

SYNOPSIS

Philo Vance, famous detective, and John F. X. Markham, district attorney for New York county, are dining in Vance's apartment when Vance receives an anonymous telephone message informing him of a "disturbing psychological tension at Professor Ephriam Garden's apartment" advising that he read up on radio-active sodium, consult a passage in the Aeneid and counseling that "Equanimity is essential." Professor Garden is famous in chemical research. The message, decoded by Vance, reminds him that Professor Garden's son Floyd and his puny cousin, Woode Swift, are addicted to horse-racing. Vance says that "Equanimity" is a horse running next day in the Rivermont handicap.

## CHAPTER I-Continued

"Therefore, we get the results that the sender of the message is a docfills these conditions, and who, inci- a horsey gentleman from some obdentally, is middle-aged and cul- scure estate on Long Island. Lattured and highly judicial-Currie's er we'll be joined by various memdescription, y'know - is Miles bers of the sporting set, and togeth-Siefert. And, added to this simple deduction, I happen to know that fascinatin' pastime of laying wag-Siefert is a Latin scholar-I once ers on the thoroughbreds." encountered him at the Latin society club-rooms. Another point in my favor is the fact that he is the Telegraph. family physician of the Gardens and would have ample opportunity to quite. It's been years since I handiknow about the galloping horsesand perhaps about Equanimity in particular-in connection with the Garden Household."

"That being the case," Markham protested, "why don't you phone the gambling on the races, I had back of his cryptography?"

"My dear Markham - oh, my the medical profession are most fantastic; and Siefert, as becomes the subject. From the fact that he been known. communicated with me in this roundabout way I rather suspect urday afternoon. And aside from that some grotesque point of honor is involved. Perhaps his conscience overcame him for the moment, and he temporarily relaxed his adher- first mature sentimental episode, so ence to what he considers his code far as I had ever observed, in of honor . . . No, no, that course | Vance's life. For once, the cold imwouldn't do at all. I must ferret undoubtedly wishes me to do."

"But what is this matter that you feel called upon to ferret out?" persisted Markham. "Granting all you say. I still don't see how you can regard the situation as in any way serious."

"One never knows, does one?"

fond of the horses myself, don't y'know." Markham seemed to relax and

of mood. "And what do you propose to do?"

he asked good naturedly. Vance looked up whimsically.

swer."

often lay beneath the other's most mental reactions. frivolous remarks.

"Are you planning to break the law?" he asked.

moment.

slightest trace of lightness. "I'll do in Woode. You know Swift, I be- lensed pince-nez glasses emphasized what I can for you. What's it to lieve, Vance. Queer crab, Woody." the impression he gave of physical

Vance took another sip of the Napoleon.

announced with a half smile, "I'm mater seem inordinately fond of going to the Gardens' penthouse to- him-sorry for him, perhaps; or Vance, the eminent sleuth; and this morrow afternoon and play the maybe he's the kind of serious, horses with the younger set."

that night, Vance's mood changed. but we have little in common ex-A troubled look came into his eyes, cept the horses. Only, he takes room pensively.

mured, as if talking to himself. "I don't at all like it. Siefert isn't end." the type to make a mysterious phone call like that, unless he has a covertly during this rambling revery good reason for doing so. It's cital of domestic intimacies. quite out of character, don't y'know. and no end ethical. There must be happening here this afternoon,' why the Gardens' apartment? The been acting queer for the past couways struck me as at least super- sorrow was gnawing at his mind." ficially normal-and now a man as

about it to the extent of indulging

in shillin'-shocker technique. It's deuced queer."

He stopped pacing the floor and looked at the clock.

"I think I'll make the arrangements. A bit of snoopin' is highly indicated.'

He went into the anteroom, and a moment later I heard him dialing a number on the telephone. When he returned to the library he seemed to have thrown off his depression. His manner was almost

"We're in for an abominable lunch tomorrow, Van," he announced, pouring himself another pony of cognac. "And we must torture ourselves with the viands at a most ungodly hour-noon. What a time to ingest even good food!" He sighed. "We're lunching with young tor whom I know and one who is Garden at his home. Woode Swift aware of my acquaintance with the | will be there and also an insuffer-Gardens. The only doctor who ful- able creature named Lowe Hammle, er we'll indulge in that ancient and

He rang for Currie and sent him out to fetch a copy of the Morning

"One should be prepared. Oh, capped the horses."

