

MURDER By An ARISTOCRAT

Mignon G. Eberhart

"But I do know. I know. Why don't you tell me the truth? None of you will tell me. I feel you are all keeping something back. You and Hilary and Evelyn—all of you. As if I were a helpless old woman. And I'm not. It's my house. It's my family. I must know." Adela's blunt white hands were shaking. It was the only time I saw her drop that impregnable shield of dignity with which she faced her family and the world.

Her appeal touched Janice. I could see the girl's face soften; I felt she was about to speak. It was curiously tantalizing, like a play, that Evelyn should appear in the doorway at exactly that moment and enter.

Both Adela and Janice turned at the sound of her footsteps. Evelyn's dark blue eyes went rapidly from one to the other. She said, as Janice had said:

"Is anything wrong?"

"No," said Janice.

"Yes," said Adela. "Why will none of you help me? I can't do this alone."

Evelyn did not ask what she grasped the situation at once, I think. Perhaps Adela's amazing moment of weakness shocked her as it did me.

"We'll do anything we can to help you, Adela," she said calmly. "Good heavens, it's warm this afternoon! Can't Emmeline make us some iced tea? Never mind, Adela, I'll speak to her."

It was very still in the library while Evelyn walked with her customary long, graceful strides to the door. Emmeline must have been near, for we could clearly hear Evelyn's concise directions. Adela turned away from Janice and sat down again in her high-backed chair and resumed at once her beads and her dignity.

And Janice, white and still, stood by the table, touching and arranging the roses in the big green bowl, with hands that trembled a little. Her eyes were still dark and wide and touched with horror, and I think she did not quite know what she was doing. Then Evelyn was back in the room, tossing her hat onto a chair and sitting down with a sigh.

"Now, then," she said, coolly matter-of-factly, "what is it you want me to do, Adela?"

"I only want you to tell me the truth, Evelyn," said Adela deliberately. She was again complete mistress of herself. "That is the only way in which I can prove—" She stopped, touched me with her cold blue eyes, and resumed, "We have no need to fear the truth."

Evelyn's clear eyes went to me, too. She took off her gloves, stripping them off her brown hands with two quick gestures, touched her straight gold hair to be sure it was smooth and said:

"I've just been up at the house. There was a letter from the boys. And one from Aunt Hetty. Allen and Hilary drove over with me; they are outside. They'll be in, in a moment—here they are now."

"Good Lord, it's hot," said Hilary. He was pink and coatless, with dampish spots on his shirt.

Allen took Adela's hand gently. "Sit down, Allen," said Adela. "You have come in good time. I want you—all of you—to help me."

Something in her voice caught Hilary's quick attention. He stopped wiping his face with his handkerchief, glanced swiftly at Adela and sharply at me, and said at once:

Indian Preacher, of Shaker Faith, Dead

Hood River, Ore.—(UP)—Sam Williams is dead. An ancient Indian preacher of the rare Shaker faith, he was a familiar figure in this region for many years. He was buried with tribal honors at Momalose Island, in the Columbia river, near here.

Williams erected a unique church near The Dalles, where he owned considerable property. Each Thanksgiving day he gave a gigantic muligan feed to all who

"Certainly, Adela. Certainly."

"You see," said Adela, "I think we owe it to ourselves to prevent—any talk there may be about—Bayard's death."

The last two words came out rather jerkily, as if with tremendous effort on Adela's part. The room was very still for a moment—still, yet echoing those two words: Bayard's death. Bayard's death. It was as if it said: I know which of you killed him; are you going to tell? Are you going to be trapped?

"Any unpleasant talk," said Adela rather stiffly and stuck again, looking rather helplessly at Evelyn. And Evelyn, blessedly direct, said:

"You mean people are apt to hint that one of us killed Bayard? Why, of course, they will. Probably have already. People aren't going to pass up such a chance for talk. I think that's very wise of you, Adela. It's a good thing to prove to our own or any outsider's satisfaction that none of us killed him. Isn't that what you mean?"

"Why—why, yes," said Adela, taken rather off her feet, I think, by Evelyn's blunt stating of the situation.

"Go right ahead, Adela," said Hilary a bit pompously. "I am ready for any inquiry you—or anyone else—choose to make." He addressed Adela and looked at me. I'm sure that even if I had not overheard that family conference I would have known what they were attempting to do. Well, I might spare Janice if I could; I might even keep the affair of the diamonds a secret. But Hilary was, so to speak, a horse of another color.

