



THE GARDEN MURDER CASE

By S.S. VAN DINE

Copyright S.S. Van Dine W.N.U. Service

CHAPTER VII—Continued

"When you deserted the party this afternoon, Mr. Kroon," Vance went on, "you gratuitously informed us that you were headed for a legal conference of some kind with a maiden aunt. Would you object to giving us, merely as a matter of record, the name and address of your aunt, and the nature of the legal documents?"

"I most certainly would object," returned Kroon coolly. "I fail to see why you should be interested in my family affairs."

Markham swung round toward the man.

"That's for us to decide," he snapped. "Do you intend to answer Mr. Vance's question?"

Kroon shook his head.

"I do not! I regard that question as incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial. Also frivolous."

"Yes, yes," Vance smiled at Markham. "It could be, don't you know. However, let it pass, Markham. Present status: Name and address of maiden aunt, unknown; nature of legal documents, unknown; reason for the gentleman's reticence, also unknown."

Markham resentfully mumbled a few unintelligible words and resumed smoking his cigar while Vance continued the interrogation.

"I say, Mr. Kroon, would you also consider it irrelevant—and the rest of the legal verbiage—if I asked you by what means you departed and returned to the Garden apartment?"

Kroon appeared highly amused.

"I'd consider it irrelevant, yes; but since there is only one way I could have gone and come back, I'm perfectly willing to confess to you that I took a taxicab and from my aunt's."

Vance gazed up at the ceiling as he smoked.

"Suppose," he said, "that the elevator boy should deny that he took you either down or up in the car since your first arrival here this afternoon. What would you say?"

"I'd say that he had lost his memory—or was lying."

"Yes, of course. The obvious retort. Quite." Vance's eyes moved slowly to the man on the davenport. "You will probably have the opportunity of saying just that on the witness stand."

Kroon's eyes narrowed and his face reddened. Before he could speak, Vance went on.

"And you may also have the opportunity of officially giving or withholding your aunt's name and address. The fact is, you may find yourself in the most distressing need of an alibi."

Kroon sank back on the davenport with a supercilious smile.

"You're very amusing," he commented lightly. "What next? If you'll ask me a reasonable question, I'll be only too happy to answer."

"Well, let's see where we stand," Vance suppressed an amused smile.

"You left the apartment at approximately a quarter to four, took the elevator downstairs and then a taxi, went to your aunt's to fuss a bit with legal documents, drove back in a taxi, and took the elevator upstairs. Bein' gone a little over half an hour. During your absence Swift was shot. Is that correct?"

"Yes," Kroon was curt.

"But how do you account for the fact that when I met you in the hall on your return, you seemed miraculously cognizant of the details of Swift's passing?"

"We've been over that, too. I knew nothing about it. You told me Swift was dead, and I merely surmised the rest."

"Yes—quite. No crime in accurate surmises. Deuced queer coincidence, however. Taken with other facts. As likely as a five-horse win parlay. Extr'ordin'ry."

"I'm listening with great interest," Kroon had again assumed his air of superiority. "Why don't you stop beating about the bush?"

"Worth-while suggestion," Vance crushed out his cigarette and got up. "What I was leadin' up to was the fact that someone has definitely accused you of murdering Swift."

Kroon started, and his face went pale. After a few moments he forced a harsh guttural noise intended for a laugh.

"And who, may I ask, has accused me?"

"Miss Madge Weatherby."

One corner of Kroon's mouth went up in a sneer of hatred.

"She would! And she probably told you that it was a crime of passion—caused by an uncontrollable jealousy."

"Just that," nodded Vance. "It seems you have been forcing your unwelcome attentions upon her, with dire threats; whereas, all the time, she was madly enamored of

Mr. Swift. And so, when the strain became too great, you eliminated your rival."

"Well, I'll be damned!" Kroon thrust his hands deep into his pockets. "I see what you're driving at. Why didn't you tell me this in the first place?"

"Waitin' for the final odds," Vance returned. "You hadn't laid your bet. But now that I've told you, do you care to give us the name and address of your maiden aunt and the nature of the legal documents you had to sign?"

"That's all nonsense," Kroon spluttered. "I don't need an alibi. When the time comes—"

CHAPTER VIII

At this moment Heath appeared at the door, and walking directly to Vance, handed him a page torn from his note-book, on which were several lines of handwriting.

Vance read the note rapidly as Kroon looked on with malignant resentment. Then he folded the paper and slipped it into his pocket.

