

The MYSTERY of HARTLEY HOUSE

by Clifford S. Raymond
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JED ABDUCTED.

Synopsis.—Dr. John Michelson, just beginning his career, becomes resident physician and companion of Homer Sidney at Hartley house. Mr. Sidney is an American, a semi-invalid, old and rich and very desirous to live. Mrs. Sidney is a Spanish woman, dignified and retiring. Jed, the butler, acts like a privileged member of the family. The family has come from Montevideo, South America. Hartley house is a fine old isolated country place, with a murder story, a "haunted pool," and many watch-dogs, and an atmosphere of mystery. The "haunted pool" is where Richard Dobson, son of a former owner of Hartley house, had killed his brother, Arthur Dobson. Jed begins operations by locking the doctor in his room the very first night. Doctor John fixes his door so he can't be locked in. He meets Isobel, daughter of the house, and falls in love at first sight. In the night he finds the butler drunk and holding Mrs. Sidney by the wrist. He interferes. Mrs. Sidney makes light of it. John buys a revolver. John overhears Jed telling Mrs. Sidney he will have his way. In reply she says she will not hesitate to kill him. Mrs. Sidney asks John to consent to the announcement of his engagement to Isobel. The young people consent to the make-believe engagement. Later they find it is to head off Jed, who would marry Isobel. Jed tries to kill John, but the matter is smoothed over. John, though "engaged" to Isobel, conceals his love. Mr. Sidney visits a nearby prison and has Dobson, the murderer, pointed out. Jed tells the story of the Dobson murder. The family goes to South America for the winter. John is left at home, but the "engagement" is not broken. John hears the story of a tragedy "that might have happened in Montevideo." The family returns. A mysterious Spanish sailor appears. Jed recognizes him and wants to kill him. The sailor plays burglar. Mr. Brown, "attorney" for the sailor, calls on John and makes demands.

CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

"I cannot correct your convictions," I said. "You must use your best judgment. You have our permission to do anything that suggests itself to you."

"You're going to brazen it out," he cried.

"We are not going to do anything at all," I said, "not seeing any necessity for doing anything. I might merely suggest to you that there are legal provisions against blackmail."

The quiet little man, with his notions of profit evaporating, suddenly became savage and desperate.

"I can't be fooled with," he cried.

"I know you. You won't assail me with a blackmail charge, because you do not dare. I know I am guilty and can be punished unless I have a real hold on this family. I have taken the chance that I have a real hold. It was not certain, but now I know it. It



"You are in for trouble," he said. "We know what you have, and we'll get it."

is not enough of a hold, but it is enough to keep you from making trouble for me, and I'll see that soon it will be enough to make you listen to me."

"You may do anything you want to do," I said.

He became quiet and cunning again. "Then, if you don't mind, I'd like to speak to Jed," he said.

I rang for him.

When Jed came, the little shabby lawyer became excited again and got up out of his chair to shake his finger at Jed.

"You are in for trouble," he said. "We know what you have, and we'll get it. They don't dare stop us, and I want to give you notice that you are marked. That's all. You'll be followed and hounded and run down in the end, and there'll be an end to this superciliousness here. It may be when you're dead."

"That's a threat, and the people in this house can make the best of it. I'm in this case to stay, and my Spanish client is not easily discouraged or controlled. You have chosen to deal with us in this fashion. We'll get the rest of this evidence, and we'll make you pay ten times more than we'd be willing to settle for now. We've got an equity in this matter, and we're going to collect it. We know all about you, my friend Jed, and we'll show you that we do. Where's my cane and hat? I'm going to get out of here. You'll regret it."

"Jed," I said, "show the gentleman where the door is and don't let the dogs attack him on the way out."

A disappointed shyster went away in a hurry. I was not only perplexed but alarmed. Of the rapacity of the little man, of his lack of conscience and morals, I had no doubt at all. My only question was whether he could make his malevolence and cupidity effective.

Jed showed him to the door and then came back. I could see that he was frightened nearly to death.

CHAPTER IX.

We had seen nothing of Dravada or the lawyer for nearly three weeks. I was unable to think that we had heard the last of them. Dravada's purpose had been too long nourished and the lawyer's cupidity was too great for either to abandon his intent. Jed's disposition was resilient, and soon he recovered his poise. He thought his enemies had abandoned their intent.