"Indeed," continued Hilary. "You might like me to undertake this—er—inquiry. I'm more accustomed to matters of this sort."

"Thank you, Hilary," said Adela tartly. "I'll do it myself. The point just now is to get you all to tell me the truth. Not to try to hide things from me. We don't fear the truth, Hilary, where was Bayard when you last talked to him?"

"Here in the library."

"What did you talk of?"

"Why, nothing much. I asked him how he felt. If there was anything I could do for him. Ah, here's Emmeline with some iced tea. It certainly looks good." It seemed to me his gusto was a little forced.

shrdlu shrdlu shrdlu shrdlu Ice tinkled in the tall glasses. Emmeline, tall and black and spotlessly aproned, passed the tray. The interruption gave us all a little rest from the growing tension. Adela sipped her tea delicately, slowly. As Emmeline put the tray on the table and went away, she said:

"You and Bayard had had no trouble, had you, Hilary? If you had, you know, someone is bound to have heard of it. There are no secrets in C—"

"No, of course not," said Hilary. He gulped some tea and continued: "That is, no more than we'd always had, and you know all about that. He wanted more money, but you knew that. He always wanted money. He'd been bleeding us white for years."

"Hilary! Don't use such coarse expressions." Adela was chalk gray. She set her glass carefully on the table and touched the turquoise beads. "It's quite true, Miss Keate. I suppose everyone in the county knows that Bayard was—a source of much anxiety and trouble to us. He—"

"He was an out-and-out scoundrel," said Hilary,

would come, transients and others, Indians and whites.

Aged Mayor Drinks Ocean Water Daily

Santa Cruz, Cal.—(UP)—The old saying of the shipwrecked sailor, "water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink," fails to hold true in the case of Mayor Fred Swanton of Santa Cruz.

The mayor, who is nearly 70 years old, but looks about 45, has been drinking ocean water for many years. He attributes his

flushing as if the bare memory infuriated him. "Time after time we gave him money, started him in some kind of business, tried to establish him. He always failed, squandered the money, came back for more. And he always worked around us somehow to get it. If he couldn't appeal to our sympathies he—" Hilary stopped abruptly, the frightened look coming into his eyes as they went quickly to Evelyn.

"Perhaps you don't know, Miss Keate," said Evelyn, "how difficult it is to have someone like that in the family. We couldn't permit him to disgrace our name. To do the things he would threaten to do. And then besides—I think we may as well tell her the whole truth about it, Hilary."

"Nonsense. There's no need."

"I think there is. You see, Miss Keate, when Hilary was a boy he did something very silly. It was when he and Dave and Bayard were all in prep school together."

"Do you think there's really any need to tell that, Evelyn?" asked Adela, her face looking old and shrunken, her blunt white hands pulling the beads back and forth, back and forth.

"Yes," said Evelyn sensibly. "It can't do us any harm. We all know about it, and Hilary found the check in Bayard's things and destroyed it. And if we don't tell Miss Keate the truth after having gone so far, she'll think it was something much worse than it is. It was only a boyish scrape, Miss Keate. Hilary had to have some money for something—something that seemed terribly urgent to him then."

"We'd been playing cards—gambling a little," said Hilary, looking pompous and blustering and as shamefaced as if he were a boy in his teens again. "I lost, and the kid I owed threatened to tell the Head if I didn't pay him. He—this kid—was leaving school anyhow, so he didn't care. But I knew I'd be expelled. And I didn't have a cent, and Adela would never send checks between our allowance checks unless she knew why we wanted extra money and approved of it. Bayard—how I don't know—had some money in the bank, and I—well, I forged his name on a check." He wiped his face again. It was strange to hear that man, with sons of his own, confessing the boyhood scrape. "It was only a small amount. We'd often amused ourselves—you know how kids are—writing and imitating each other's signatures. But Bayard—Bayard kept the check. It was written in pencil; he erased the date and amount and kept it all these years, threatening to fill it out for a larger amount, a recent date, and prosecute. He couldn't have got far with it—still I'm not sure. It would have raised an awful stink."

"Hilary!" said Adela in faint protest.

