Family

By EDWARD LAWSON

WHAT HAS HAPPENED: Sent out to interview Representative Paul Lucas, Congressman from Mississippi, I discover two persons working frantically over his dead body, removing it from an easy chair and placing it on a bed. One is a man named Hutchinson, the dead man's butler, and the other a middle-aged white-haired, fairly beautiful woman who described herself as the housekeeper. I call the police to handle the case and give the amazing story to my paper. Hutchinson tries to escape by leaping through the window while the police are on the way, but I hold him until they all stood there transfixed, watching arrive.

The two servants ascribe the Congress-man's death to an attack of heart disease, but the police doctor, after examination, declares that Lucas has been murdered by poisoning.

the doctor as he concluded his brief, examination. Finally he looked but the police doctor, after examination, up.

"I am positive now," he said,

Representati.e Paul Lucas, the tall, If my diagnosis of poisoning is corgaunt and handsome old Southern-rect, we will find unmistakable corer, had not died from a heart at- roboration there."

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HOURISHING

in cold blood? We could hardly

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY:

CHAPTER II

The doctor's amazing declaration astounded us all. Was i' true that Representative Paul Lucas the tall of the contents tested.

I suddenly thought of my paper tack at all, but had been murdered and the sensation that this story would cause. A congressman, a I discovered he was having a love man who had risen to such promi-affair with another weman, a widow A Laxative that costs in nee in the affairs of this country in so short a time, a man so hon-ored and respected as Paul Lucas, scene now, but not one of them ally, and yet keep such a junkymurdered!

room into the hall. As fast as the r-write man could take it, I poured out the story of Paul Lucas's death, at a glance before hurrying out to habits of some sort. This seems

Stewart, my city editor, told me. "One's bringing a camera and the other's an expert on homicide cases. I left the inspector clon, and followed another plainclothes man who was engaged in making a systematic search of the apartment for fingerprints or other tangible clues. The apartment was a large every fifteen minutes with the latest developments."

"O.K.," I said, and hung up.

I hurried back to the room in which the d tectives had cor respect to home in the tenth floor of the hotel.

Toward the front were the Representative Lucas was cheating on them. Either a man or a woman could have written taste. In the rear were the servants' that note, but whoever it was was



had as much straight dope on the looking desk." I turned and rushed from the story as I did, I knew. come only "It's just a habit," the detective

taste. In the rear were the servants' quarters, Hutchinson occupying one room and the housekeeper another.

Just ahead of these rooms was the congressman's bedroom in which he now lay dead.

A door led off from the bedroom into a tiny kitchenette, in which the housekeeper prepared the morning meal before serving it in the bedroom. Between the bedroom and the front reception rooms was the congressman's private office. It was here that the plainclothes man made his most intensive search.

And his efforts did not go with-

Lucas's desk he discovered a cryptic note, buried deep in a motley pile of miscellaneous papers. The note was undated and unsigned; it was typewritten very poorly, as though by someone unfamiliar with the machine. Handling the scrap of paper carefully, we read the note and puzzled over its meaning. It

"Better stick to your high society ladies or you'll regret

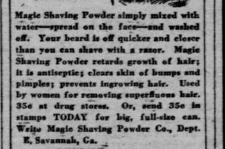
"It looks like a threat of some kind," I offered.

"It might be," the detective greed. "This little note might prove of utmost significance in this case. And then again it may mean nothing at all."

"Are there an more like it?"
"I haven't found any. We'll look through these papers on the desk, though."

I assisted him in wading through the stacked-up mess of paper on the congressman's desk. "Isn't it the congressman's desk. queer," I observed, "how a man can be so neat and so clean person-

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gated. There were half a dozen taste. In the rear were the servants' that note, but whoever it was was

And his efforts did not go with-out reward. For among the numer-ous bills and memoranda on Paul Lucas's desk he discovered a cryptic



Two minutes later he emerged triumphantly carrying another slip of paper. "Look!" he said. "The type's the same. Whoever wrote that note to Lucas, wrote it on his own typewriter. And he must have been here, in this apartment, to have done it." have done it.'

"That makes things a little easier," the inspector sighed. "With that clue you've got there, we can go on with the investigation." He turned to a police sergeant who had been in his attendance since he had entered the building. "Smith," he said, "g'! that woman—the housekeeper, and send her in here to me. She's back in her own room, resting. There're two privates guarding the door; tell 'em I sent you for her." you for her."
"Yes, sir." Sergeant Smith's heels

clicked together and his hand touched the brim of his cap in

A moment later he returned with the middle-aged, white-haired lady in black on his arm. He helped her into a chair and stood Lihind her while the inspector paced the floor in deep thought.

Finally he stopped & d faced the woman. "I want you to tell us just exactly what you know about this man's death," he said. "I want you to begin at the beginning—the time

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