"When the time comes . . ." he murmured. "Yes—quite." He raised his eyes lazily to Kroon. "As you say. When the time comes. The time has now come, Mr. Kroon."

The man stiffened, but did not speak.

"Do you, by any chance," Vance continued, "know a lady named Stella Fruemon? Has a snug little apartment on the seventeenth floor of this building—only two floors below. Says you were visitin' her around four o'clock today. Left her at exactly four-fifteen. Which might account for your not using the elevator. Also for your reluctance to give us your aunt's name and address. Might account for other things as well . . . Do you care to revise your story?"

Kroon appeared to be thinking fast. He walked nervously up and down the study floor.

"Puzzlin' and interestin' situation," Vance went on. "Gentleman leaves this apartment at—let's say—ten minutes to four. Family documents to sign. Doesn't enter the elevator. Appears in apartment two floors below within a few minutes—been a regular visitor there. Remains till 4:15. Then departs. Shows up again in this apartment at half-past four. In the meantime, Swift is shot through the head—exact time unknown. Gentleman is apparently familiar with various details of the shooting. Refuses to give information regarding his whereabouts during his absence. A lady accuses him of the murder, and demonstrates how he could have accomplished it. Also kindly supplies the motive. Fifteen minutes of gentleman's absence—named by, from 4:15 to 4:30—unaccounted for."

Vance drew on his cigarette.

"I say, Mr. Kroon, any suggestions?"

Kroon came to a sudden halt and swung about.

He sucked in a deep noisy breath and made a despairing gesture.

"All right, here's the story. Take it or leave it. I've been mixed up with Stella Fruemon for the past year. She's nothing but a gold-digger and blackmailer. Madge Weatherby got on to it. She's the jealous member of this combination—not me. And she cared about as much for Woodie Swift as I did. Anyway, I got involved with Stella Fruemon. It came to a show-down, and I had to pay through the nose. To avoid scandal for my family, of course. At any rate, we each got our lawyers, and a settlement was reached. She finally named a stiff figure and agreed to sign a general release from all claims. In the circumstances, I had no alternative. Four o'clock today was the time set for the completion of the transaction. My lawyer and hers were to be at her apartment. The certified check and the papers were ready. So I went down there a little before four to clean up the whole dirty business. And I cleaned it up and got out. I had walked down the two flights of stairs to her apartment, and at 4:15, when the hold-up was over, I walked back up the stairs."

Kroon took a deep breath and frowned.

"I was so furious—and relieved—that I kept on walking without realizing where I was going. When I opened the door which I thought led into the public hallway outside the Garden apartment, I found I was on the terrace of the roof. When I saw where I was I thought I'd come through the garden and go down the stairway there. It was really the natural thing to do . . ."

"You knew about the gate leading into the garden, then?"

"I've known about it for years. Everybody who's been up here

knows about it. Anything wrong with my knowing about the gate?"

"No. Quite natural. And so, you opened the gate and entered the garden?"

"Yes."

"And that would be twenty minutes after four and between minutes after four?"

"I wasn't holding a stop-watch on myself, but I guess that's close enough . . . When I entered the garden I saw Swift slumped down in his chair. His position struck me as funny, but I paid no attention to it until I spoke to him and got no answer. Then I approached and saw the revolver lying on the tiles, and the hole in his head. It gave me a hell of a shock. I can tell you, and I started to run downstairs to give the alarm. But I realized it would look bad for me. There I was, alone on the roof with a dead man . . ."

"Ah, yes. Discretion. So you played safe. Can't say that I blame you entirely—if your chronology is accurate. So, I take it, you re-entered the public stairway and came down to the front door of the Garden apartment."

"That's just what I did."

"By and by, during the brief time you were on the roof, or even after you returned to the stairway, did you hear a shot?"

Kroon thought a moment.

"By George? I did hear something, now that you put it that way. I thought nothing of it at the time, since Woody was already dead. But just as I re-entered the stairway there was an explosion of some kind outside. I thought it was a car back-firing down in the street, and paid no attention to it."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"That's very interestin' . . . Vance's eyes drifted off into space. "I wonder . . . But to continue your tale. You say you left the roof immediately and came downstairs. But there were at least ten minutes from the time you left the garden to the time I encountered you entering the apartment at the front door. How and where did you spend these ten intervening minutes?"

"I stayed on the landing of the stairs and smoked a couple of cigars."

"Quite so. He was breaking off with the lady for ever and ever."