It was a relief to me when going to bed and lying a few minutes awake, to hear the rush and scurry of the dogs about the place. They were active at night. Rabbits, coons, weasels and occasionally a fox kept them moving.

Jed's courage returned—and with it, I was disturbed to observe, a threat of another fit of temper. It showed itself first in moodiness and then in insolence. I was glad to find that Jed in this mood this time was not directing himself against Mrs. Sidney. He had turned against me. I knew that he was in torment again. He had nothing to say to me unless he saw me in Mr. Sidney's room. Then he was pleasant.

"Jed," I said to him one morning. "I know you better than you think I do. You'll torment yourself until you do something you'll regret."

"Go to the devil," said Jed.

Isobel and I had been progressing as rationally as two young people could, situated with regard to each other as we were.

One evening I had been reading and Isobel had gone to the piano. I had put my book down on my knees as she began to play. Then I was aroused by perceiving, without seeing, that somebody was near me.

I turned suddenly and saw Jed. He was not three feet behind my chair. His face revealed disorder of mind.

"Do you want a cocktail?" he asked.

"No," I said.

Isobel touched the keys of the piano, as a player done with a mood may do to express surfeit or conclusion.

"Not a mild one?" Jed asked, persisting.

"Well, then, very weak," I said.

I took up my book again and forced myself, as discipline, to read. I had not been able to do it so long as Isobel played, but now that she had stopped I might at least try.

I made an effort. I tried to keep my attention on the type. It was no use. After fifteen minutes' reading I found that I had not turned a page. Neither had Jed brought the cocktail. I got up and walked about the library. I went to the front entrance to find if a few deep breaths in the open would not produce tranquillity.

As I stood at the entrance Isobel came running toward it. I heard her before I saw her. She was running and gasping. She came up the steps, saw me, controlled herself and tried to appear undisturbed. She might have succeeded, but a sleeve of her gown was torn from her waist and had fallen to her wrist.

"What has happened to you?" I asked.

"Nothing," she said.

"You are running."

"A little exercise."

"Look at your sleeve," I said.

She clutched at it as if she had become conscious of it for the first time, and then ran by me and indoors.

We met at dinner twenty minutes later. Isobel had on another gown. Jed did not serve us. Dinner was delayed ten minutes. Then two maids underlooked the service. Mrs. Sidney asked for Jed. One of the maids said that he had not appeared and they were doing the best they could without him.

"Why, what can have happened to Jed?" Mrs. Sidney exclaimed.

"What did happen to Jed?" I asked Isobel after dinner when we were alone.

"I don't know," she said.

"Who tore your sleeve?"

"Jed," she said with resolute frankness. "Where is he?"

"I don't know."

"Where were you when he did it?"

"At the edge of the woods. I had gone out for a bit of air—just across the lawn. Jed appeared."

"What did he say?"

"I don't know—something incoherent, violent; and he took me by the sleeve. I was not frightened, but I drew back suddenly. My sleeve ripped out. We were at the edge of the woods. Three men appeared, strangled Jed before he could cry out, picked him up and carried him off."

I spent the evening with Mr. Sidney and told him that Jed was ill. He was concerned, and I made the lie a kindly one.

"It is insignificant," I said. "With his habits he must occasionally pay a price. A touch of indigestion this time."

To extemporize a few lies to get through the night was easy enough; but Jed was not back in the morning, and Mr. Sidney had to be deceived in more enduring fashion.

I explained to him that Jed had been called away on an urgent matter, which seemed to Mrs. Sidney to justify his going at once. Mrs. Sidney, at my request, made the same explanation later, and Mr. Sidney accepted it. This explanation seemed very lame to me, but it served. Mr. Sidney did not know of any reasons why Jed should disappear. We offered him an explanation of the servant's absence, and he accepted it.

It was apparent that the Spaniard and the lawyer had been two of the men concerned in Jed's plight, and I thought it best to telephone a discreet detective agency and have the lawyer put under scrutiny. Mrs. Sidney thought this was a proper course—or at least that no better one was available.