Although I was well aware that Vance had some serious object in lunching with young Garden the following day and in participating in him and find out exactly what's not the slightest suspicion, at the time, of the horrors that were to follow. On the afternoon of April dear Markham! Siefert would not 14 occurred the first grim act of one only indignantly repudiate any of the most atrocious multiple knowledge of the message, but crimes of this generation. And to would automatically become the Doctor Siefert must go, in a large first obstacle in any bit of pryin' I measure, the credit for the identifimight decide to do. The ethics of cation of the criminal, for had he not sent his cryptic and anonymous message to Vance, the his unique position, is a fanatic on truth would probably never have

I shall never forget that fatal Satthe brutal Garden murder, that afternoon will always remain memorable for me because it marked the personal attitude of his analytical an attractive woman.

## CHAPTER II

Shortly before noon the next day beautiful skyscraper apartment, and were cordially, and a little ex-

Floyd Garden was a man in his on the horses?" early thirties, erect and athletically fitted his manner to Vance's change | built. He was about six feet tall, with powerful shoulders and a slender waist. His hair was almost the vehemently. "And that's anoth-His manner, while easy and casual, the golliwogs we're harboring are "The public prosecutor of New and with a suggestion of swagger, due to Woode's cuckoo state of York—that noble defender of the was in no way offensive. He was mind, but there are other queer inrights of the common people—to not a handsome man: his features visible animals springing up and wit: the Honorable John F-X. Mark- were too rugged, his eyes set too down the corridors. I can't figure ham-must grant me immunity and close together, his ears protruded it out. The mater's illness doesn't protection before I'll consent to an- too much, and his lips were too make sense either. And there's fun-Markham's eyelids drooped a lit- charm, and there was a quiet sub- among the gang that drifts in here tle as he studied Vance. He was merged competency in the way he nearly every afternoon to play the familiar with the erious import that moved and in the rapidity of his races."

"There are only five of us for

He pondered a moment with a wry face

"Can't figure out just how he fits "Well, Markham old dear," he into this household. Dad and the sensitive guy they wish I'd turned retiring chronicler." As soon as Markham had left us out to be. I don't dislike Woode, "I don't like it, Van," he mur- wins or losses mean a lot to him. Of course, he'll go broke in the

Vance had been watching Garden

"I know you hate mysteries, and He's a dashed conservative chap, there's apt to be some funny things something worrying him deeply. But | Garden continued. "Woode has domestic atmosphere there has al- ple of weeks, as if some secret "Any specific psychopathic sympdependable as Siefert gets jittery toms?" Vance asked lightly.

"No-o." Garden pursed his lips grin; then he added aggressively: Maintenon of France.

developed a curious habit of going poured himself another drink. upstairs to the roof-garden as soon as he's placed a large bet, and he remains there alone until the result of the race has come through."

"Nothing very unusual about ing one cigarette after another. But that." Vance made a deprecatory she's sitting up. She'll probably be motion with his hand. "Many gam- in later to take a crack or two at blers, d' ye see, are like that."

"You're probably right," Garden hot for a horse."

occurrences this afternoon?" Garden shrugged.

"The fact is," he replied, after a heavily of late, and today's the day of the big Rivermont Handicap. I have a feeling he's going to put Mr. Van Dine." every dollar he's got on Equanimity, who'll undoubtedly be the favorite . . Equanimity!" He snorted with

undisguised contempt. "That raillugger! Probably the second greatest horse of modern times - but what's the use?"

He looked up solemnly.

it Equanimity doesn't come in. It noon's Rivermont Handicap. got me worried. To tell you the ers at the table. truth, I'm glad you picked this day to' sit in with us "

he's a rail-lugger because of any scarf and a black felt toque. innate passion for wood . But as you were sayin', the psychological situation hereabout has you worried. I gather there's a supercharged atmosphere round this charmin' aerie."

"That's it, exactly," Garden answered almost eagerly. "Supercharged is right. Nearly every day the mater asks, 'How's Woody?'



A Slight, Pallid Young Man.

