

The KENNEL MURDER CASE

By S.S. Van Dine
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CHAPTER X—Continued
—16—

Vance appeared to accept his explanation without question. "And what time did you arrive here that evening, Major?" Higginbottom seemed to ponder the question; but before he could speak Annie supplied the information.

"You arrived about six o'clock, sir," she informed him with a respectful naivete. "And Miss Doris came in at half-past seven."

"Ah, yes. Quite right, Annie." The major pretended to be grateful for his memory. "Miss Delafield," he explained blandly to Vance, "said she had been shopping."

Vance turned to the maid. "By the by, Annie," he asked, "was the dog here during dinner?" "Oh, yes, sir," the woman assured him. "She always gets under my feet when I'm serving."

"And how do you account for the fact that she disappeared immediately after Major Higginbottom and Miss Delafield had gone?" "I don't know, sir—honest I don't. I looked for her everywhere. I looked out in the back yard and in the court, and I went through every rear hallway in the house. But she wasn't anywhere."

"Why didn't you look in the street?" Vance asked. "Oh, she couldn't have got into the street," the maid explained. "She was in the kitchen and the dining room here, sir; and only the front door of the living room leads into the main hall. But that was closed and locked after Miss Doris and Mr. Higginbottom went out."

"Then, as I understand it, the dog could only have gone into the rear yard?" "Yes, sir; that's all. And that's the strange thing about it, sir; for if she had been in the rear yard, I would have found her."

"Did you look in the vacant lot next door, between this house and Mr. Coe's residence?" "I looked there, too, sir, though I knew it wouldn't do any good. There's no way she could have gotten through the gate, for it's always kept locked."

Vance did not speak for a moment; then he asked with unwonted seriousness: "At just what time, Annie, did you start your search for the dog? It is quite important that you be accurate."

did you get Miss MacTavish, Major?" "I bought her from Mr. Henry Bixby, when she was five months old, and I turned her over immediately to Miss Delafield," the major said regretfully. "Doris became attached to her and insisted upon showing her. I tried to discourage her—"

"She was quite worthy of being shown," said Vance. "So you drove out to Mr. William Prentice's and had him trim her for the ring—eh, what? . . . But why did you enter her under your own name at Englewood?"

"By gad, I don't know." The major seemed thoroughly disgusted with himself. "One of those foolish things we all do." He looked appealingly at Vance, who nodded sympathetically. "Mr. Bixby made out the papers in my name," the major continued, "and I never took the trouble to have the dog re-transferred. It never occurred to me that Doris would want to show her. So I filled out the blank—and there you are. Trouble, trouble, trouble. . . . Is there anything else, Mr. Vance?"

"No, I think not. . . . Only, I'd like to ask Annie another question." He turned to the maid. "Annie," he said, "what kind of lipstick does Miss Delafield use?" The maid seemed greatly surprised at this question and stared at Vance. Then she shot a quick glance at Higginbottom.

"Well, do you know, or don't you, Annie?" the major asked her severely. "Yes, sir, I know. Miss Doris sent me to Broadway to the drug store only Wednesday morning to buy her a lipstick."

"Well, tell Mr. Vance what kind it was." "It was a Duplex Carmine—or something like that; Miss Doris wrote it out for me," she said. "Thanks awfully, Annie. That will be all."

As we emerged into Seventy-first street, the major expressed his curiosity in a question. "What about that lipstick, sir?" "Nothing serious—I hope," Vance returned casually. "I just wanted to clear up a little point. An empty holder of Duplex's Carmine lipstick was found in the waste-paper basket in Mr. Coe's library Thursday morning."

"By gad! You don't say!" The major, however, did not seem particularly perturbed. "Doris must have dropped in on Archer Coe to say good-by."

the murderer for the doing-in of Archer. My great difficulty, however, would be that there was no point whatever in the murderer's killing Brisbane. Motive is lacking—in fact, that particular murder is meaningless from a logical point of view. But I'm sure the murderer most passionately desired the death of Archer. And yet, it would be utterly unreasonable to accuse him of killing Archer—he apparently couldn't have done it. . . . And there you are. Do you not sympathize with me in my predicament?"

"I'm on the point of bursting into tears," returned Markham. "But just what do you propose doing to extricate yourself from your embarrassing situation?" "I propose to go to the Coe house and ask many questions of its inmates. Will you accompany me?"

Markham glanced at the clock on the wall and rang for Swacker. "I'm leaving for the day," he told his secretary. And taking his hat and coat from the stand in the corner, he went toward the private entrance door. "I'm interested," he said, "—in a mild way. . . . But what about Heath?"

"Oh, the sergeant, by all means," Vance replied. "He's definitely indicated."

