLY.

You can combat nearly any cold you get simply by taking BAYER Aspirin and drinking plenty of water every 2 to 4 hours the first day and 3 or 4 times daily thereafter. If throat is sore, gargle with 3 BAYER Aspirin Tablets crushed

and dissolved in a half glass of warm water, repeating every 2 or 3 hours as necessary. Sore throat eases this way in a few minutes, incredible as this may seem.

Ask your doctor about this. And when you buy, see that you get the real BAYER Aspirin Tablets. They dissolve almost instantly. And thus work almost instantly when you take them. And for a gargle, Genuine Bayer Aspirin Tablets dissolve with speed and completeness, leaving no irritating particles or grittiness. Get a box of 12 or bottle of 24 or 100 at any drug store.



Ask your druggist about the recent price reduction on the 100 tablet size Bayer Aspirin.

BAYER  
NO TABLETS ARE GENUINE BAYER ASPIRIN WITHOUT THIS CROSS

## WOMAN LOST 20 POUNDS IN 4 WEEKS

Mrs. Mae West of St. Louis, Mo., writes: "I'm only 28 yrs. old and weighed 170 lbs. until taking one box of your Kruschen Salts just 4 weeks ago. I now weigh 150 lbs. I also have more energy and further have I've never had a hungry moment." Fat folks should take one half teaspoonful of Kruschen Salts in a glass of hot water in the morning before breakfast—it's the SAFE, harmless way to reduce as tens of thousands of men and women know. For your health's sake ask for and get Kruschen at any drugstore—the cost for a bottle that lasts 4 weeks is but a trifle and if after the first bottle you are not joyfully satisfied with results—money back.

ADVERTISING is as essential to business as is rain to growing crops. It is the keystone in the arch of successful merchandising. Let us show you how to apply it to your business.

### FIGHT COLDS 2 WAYS

## Mistol

FOR NOSE AND THROAT

Essence of Mistol ON HANDKERCHIEF AND PILLOW

## DON'T GET UP At Night

If you are one of the millions who must get up several times a night, your trouble is probably due to an irritation of the bladder or excess acidity of the urine. Then just try

### GOLD MEDAL HAARLEM OIL CAPSULES

During 237 years this fine old preparation has helped millions. Insist on Gold Medal, 35¢.

## NEW RULES TO GOVERN TRUCKS

Harrisburg, Pa. — (UP) — The new rules governing common carriers of property by motor vehicles, adopted by the Public Service Commission, became effective with between 10,000 and 25,000 trucks in the state affected. Four classes of certificates were

procided for. They are: Transportation over definite routes or between fixed termini; transportation between points within a designated area; from a town to other points in the state upon calls; and special certificates. The Commission also made provision for issuing certificates without advertisement in the case of trucks confining their work within limits of a municipality and its environs. This exception applies to third class cities and all smaller municipalities.

## 90 Foot Underground Waterfall Discovered

Decorah, Iowa — (UP) — A 90-foot waterfall 300 feet below the surface of the ground has been discovered here.

The discovery was made when a group of Decorah men explored a subterranean passage found by some boys several years ago. As the explorers made their way downward larger caverns branching off the passage were found. In one of these the water-

fall was found. The fall was 27 feet wide.