Two days later the detectives reported that the lawyer had disappeared from all his accustomed places and that it might require some time to get trace of him.

Jed had been gone four days when one of the maids asked for a month's leave. Her mother was very sick, she said. Mrs. Sidney agreed willingly, although disliking to have an unfamiliar servant in the house to fill this maid's place for the time she would be gone. Anna, the maid, said that a very close friend of hers would be glad of an opportunity to have a month in the country. Mrs. Sidney took Anna's recommendation with some relief.

The day Anna went away a very pretty girl was met at the train by the chauffeur. She was the thirty-day maid. I saw her as she came in. I thought her manner did not indicate domestic service, but afterward I found that in spite of appearance she was very deft and competent. With Jed gone, such of his duties as could be done by the maids were given them; and this new servant, Agnes, was so efficient in the dining room that she took over what Jed had done there.

Mr. Sidney liked attractive women about him, and Agnes pleased him with her bright, pretty appearance and good-humored serviceability. In three or four days he was glad to have her assigned to duties which Jed had done for him. In little over a week Agnes had fitted into the routine of the house perfectly.

Up to this time nothing had been heard of Jed, but on the ninth day of his disappearance the detectives telephoned that they had the lawyer. McGuire was the detective-superintendent's name.

"I am not to understand what is back of this case," he suggested, telephoning.

"It is not necessary," I said. "If he is willing to come here in your custody, that is enough."

The next day McGuire, the detective, came with the lawyer, who apparently was trying to keep from looking as frightened as he felt.

"I'll have you understand I came of my own volition," he said.

"With Mr. McGuire representing your volition," I suggested.

"I think I'll look about the grounds for a while," said McGuire.

"What do you expect to gain by this?" the lawyer asked when the detective had gone.

"What did you fear to lose by not coming?" I asked. "Suppose we make our dealing plain. You were one of a party of three that abducted the servant Jed. We want him released and returned here where he is needed."

"You are talking nonsense," said the lawyer. "I came with your detective because I thought that at last this household was prepared to deal reasonably with a reasonable man."

"Where is Jed?" I asked.

"That's none of my business."

"It will be made yours."

"Barking dogs—moonshine—things to scare babies," said the little man.

"McGuire came back."

"I guess I've seen all I want of the grounds," he said, "and there's a train back in half an hour. We're our right waiting."

"I'm not going back," said the lawyer. "I stay at Hartley."

"What is he to do?" asked McGuire.

"Merely leave the house," I said, and rang for a maid.

"I'll not be bulldozed," said the lawyer.

"You are not being" I suggested. "The maid will show you out."

He was at a loss but had nothing else to do but go when the maid came. I held McGuire for only a moment and asked him to have operatives watch the lawyer constantly, with an idea that he actually would remain in Hartley, and to continue to search for Jed.

Mr. Sidney, Isobel and I had a cheerful dinner that evening. Worried as Mrs. Sidney was by Jed's disappearance,

she was relieved by his absence. I had a pleasant two hours with Mr. Sidney, and after that the night produced an occurrence.

Ever since Jed had disappeared I had been accustomed to taking certain responsibilities with regard to the house. The element of security entered as a question. I knew we were in circumstances which demanded—at least asked—precautions. So I went about the house at night to see to locks, in a supervision of the duties the servants performed in closing the place—one I took on myself without saying anything about it.

Hartley house was large, with many wings. It was nearly a half-hour's work to visit all the entrances and see to bolts. Many of the halls and corridors were dark, and I carried an electric flash to use when needed.

I did not say anything of my assumed duties, but I suggested to Mrs. Sidney that, considering the state of

the house, it would be wise to tell the household that all doors would be locked at ten o'clock. Mrs. Sidney thought this good policy and the servants were so informed.



"I'll Not Be Bulldozed," Said the Lawyer.

The night which had our phenomenon as a development I started through the house at midnight. I had gone from Mr. Sidney's room to my own, had put on a smoking jacket and slippers, put my revolver in my pocket and had laid my watch on the dresser.