We got into Vance's car, picked up the sergeant, who seemed unusually surly, and drove uptown. At Fifty-ninth street and Fifth avenue

"There's something queer about all this, Vance—your interest in that Doberman Pinscher, and then to have him attack Wrede in that brutal fashion. And I can't see that we're getting anywhere. There's just one tragedy after another, without any light on the case, I suppose you see some connection between the Scottish terrier and the Doberman. Would you mind telling me what was in your mind when you looked up Enright?"

"There was nothing cryptic about it, my dear Markham." Vance was moving about the room aimlessly, looking at the various vases and objets d'art. "When the sergeant told me that Wrede owned a dog, I was particularly interested, for he wasn't the type of man that could love any animal. He was an enforced egoist, with a somewhat violent inferiority complex—his egoism, in fact, had been automatically built up to cover his complete lack of confidence in himself. He had a shrewd, unscrupulous brain which he was unable to use in any practical way. And he was constantly in need of substitutes for his sense of inferiority. It is not uncommon for persons of his nature to go in for dumb animals. They do not do so because of any instinctive liking for the animals, but because, having failed to impress themselves upon their equals, they can bully and torment an animal, and thus give themselves a feeling of heroism and superiority. The animal is merely an outlet for their lack of self-confidence; and, at the same time, the animal gratifies their profound instinct for domination. The moment I heard that Wrede had owned a dog, I wanted to see the dog, for I was sure he had mistreated it. And when I saw the Doberman's frightened and timid demeanor, I knew that he had suffered horribly at Wrede's hands. Markham, that Doberman showed all the signs of having been beaten and abused—and that fitted perfectly with my estimate of Wrede's character."

"But," objected Markham, "the Doberman certainly showed no timidity at the sight of Wrede. He was aggressive and vicious—ugh!" "He had regained his confidence in himself," Vance explained. "Enright's kindness and benevolent treatment after the dog's terrible experience at Wrede's hands, was what, in the end, revived the Doberman's courage sufficiently to kill Wrede."

He sat down and lighted another cigarette. "Almost any man may be a murderer, but only a certain type of man can injure a dog the way that Scottie was injured here the other night. By striking that little bitch over the head, the murderer left his signature on the crime. . . . Now do you understand why I was so interested in Wrede's Doberman Pinscher?"

Markham leaned forward. "Do you mean to say that Wrede—?" Vance held up his hand. "Just a moment. I want to talk to Liang. There are certain things to be explained. Perhaps Liang will tell us—now."

Vance knelt down and felt the prostrate man's pulse. Then he stood up and shrugged. "He's quite dead, Markham," he said without the slightest emotion. "The dog's fangs severed the jugular vein and the carotid artery. Wrede died almost at once from the profuse hemorrhage and, possibly, an air embolism. . . . No use pushing him to a doctor."

"And what do you want me to do?" wanted the frightened Enright. Vance answered him. "Go home and take a stiff drink and try to forget the episode. If we need you, we'll call on you."

Enright made an attempt to answer, but failing, he turned and waddled away into the gathering mist.

"Let's be going, Markham," suggested Vance. "Wrede's appearance doesn't charm me, and the sergeant will look after things." He turned to Heath. "By the by, Sergeant, we'll be at the Coe home. Join us there after the ambulance comes."

Heath nodded without looking up. He still stood, revolver in hand, gazing down at the dead body of Wrede, like a man hypnotized.

"Who'd have thought a dog could do it!" he mumbled. "Personally I feel rather grateful to the Doberman," Vance said in a low voice, as he walked away toward his parked car.

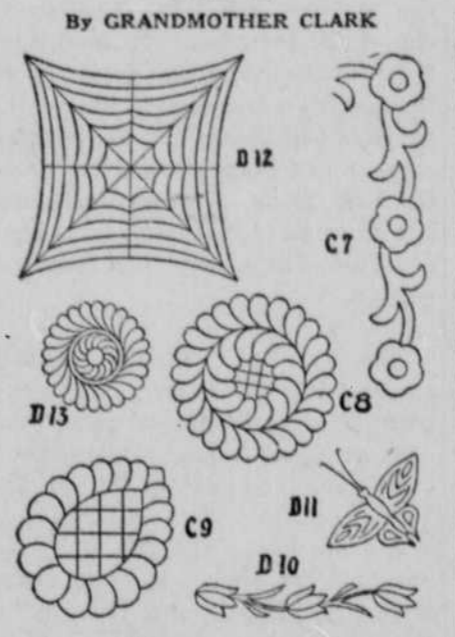
It was only two blocks to the Coe residence and nothing was said en route; but when we were seated in the library, Markham broke the silence by trying to put into words his baffled state of mind.