"Is that the truth?" Miss Weatherby straightened in her chair.

"Yes, yes. No subterfuge. Kroon said you were jealous of Stella. Thought I'd relieve your mind."

"Why didn't he tell me, then?"

"There's always the possibility you didn't give him a chance."

The woman nodded vigorously.

"Yes, that's right. I wouldn't speak to him when he returned here this afternoon."

"Care to revamp your original theory?" asked Vance. "Or do you still think that Kroon is the culprit?"

"I—I really don't know now," the woman answered hesitantly. "When I last spoke to you I was terribly upset. . . . Maybe it was all my imagination."

Vance looked at the woman quizzically. "Since you're not so sure that Kroon did the deed, have you any other suggestions to make?"

There was a tense silence. Miss Weatherby's face seemed to contract. She drew in her lips.

"Yes!" she exploded, leaning toward Vance with a new enthusiasm. "It was Zalia Graem who killed Woody! She had the motive, as you call it. She's capable of such things, too. There was something between her and Woody. Then she chucked him over. He didn't have enough money to suit her. You saw the way they acted toward each other today."

"Have you any idea as to how she managed the crime?" Vance asked quietly.

"She was out of the drawing-room long enough, wasn't she?"

"Poignant question. Situation very mysterious." Vance rose slowly and bowed to the woman.

"Thanks awfully—we're most grateful. And we shall not hold you prisoner any longer."

When she had gone Markham grinned sourly.

"The lady is well equipped with suspects. What do you make of this new accusation?"

Vance was frowning.

"Animosity shunted from Monsieur Kroon to La Graem. Yes. Queer situation. Logically speakin', this new accusation is more reasonable than her first. It has its points . . . If only I could get that disconnected buzzer out of my mind. It must fit somewhere . . . And that second shot—the one we all heard."

Vance again moved to the buzzer and inspected it with care. "No indications of a mechanism."

"It could have been removed before the repair man arrived," theorized Markham without enthusiasm.

"Yes, another possibility. I had thought of that too. But the opportunity was lacking. I came in here immediately after I had found the Johnnie shot . . ."

"Does the buzzer connect with any other room besides the den?" asked Markham.

Vance shook his head.

"No. That's the only connection."

"Didn't you say there was someone in the den at the time you heard this shot?"

Vance's gaze swept past Markham.

"Yes. Zalia Graem was there. Ostensibly telephoning." His voice, I thought, was a little bitter.

"We might get more information from the young woman herself," Markham put in sarcastically.

"Oh, yes. Quite. Obvious procedure. But I have a few queries to put to Garden first. Pavin's the way, as it were. I say, Sergeant, collect Floyd Garden and bring him here."

Garden came into the room unsteadily and looking slightly haggard.

"What a mess!" he sighed, sinking dismally into a chair. "Any light on the case?"

"A few fitful illuminations," Vance told him. "By the by, it seems that your guests walk in and out of the front door without the formality of ringing."

"Oh, yes. But only when we're playing the races. Much more convenient. Saves annoyance and interruptions."

"And another thing: when Miss Graem was phoning in the den and you suggested that she tell the gentleman to call back later, did you actually know that it was a man she was talking to?"

Garden opened his eyes in mild surprise.

"Why, no. I was merely ragging her. Hadn't the faintest idea. But, if it makes any difference, I'm sure Sneed could give you the information, if Miss Graem won't. Sneed answered the phone, you know."

"It's of no importance," Vance brushed the matter aside. "It might interest you to know, however, that the buzzer in this room failed to function because someone had carefully disconnected the wires."

"The devil you say!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Origin of Beer Making

The origin of beer making is lost in antiquity. Probably the ancient Egyptians were the first civilized people to engage in brewing, and a barley wine or beer is believed to have been known in that country as early as 3,000 B. C. Herodotus ascribes the invention to the goddess Isis. Ale or beer was never used to any extent in Greece or Italy, partly owing to the abundance of wine there, but Xenophon mentions it as being used among the inhabitants of Armenia, and the Gauls were also acquainted with it in early times. It was in common use in Germany in the time of Tacitus.

HOW ARE YOU TODAY

DR. JAMES W. BARTON Talks About

Dinitrophenol
YOU are not hearing or reading as much now about the use of dinitrophenol for reducing weight. The fact that about one in every seven using it develops a skin rash, and that cases of cataract, collapse, and even death have resulted has naturally made overweighters somewhat afraid of this drug.