And when the old gentleman comes out the matter for myself-as he mind melted before the appeal of home from his lab at night he greets me with a left-handed 'Well, my boy, have you seen Woody to-

Vance made no comment on these remarks. Instead he asked in a pewe arrived at Professor Garden's culiarly flat voice: "Do you consider this recent hyper-tension in the household due entirely to your drawled Vance. "Still, I'm rather uberantly, greeted by young Gar- cousin's financial predicament and his determination to risk all he has

Garden started slightly and then

settled back in his chair. "No, damn it!" he answered a litblack, and his complexion swarthy. er thing that bothers me. A lot of thin. But he had an undeniable ny business of some kind going on

At this moment we heard the sound of light footsteps coming up lunch, Vance," he remarked breezi- the hall, and in the archway, which ly. "The old gentleman is fussing constituted the entrance from the "Oh, yes-quite," he admitted with his test-tubes and Bunsen burn- hall into the drawing-room, apnonchalantly. "Jailable offense, I ers at the university; the mater is peared a slight, pallid young man having a grand time playing sick. of perhaps thirty, his head drawn Markham studied him for another But Pop Hammle is coming-rum into his slightly hunched shoulders, old bird, but a good sport; and we'll and a melancholy, resentful look on "All right," he said, without the also be burdened with beloved cous- his sensitive, sallow face. Thickweakness.

Garden waved his hand cheerily

to the newcomer. "Greetings, Woody. Just in time for a spot before lunch. You know is Mr. Van Dine, his patient and

Woode Swift acknowledged our presence in a strained but pleasant manner, and listlessly shook and he walked up and down the his betting too seriously to suit me hands with his cousin. Then he -he hasn't much money, and his picked up a bottle of Bourbon and poured himself a double portion, which he drank at one gulp.

"Good Heavens!" Garden exclaimed good-humoredly. "How you have changed, Woody! . . . Who's the lady now?"

The muscles of Swift's face twitched.

"Oh, pipe down, Floyd," he pleaded irritably. Garden shrugged indifferently.

"Sorry. What's worrying you today besides Equanimity?"

day." Swift managed a sheepish dame de Sevigne and Madame de

and frowned thoughtfully. "But he's "I can't possibly lose." And he "How's Aunt Martha?"

Garden narrowed his eyes. "She's pretty fair. Nervous as the devil this morning, and smokthe prancing steeds . . .

At this point Lowe Hammle aradmitted reluctantly. "But I wish rived. He was a heavy-set, short he'd bet moderately, instead of man of fifty or thereabouts. He was plunging like a fool whenever he's wearing a black-and-white checked suit, a gray shirt, a brilliant green "By the by," asked Vance, "why four-in-hald, a chocolate-colored do you particularly look for strange | waistcoat with leather buttons, and tan blucher shoes the soles of which were inordinately thick.

"The Marster of 'Ounds, b'Gad!" short pause, "Woody's been losing Garden greeted him jovially. "Here's your scotch-and-soda; and here also are Mr. Philo Vance and

"Delighted-delighted!" Hammle exclaimed heartily, coming forward.

In a few minutes the butler announced lunch. The conversation was almost entirely devoted to horses, the history of racing, the Grand National, and the possibilities "And that, Vance, means trouble of the various entrants in the after-

means a blow-up of some kind. I've Vance contented himself mainly felt it coming for over a week. It's with listening and studying the oth-

We were nearing the end of the luncheon when a tall, well-built and "Very interestin' situation," com- apparently vigorous woman, who mented Vance. "I agree in the looked no more than forty (though main with what you say regarding I later learned that she was well Equanimity. But I think you're too past fifty), entered the room. She harsh, and I'm not convinced that wore a tailored suit, a silver-fox

"Why, mater!" exclaimed Garden. "I thought you were an invalid. Why this spurt of health and energy?'

He then presented me to his mother: both Vance and Hammle had

met her on previous occasions. "I'm tired of being kept in bed," she told her son querulously, after nodding graciously to the others. 'Now you boys sit right down-I'm going shopping, and just dropped in to see if everything was going all right . . . I think I'll have a creme de menthe frappee while I'm here."

The butler drew up a chair for her beside Swift, and went to the pantry. Mrs. Garden put her hand lightly on her nephew's arm.

"How goes it with you, Woody?" she asked in a spirit of camaraderie. Without waiting for his answer, she turned to Garden again. "Floyd, I want you to place a bet for me on the big race today, in case I'm not back in time." "Name your poison," smiled Gar-

"I'm playing Grand Score to win and place-the usual hundred."