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Forget Self to Win Popularity

Personality Means Much, of Course, but There Are Many Methods.

A girl is popular for some one of many reasons, or by a combination of them. For example, a girl who is good at sports will find herself popular with those of similar tastes. She must be expert in some field. It may be tennis, golf, water sports, sailing a boat, skiing, etc., and she should be above the average in some of the other sports. It is worth while for a girl who enjoys out-of-door exercise to practice and perfect herself in her favorite sports so that she will be sought as a partner for games or a companion in sports. Her very ability at winning gives her prestige which makes her agreeably noticeable. If to this ability she adds a pleasant manner and is a good sport in losing, when she does, as every one must at times, she has gone a long way on the road to popularity.

Some girls are popular in their set because they have an accomplishment which makes them an addition to any gathering. Playing a musical instrument, singing, impersonating, being able to interest a group in an account of some event or in telling stories amusingly, in short, being a good raconteur—any of these things, when done in a way above the average, lends a certain enviable distinction to the person, and supplies them with popularity. It is assumed that there is also a polish of manner which gives a gracious and agreeable personality, without which few can expect to become favorites or be popular, whatever their field.

Being a good dancer is one of the drawing room accomplishments which

makes a girl sought as a partner, and cut in for when already dancing. A help to this popularity is to have a happy expression. The one with whom the girl is dancing may get only brief glimpses of this, but those watching get full view and are apt to make mental note of expression. Another drawing room accomplishment is playing a good game of cards plus taking a beating without arguments. To haggle over cards played, to criticize your partner's leads or the way he failed to follow yours, is fatal to popularity.

Girls who are unpopular are apt to think harshly or even speak disparagingly of those who are popular. It is distressing to find one's self in the background, but one is wise to analyze the situation and find out why one loses out, before being too downcast or derogatory.

Learn to be good at something which makes for attraction. To be good looking isn't everything. To be made up too much is no help. To have a winning expression is a great aid. To be a good listener is another. This does not mean merely being silent and listening to the other person talk. It means listening so that whatever comments you do make are to the point, revealing an understanding of the conversation. Try to make yourself popular in some field and in some way. If you do this with sincerity and not superficially you are in a fair way to win success.

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HOW ARE WE EVER GOING TO GET THE MONEY TO MEET THE LAST TWO PAYMENTS ON OUR LOAN?

TELL HER IF SHE'LL WAIT ON THAT CUSTOMER THAT JUST CAME IN, INSTEAD OF BAWLING YOU OUT, IT MIGHT HELP

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HEY-I DON'T LIKE THE WAY THIS CONVERSATION'S GOING!

JIM'S DOCTOR TOLD HIM TO CUT OUT COFFEE AND SWITCH TO POSTUM . . . AND THE CHANGE WORKED WONDERS IN HIM!

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MY, BUT JACK HAS CHANGED. I'D RATHER HAVE HIM WAIT ON ME NOW THAN ANY ONE IN TOWN!

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"She Always Gets Under My Feet When I'm Serving."

or one of the expressmen, had stolen her. She's a sly little devil, she is. And very sweet. And she has a lovable nature. Almost anyone could get her to follow them. But no one had been here after seven o'clock that evening."

"That's quite all right, Annie," Vance said in a kindly tone. "Miss MacTavish is well and happy." He turned to Higginbottom. "By the by," he asked, "where

CHAPTER XI

Death and Revelations.
MARKHAM leaned forward in his chair, and gave Vance a quizzical look. "You positively stagger me," he said. "What name shall I write on the warrant?"

"Too much haste, Markham," Vance reprimanded him. "Far too much haste. There are various little things to be done—little knots to be tied—before the arm of the law can pounce upon the culprit—only, arms don't pounce, do they?"

"In that case, perhaps you could bring yourself to confide in me," Markham still spoke ironically. "I assume that you know how the crimes were committed."

"Alas, no!" Vance shook his head lugubriously. "That's the chief reason why I shall hoard my theory as to who perpetrated them. I could make out an excellent case against

When we reached Wrede, there was no movement in his body. He lay on his back, his eyes staring, his arms drawn up, as motionless as death. His throat was red, and a great pool of blood had formed under his head. It was a sight I wish I had never seen.

Enright came lumbering up, his mouth open, his face the color of chalk.

"My G—d!—oh, my G—d!" he muttered over and over.

Vance stood looking down at Wrede, smoking complacently. He turned to Enright.

"It's quite all right, don't y' know," he said in a hard voice. "It serves him jolly well right. He'd beaten and misused the animal in some outrageous fashion; and this is the dog's revenge."