I went downstairs and examined the bolt, lock, and chains on the doors at the main entrance. In the halls leading from these doors there were electric buttons, and the house being presumably closed for the night and darkened, I went from hall to hall, from door to door, lighting my way by pushing the buttons and turning off the lights when I had satisfied myself. In two wings, one to the north and one to the south, there was no electric wiring. In the halls of these wings I went along easily enough with an occasional flash of the little light I carried.

Jed's room was in the south wing on the second floor. The windows of the hall toward the east showed the waning moon just rising above a grove of oak mixed with larch, and I stopped at one of the windows to admire the quiet scene. I was attracted—not startled but turned—by a noise at the farther end of the hall. At that end of the hall were the stairs to the second floor, where Jed had his room. There were no windows at that end, and it was in complete darkness, although three faint rays of moonlight reversed the hall from the windows nearer me.

I listened, and it seemed that the sound I heard was the creaking of old stairs under a light and stealthy step. That interested me, and I went as quietly as I could toward the sound. I must have made some noise. The creaking stopped. I stood still—in one of the shafts of moonlight. There was an instant of silence. I took another step toward the stair and hit my foot against a chair, almost losing my balance.

There was a scurry of feet and a rustling of skirts from the bottom of the stairs across the dark hall. I flashed my electric light, and within its rays saw a glint of white which instantly disappeared down a side corridor which led to a small door used by servants. I started in pursuit, but a blow on the head, sharp but not powerful, coming from behind, knocked me down.

It dazed me a bit and felled me, but was not enough to make me unconscious. Nevertheless I got to my feet unsteadily and made my way slowly down the corridor into which the flash of white had turned. I came to the door with my electric light illuminating the hall, and thus I knew no one was in it—it had no recesses or furniture to offer concealment—and found the door locked from the outside.

"Agnes, the new maid, can not be found."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Eye of the Cat.
As showing how widely the permanent blue eyes of cats differ from other eyes, it is noted that immediately the eyes of white cats that are to have permanently blue eyes open they shine bright red in the dark. No other colored eye does this.

One of Human Ways.
Ever notice how every one of the near-centenarians thinks the one great habit is the secret of

OWNERS WANT BETTER PITCHING NEXT YEAR

Both Major Leagues Expected to Amend Rules.

Magnates Have Reached Conclusion That There is Too Much Hard Hitting—Leading Pitchers Make Vigorous Protests.

It is understood that the major league pitching rules will be amended at the winter meetings of the clubs. The governors of the national pastime, with few exceptions, have arrived at the conclusion that there is too much batting and also too much run-making. Protests from team managers and from leading pitchers have poured into major league headquarters ever since the start of the pennant races to the effect that the rules are too severe.

It is a sure thing that the "shiner" and "emery ball" have been eliminated for all time. Those tricky deliveries never should have been tolerated. But, it is thought probable that the big league boxmen who always have used the spit ball will be allowed to deliver it as long as they remain in the leagues.

In other words, the ban placed on the use of the spitter after this season will be raised in the cases of the pitchers listed in that class, but newcomers from the minors and elsewhere in 1921 will have to depend on natural skill.

The preservation of the "wet delivery" is favorably considered for the reason that the present rule, if enforced next year, would drive some of the most effective pitchers out of the profession. As many of them have only a few years left in the big circuits it is argued that they are entitled to make a living until they lose their efficiency as a result of advancing years.

President Heydler of the National league has been quoted in favor of removing the restrictions on the spit ball and to favor a new rule permitting the pitchers to dry their hands with resin to be supplied by the umpires. Heydler and President Johnson of the American league have talked this matter over, and it is believed that both will recommend changes based upon common sense, but just what changes will be made is not certainly known at this time.

JAUBERT QUILTS VILE HABIT

Sterling First Baseman of Cincinnati Reds Takes Up Tobacco in Place of Gum.

They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks. But listen to this: Jake Daubert has been playing ball since 1906, and this is the first year he ever has chewed tobacco.

"I used to chew gum," says Jake. "but during the winter I got to chewing tobacco around my coal barge and home, and I find it more satisfactory than gum."

"I tried many kinds of tobacco, several plugs and several scraps, and



Jake Daubert. they all burned my mouth. I was about to give it up, when I tried a sack of (—) and found it just what I had been looking for."