"Right - o, mater." Garden glanced sardonically at his cousin. 'Less intelligent bets have been made in these diggin's full many a time and oft . . . Sure you don't want Equanimity, mater?"

"Odds are too unfavorable," returned Mrs. Garden, with a canny "He's quoted in the over-night

line at five to two." "He won't stay there." There was authority and assurance in the woman's tone and manner. "And I'll get eight or ten to one on Grand

Score.' "Right you are," grinned Garden. 'You're on the dog for a century

win and place." The butler brought the creme de menthe, and Mrs. Garden sipped it

and stood up. "And now I'm going," she announced pleasantly. She patted her nephew on the shoulder. "Take care of yourself, Woody . . . Good afternoon, gentlemen." And she went from the room with a firm masculine stride.

"Sneed," Garden ordered, "fix the set-up as usual."

I glanced at the electric clock on the mantel: It was exactly ten minutes after one.

"Fixing the set-up" was a comparatively simple procedure, but a more or less mysterious operation for anyone unfamiliar with the purpose it was to serve. From a small closet in the hall Sneed first wheeled out a sturdy wooden stand about two feet square. On this he placed a telephone connected to a loud speaker which resembled a midget radio set. As I learned later, it was a specially constructed amplifier to enable every one in the room to hear distinctly whatever came over the telephone.

On one side of the amplifier was attached a black metal switch box with a two-way key. In its upright position this key would cut off the voice at the other end of the line without interfering with the connection; and throwing the key forward would bring the voice on again.

The butler then brought in a wellbuilt folding card-table and opened it beside the stand. On this table he placed another telephone of the conventional French, or hand, type. This telephone, which was gray, was plugged into an additional jack in the baseboard. The gray telephone was not connected with the one equipped with the amplifier, but was on an independent line.

#### (TO BE CONTINUED) Fifteen Famous Women

The fifteen most famous women in history, it is believed, says Collier's Weekly, were: Queens Elizabeth and Anne of England, Mary Stuart of Scotland, Catherine of Russia, Maria Theresa of Hungary, Christina of Sweden, Cleopatra of Egypt, and Joan of Arc, Marie Antoinette, Josephine, George Sand, Catherine "That's enough worry for one de' Medici, Madame de Stael, Ma-



A Holiday for Two

by Luella B. Lyons

HIS being with the family on Christmas is the bunk so I won't mind parking myself down there in Martinville, Mr. Howard," Paul Boyd told his employer. That's how he found himself spending the holidays in a lonely little room in a boarding and rooming house. His landlady had gone out to church services, he knew, but he determined to pass the lonely hours by reading, having prepared himself with a flock of new detective fiction before leaving the city.

Before another half hour had passed. Paul tossed the book aside and began pacing the floor. Here he was alone at last on one Christmas eve, far from too-cor cerned relatives and friends

As the crowning insult, without a moment's warning, the little light that hung on a single cord from the ceiling, flickered and went out. "Great day, this is the end! I



Tossed the Book Aside and Began Pacing the Floor.

wonder what they do here when the lights go out-go to bed, I suphe muttered disgustedly. But just the same he began scratching matches to hunt for a possible kerosene lamp he might have overlooked. Five matches later, he found a candle and lost no time lighting that. "At least I can find my way about while getting ready to retire," he grumbled.

But as he jerked at his tie, the anmistakable sound of a smothered sob came to him through the hot air register. Paul wanted to be alone, but sobs did things to him and it took him just three minutes to locate the door from behind which was darkness and those sobs.

All because a thoughtless landlady had failed to provide the lovely and lonely girl with an extra bit of lighting in case the rather unreliable power company service discontinued without notice, wasn't the only reason for the sobs.

"Being in a noisy city where folks are celebrating, asking all kinds of favors of you at the holiday time, doing the same old parties, family dinners and all that-I thought it would be nice to escape it for a change," she explained. Jean Hathaway, she said was her

"Jean, I said the same thing and maybe we were both right only that-that," and suddenly he became embarrassed but struggled on, "that it is all okeh if you don't have to escape alone. Just one for company and for celebrating is about the right number. What do you think, Jean?"

"Alone together! It doesn't make sense as for English, but it does Christmas-edly speaking!" and the light of the candle burned high and proud on that holiday for just

@ Western Newspaper Union.