"Well, you know, Adela, there'd have been plenty of people to jump at the chance to discredit me. For a banker it would have been—" "Then he was using that check to bring pressure just now?" I said.

Hilary looked at me uncomfortably.

"Yes. He wanted a large sum of money. Larger than I could give him. He thought it was a good time to squeeze."

"But Hilary, you didn't quarrel with him. That last afternoon."

"No, Adela," said Hilary heavily. "I didn't quarrel with him."

"You didn't—" it was Allen, standing at the window, his back to us, speaking rather softly. "You didn't shoot him, for that."

Hilary leaped to his feet, his plump face crimson again.

"God, no! He was a scoundrel. A disgrace to the family. But I wouldn't have killed

healthy old age to it. Swanton drinks a glass of ocean water every day as a tonic.

He is planning a trip to Europe this summer, and will take a big bottle of ocean water with him to be used on the continent. On shipboard he doesn't anticipate much trouble obtaining his daily glass of salt water.

Fewer Automobiles Registered in 1931

Washington — (UP) — Fewer automobiles operated in the

him. Good God, I couldn't do that."

"You left him alive," said Evelyn quickly. "As I found him. Remember, Allen, that I was the last one to see Bayard alive. That was after Hilary had talked to him."

Allen turned suddenly away from the window, walked to Evelyn, and put his hand under her chin, looking down at her upturned face and smiling a little into the steady dark blue eyes so like his own. The two bright heads shone above the two brown faces.

"That's all right then," he said. "We all know you didn't shoot him."

"Then," said Hilary, "Bayard was alive when Evelyn left him. Dead when Emmeline found him not an hour later. No one of the family saw him during that time—" "You are wrong, Hilary," said Janice. "I have just told Adela that when I returned from the farm and came into the house a few moments ahead of Adela I found him dead. I saw him dead before Emmeline found him."

"Janice—" Allen was at her side. We'd have been blind, all of us, not to have seen the love and fear in his face. But she pushed him away with steady hands.

"No, I didn't shoot him. But I'm glad he's dead. I think we ought to stop this talk. We ought not to try to discover who did it. If it was one of the family, how much better not to—"

"But, Janice," said Adela hoarsely, as if her throat and mouth were numb, "it was not one of the family. It was the burglar. We are only proving—"

"You ought not to have started this, Adela," said Hilary agitatedly. "Better let sleeping dogs lie."

"You'll have to let me do as I think best," said Adela. "You were going to tell me, Janice, about the revolver."

"The revolver!" cried Hilary, bouncing to his feet again. "What revolver? What about it?"

"I—I warned you not to ask me, Adela," said Janice. Allen's hands went out to hers.

"Don't talk, Janice. Don't say anything—"

"Hush, Allen. The revolver—was on the floor—beside Bayard. I put it in the egg basket—to hide it."

"The egg basket!" cried Hilary, quite frantic with bewilderment. "What on earth are you talking about? What do you mean? For heaven's sake, speak up! Why did you hide it?"

"Why did I hide it?" repeated Janice, as if we should have known. "Why, you see," she said helplessly, "it was Dave's. Dave's revolver. He'd already shot Bayard once with it."

"Janice—Dave didn't kill Bayard." Adela was on her feet, her eyes like ice, her thickish body swaying a little. "You are out of your senses."

"Now, Adela, wait. It was natural for Janice to think it might have been Dave who shot him." Allen was speaking rapidly, trying to get Adela's attention. Giving them all time, I thought. "If she came in, saw Bayard had been shot, was dead, saw Dave's revolver, of course her first thought would be that Dave might have shot him. She's not saying he did. She doesn't think Dave killed Bayard. She only acted hurriedly. Her first thought was to hide the revolver. To conceal the fact. She acted," said Allen gravely and rather sadly, "only as a loyal wife. You ought to be the last to reproach her for it."

Evelyn nodded.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

From Tale Spins. Mrs. Newlywed. (Indignantly): I don't like to mention it, dear, but there seems to be something wrong about these biscuits.

Mrs. Newlywed, triumphantly: That shows how much you know about biscuits—the cook book says they are delicious!

United States last year than in 1931, according to the federal bureau of public roads. A total of 24,136,879 motor vehicles were registered in 1932, a decline of 6.6 per cent from the year before.

The state of Washington alone showed an increase, with 446,001 cars registered, a jump of 6 per cent. The declines were largest in Arkansas, 24.5 per cent; Mississippi, 18.8 per cent; South Dakota, 16.1 per cent.