It is perhaps fortunate, generally speaking, that many are afraid to use dinitrophenol because its use by anybody and everybody without a physician's supervision is dangerous.

However, Dr. W. G. Campbell, chief of the federal food and drug administration (Washington), points out "that dinitrophenol

now forms the basis of a half dozen or more patent medicines on the market. The indiscriminate use of these preparations will most likely be followed by poisoning."

Fortunately one of the physicians who has done most of the research work on dinitrophenol, Dr. M. L. Tainter, Los Angeles, outlines in the Journal of the American Medical Association a form of treatment for those poisoned by this drug.

"As there is no special drug that overcomes dinitrophenol, the treatment is directed toward getting the drug out of the body. When the patient is first seen the stomach should be washed out with large volumes of water containing baking soda (about a tablespoonful to the quart of water). A large amount of water may be left in the stomach to take the place of the water lost by profuse sweating. If pure oxygen is available the patient should breathe it through a mask. To reduce fever, the victim should be placed in a bath tub containing ice water or in an ice pack."

The point then is that by washing out the stomach and putting the victim in a bath tub of ice water—a treatment that can be given at home—the lives of these victims may be saved in many cases.

Poisoning Cases Rare

However, poisoning occurs only at rare intervals and usually from using doses that are too large. Dr. Tainter and his associates, Drs. A. B. Stockton and W. C. Cutting, who have studied this drug for over five years report as follows on its value for the treatment of overweight:

"One hundred and seventy selected overweight patients (20 males and 150 females) were given sodium dinitrophenol by mouth for an average of 88 days, each being given an average daily dose of 5 1/4 grains. The average increase in metabolic rate (rate at which the body processes work) was about 11 per cent for each 1 1/2 grains daily dose. The average loss of body weight was 17 pounds for each patient with an average loss of about 1 1/2 pounds weekly. Their food intake was not reduced but they were not to eat more food than had been their custom."

Now why were these physicians able to get such excellent results from dinitrophenol? It was because the drug was free from impurities and the patients were under supervision at all times.

These research physicians from results obtained feel justified in giving dinitrophenol to almost all overweight persons as it will promptly and certainly increase the rate at which the body processes work, greatly increase the heat and thus reduce weight in a manner and to an extent not approached by any drug previously tried. It has the disadvantage, however, of producing undesirable reactions in some patients which cannot be known beforehand and which occasionally are alarming.

Dizziness

When an attack of dizziness occurs there is often the feeling on the part of the patient that there is something wrong with his heart. As a matter of fact most cases of dizziness come from a disturbance in the ear or in the liver. Generally but not always when the objects about the patient seem to be going "around and around," or the patient himself seems to be going around and around, the trouble is in the ear, whereas when things appear to be going up and down or the patient feels that he is going up and down the liver is at fault.

When the ear is at fault, that is, the part of the ear that "balances" the body, it is very often due to some trouble in the nose and the sinuses adjoining the nose. Acute or chronic catarrh, or infection of the sinuses immediately behind the nose are the commonest causes of this dizziness which is usually accompanied by nausea or a "tinkling" noise in the ear.

Treatment during attacks consists of any quieting medicine such as phenobarbital. While this is a most helpful drug, there is the chance that the patients may acquire the "barbital habit."

The attacks of dizziness due to the liver are prevented or controlled by cutting down on rich starch or fat foods.

© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.

The Candy Girl

By JANE OSBORN
© McClure Newspaper Syndicate, WNU Service.

WHEN Martha was in college she made up her mind that if she ever did have to earn her own living she would do it in some unusual way. She would go into some sort of business that didn't attract other college graduates. Thus she, with her superior education, would compete only with obviously inferior, uneducated people and her financial success would be assured. Martha was the one member of her family who had gone to college—that was doubtless why she held such an exalted idea of the value of the degree for which she was working. Until the end of her senior year there didn't seem to be the shadow of a chance that she ever would have to earn her own living. She had inherited from her father large tracts of farm land—but somehow through an involvement of business that Martha couldn't quite understand an immediate return from her acres was out of the question.

Martha took stock of her accomplishments. All around the campus she was known as the candy girl. That settled it. If there was one thing she excelled in it was in making candy. Undoubtedly she had a gift—and this gift she would put to good account. She had never heard of a man or woman with a college degree going into the candy business. But she decided, the vast majority of her competitors in this business would not be blessed with superior education such as hers.

On the last day of college Bertram Ross had proposed to Martha. A few days before another of her class had proposed.