## THE **CHRISTMAS** CAROL

by Helen Waterman

HE Christmas Spirit, if such a sprite there be, must have fled in dismay from old Silas Wentworth, for a crustier, harder, less Christmas-spirited man would be hard to imagine.

Yet Sally Blaine, his clerk and bookkeeper, had the temerity to bring Christmas into the store, stringing lines of tinsel Old Silas, coming to work,

stopped and stared at this unusual addition to the colored globes and patent medicines with which his windows were adorned. Sally Blaine, rather frightened

now, looked up. "Merry Christmas, Mr. Wentworth." Silas surveyed the store grimly.

"Take it down!"

But Sally hesitated. "I said take it down. More of your fool notions! What's this? "Dickens' Christmas Carol, sir."

He thrust the book on a back shelf. "Humph! Don't let me catch

you reading on the job." "Yes, sir. I'm sorry about the

decorations-At nine o'clock on Christmas eve Silas saw out his last customer. and began putting up the shutters. It was beastly cold, and his numb fingers were slow at their task. As he was about to lock up, he was confronted by two men, one carrying a revolver.

"Let us in and lock the door," said the man.

Silas, his teeth chattering from fear more than cold, complied. "Now if you're quiet you won't get hurt," said the spokesman. "My

pal here has had an accident. I need some medicines. You'll be paid all right." "Of course; of course," Silas an-

swered, and brought out a stock of supplies. The wounded man spoke up. "Sorry to keep you on Christmas

eve, buddy." Silas grunted. "Tommyrot." The other man had been rum-



Silas Surveyed the Store Grimfy. "Take it Down!"

he commanded. "I can't watch what you're doing. So you read aloud until I get through." And he handed Silas "Christmas Carol." He was scarcely half way through when the men paid him and left. He threw the book down and started off, but at the door

light, read again. "So like me," he muttered, as he finished. From the wastebasket he drew out the tinsel and strung it awkwardly around the store. He looked through his accounts marked 'Overdue," and selected several bills which he marked "Paid in

he turned, and sitting by the night

Then he got his wraps. "Merry Christmas, Silas," he exclaimed, and went out to the dawning of his first merry one in many

Full," and put in proper envelopes.

@ Western Newspaper Union,

### These Cuddle Toys Solve Gift Problems

"Eenle, Meenie, Minie, Mo"it's hard to decide which to make -but why make just one, why not all! Delightful cuddle toys, these, and just the soft, warm playthings for a baby's arms. There's noth-



ing to the making of them, for each is composed of but two pieces, with the exception of the bear, whose jacket is extra, and the chick, whose flapping wings are separate. Your gayest cotton scraps can go into the making of these winning gifts. In pattern 5609 you will find a transfer pattern for the four animals; instructions for making them; material requirements.

To obtain this pattern send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) to The Sewing Circle Household Arts Dept., 259 West Fourteenth St., New York, N. Y. Write plainly pattern number, your name and address.

## Household @ @ Questions

Tomato juice may be thickened and highly seasoned and mixed with milk for tomato soup.

Black marble clocks or ornaments will have a beautiful lustre if rubbed with a soft cloth dampened with olive oil and then polished with a clean chamois.

White woodwork in the home

can be kept clean by sponging

with lukewarm suds of a pure, mild soap, then wiping dry. This does not harm the enameled sur-The blunt end of a pencil is ex-

tials on linens which are to be embroidered. @ Associated Newspapers .- WNU Service.

# From a MEDICAL JOURNAL THIS: ABOUT COLDS!

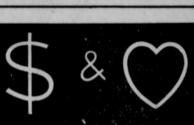
(of these doctors)
led them to believe that colds result from an acid condition of the body. To overcome this they prescribe various alkalies."That's why, today...

LUDEN'S COUGH DROPS 5 NOW CONTAIN AN ALKALINE FACTOR

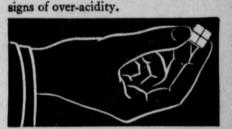
Price of Personal Splendor

Can there be personal splendor





**DOLLARS & HEALTH** The successful person is a healthy person. Don't let yourself be handicapped by sick headaches, a sluggish condition, stomach "nerves" and other dangerous



MILNESIA FOR HEALTH Milnesia, the original milk of magnesia in wafer form, neutralizes stomach acids, gives quick, pleasant elimination. Each wafer equals 4 teaspoonfuls milk of magnesia. Tasty, too. 20c, 35c&60c everywhere.