The nests of bald or golden eagles weigh from 10 to 12 pounds.

Well-Guarded Sonny Boy



Golden-haired Sonny Raymond Bishop, Jr., doesn't have to be scared of kidnapers—or anyone else, for that matter while he has this formidable bodyguard. He is showing off the powerful great danes, Top Sergeant Cherry and Tiger King, prize dogs at the seventh annual show of the Morris and Essex Kennel Club at Madison, N. J.

GLORIFYING YOURSELF

By Alicia Hart

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GO RIGHT AFTER BEAUTY THIS SUMMER

Whether you're lucky enough to get away or not this summer, make it as much a vacation time as possible!

It's all in the planning. And don't forget that the energy and repose you store away in your system this summer is just that much velvet on the road to beauty next winter.

For the healthy, vibrant person is really the beautiful one. Features don't make a bit of difference in the long run. Nor does color of hair or eyes. It's the spirit and contentment that you radiate that makes folks think you beautiful.

Go after beauty this summer. The first step toward beauty-health this summer is to keep as cool as possible. Wear the light-

est clothes you can, and this means one of those summer girdles, if you wear one. They don't cost much. And keeping cool through the waistline and over the hips is something, on a torrid day. When you get home nights from work, peel off your things and take a dip and then get into a minimum of clothes. Go barefooted. If your family will stand it. If they won't wear barefoot sandals. The more air you get onto your body, the better will be your health. Sneak out by yourself, find a nice spot, and get a sunbath, every chance you get. Long after winter has settled down to freeze you, the glow from summer sunbaths will still keep you feeling good.

Sheriff Halted Civic Improvement Program

Augusta, Mont.—(UP)—It took Sheriff Arthur C. Parsons to halt an ambitious civic improvement program started by Augusta residents.

The sheriff received numerous complaints Augusta citizens were tearing up the sidewalks of the nearly deserted town of Gilman, and transferring them to their own community.

Parsons informed the Augusta city fathers the "city beautiful" campaign would have to stop until Lewis and Clark county commissioners approved the transfer of sidewalks.

Man's Job Is a "Snap" —He Turns Off Lights

Oklahoma City, Okla.—(UP)—Clarence P. Craig, 54, turned-off of lights in downtown store show windows, has a job that is almost a perpetual "snap."

For 16 years he has made nightly rounds to an average of 300 stores, accumulating a total of approximately 1,700,000 twists of light-switches to the "off" position.

During Craig's long years on the job he has walked an estimated 350,400 miles around town, wearing the soles off a pair of shoes once each two months.

Old German Jig-Saw Puzzle Puzzles Church

Perrysburg, Ohio.—(UP)—Jig-saw puzzles are nothing new in the life of Rev. Peter Kluepel, 67, who brought a homemade puzzle over from Germany when he came to this country 47 years ago. The puzzle contains 649 pieces, and is so difficult that members of his congregation are having trouble piecing it together.

Rev. Kluepel spends a great deal of time in his workshop, and makes about three puzzles a week. He also has found time to publish a book of hymns. He is president of the Ohio Lutheran conference and a trustee of Capitol university.

Spotting a Winner?



To see the very latest in feminine fashions visit a race track. Here is Mrs. Harold E. Talbot, noted society leader, pictured at Belmont Park, N. Y., in a sporty ensemble composed of a white glove silk dress, trimmed with polka dot material, with gloves, scarf and hat band matching.

Inventor of Autogiro Exhibits New Airplane

London.—(UP)—A new and simplified autogiro, wingless and rudderless, recently was demonstrated by its inventor, Senor de la Cierwa, at Hanworth Airdrome.

The machine is capable of 100 miles per hour, but also can travel so slowly as to be out run by an ordinary man.

With only a couple of tail-fins and one under-fin in the body near the tail, the machine can change motion in any direction—

upward, downward, sideways—merely by the tilting of its big horizontal rotors. So easily controlled is it that it can be made to jump over obstacles on the ground like a grasshopper, and can land or take off almost vertically.

It is understood that the air ministry has decided to order a large autogiro of the new type, to carry four or five passengers.

Planes having their base on Mayo Lake, 190 miles east of Dawson, are used to transport food and dogs to Alaskan gold mines.