Name of manufacturer omitted at request of the manufacturer.

TO GOVERN BASKETBALL

Commission Patterned After Baseball Governing Council Now Being Organized.

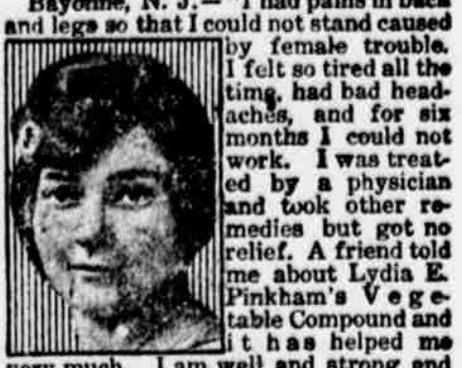
To control professional basketball players by a commission patterned after the baseball governing council, four Eastern organizations plan action. They are Eastern, Penn. State, New York State and Interstate. It is hoped to have things in readiness by fall.

SHOCKER MAKES MARK BY FANNING 14 YANKS

Urban Shocker of the Browns, hung up a season's strike-out mark when he fanned 14 New York batsmen in the first game of the double-header between the Browns and Yankees. It broke the run of ten set up by Johnson when he pitched his great no-hit game against the Red Sox.

SIX MONTHS I COULD NOT WORK

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Made Me Strong and Able to Work—I Recommend It To All My Friends.



Bayonne, N. J.—"I had pains in back and legs so that I could not stand caused by female trouble. I felt so tired all the time, had had headaches, and for six months I could not work. I was treated by a physician and took other remedies but got no relief. A friend told me about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and it has helped me very much. I am well and strong and now able to do my work. I cannot thank you enough and I recommend your medicine to my friends who are sick."—Mrs. SUSIE SACATANSKY, 25 East 17th St., Bayonne, N. J.

It must be admitted by every fair-minded, intelligent person, that a medicine could not live and grow in popularity for over forty years, and today hold a record for such wonderful success as does Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, without possessing great virtue and actual worth. Such medicines must be looked upon and termed both standard and dependable by every thinking person.

Money Not All-Powerful. Money, in truth, can do much, but it cannot do all. We must know the province of it and confine it there, and even spurn it back when it wishes to get farther.—Carlyle.

CASCARETS

"They Work while you Sleep"



Do you feel all tangled up—bilious, constipated, headachy, nervous, full of cold? Take Cascarets tonight for your liver and bowels to straighten you out by morning. Wake up with head clear, stomach right, breath sweet and feeling fine. No griping, no inconvenience. Children love Cascarets too. 10, 25, 50 cents.—Adv.

Airplanes to Chase Bandits. The Chinese government plans to use airplanes to locate bandits and smugglers, transport precious metals from the interior to coast ports and explore for new railroad and highway routes.

DYE RIGHT

Buy only "Diamond Dyes"



Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple that any woman can diamond-dye worn, shabby skirts, waists, dresses, coats, gloves, stockings, sweaters, draperies everything, whether wool, silk, linen, cotton or mixed goods, new, rich fadeless colors. Have druggist show you "Diamond Dyes Color Card."—Adv.

Unnatural Flavor. A girl from Gotham was visiting a friend "up the state," who was trying to run a model chicken farm. The girl was much interested in all that was shown her, particularly a line of incubators, in front of which she made this observation: "So you have incubators? Very nice, indeed; but I am afraid that artificial chickens can never taste like natural ones."

Find the Cause!

It isn't right to drag along feeling miserable—half sick. Find out what is making you feel so badly and try to correct it. Perhaps your kidneys are causing that throbbing backache or those sharp, stabbing pains. You may have morning lameness, too, headaches, dizzy spells and irregular kidney action. Use Doan's Kidney Pills. They have helped thousands of ailing folks. Ask your neighbor!

A Nebraska Case

Mrs. Duda McKee, 721 11th St., Auburn, Neb., says: "I had a great deal of trouble with my kidneys. I was all run down and had severe pains in my back and kidneys. There was a heavy bearing-down ache in the small of my back, too. Doan's Kidney Pills were recommended to me and two boxes entirely cured me."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 60c a Box DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.