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SYNOPSIS

John Spencer and his cousin, Geoffrey Bohun, are vacationing in Austria. Geoffrey is a gifted portrait painter but prefers to paint landscapes. While strolling in the forest, John hears English voices and decides to investigate. From safe cover he finds four men burying a man in green livery who, evidently, had been murdered. Pharaoh is the leader of the gang; the others are Dewdrop, Rush and Bugle. Unfortunately, John makes himself known to the assassins by dropping a letter with his name and address on it. He tells Geoffrey and his chauffeur, Barley, of his adventure. Geoffrey, realizing that John's life is in danger, declares he must vanish.

CHAPTER I—Continued

For more than an hour I wandered the curious streets, crossing and stopping and idling and turning back, but I never set eyes upon any one of the four or on anyone else that I could fairly suspect; and at last I decided to rest and drink before making my way to St. Jacques.

I was sitting in a cafe, drinking my liquor when I saw a car going by on the opposite side of the square. For a moment I sat spell-bound. Then I was up and was running as hard as I could.

The car was a cabriolet, very long and handsome and painted green. Its hood was raised, so that whoever was in it was not to be seen but in front were sitting two chauffeurs—in curious livery. In a word, they were wearing green tunics, exactly like that of the man whom I had seen lying that morning, awaiting his grave.

The car was gathering speed when I flung myself on to the step. As someone within exclaimed, I thrust my head over the door.

"Forgive me," I said, using German, "but I have most urgent news. Of the very gravest import. I don't know who you are, but you're deeply concerned."

A girl was regarding me as though I were less than the dust. "How can your news concern me, if you don't know who I am?"

The words were spoken in English, with the faintest American touch, and the tone was less cold than imperious.

"I recognized your livery," I said. "Hasn't one of your men disappeared?"

The girl never moved, but her eyes looked straight into mine. "What do you know," she added, "of one of my men?"

"I know that he's dead," said I. I saw her start at the word, and a hand went up to her mouth.

"And I know who killed him," I said, "and I'll help you to rope them in. They didn't kill him for nothing. I mean, I rather think there's a good deal behind the crime."

The girl looked at me curiously. Then she sat back on the cushions and glanced at her watch.

"I expect the police," she said coldly, "will be glad to hear any facts. The station is in the next street."

"My speech was impetuous, I know, and never would have spoken if I had but a moment to choose my words."

"On the other hand," I said thickly, "the police may agree with you."

"Agree with me—what do you mean?"

"That it's none of my business," said I.

With that, I made her a bow and sauntered back to my cafe.

As I gained the pavement, I heard a step at my side.

Then a chauffeur was speaking, hat in hand.

"Her ladyship, sir, would be glad of your name and address."

"Tell her ladyship this: My name does not matter, and my address is this cafe—until I have finished my beer."

The man withdrew, and, more enraged than ever I sat myself down at my table and mopped my face.

I had been used with contumely, as though I had been some peasant, the worse for drink. This by a girl whom I was seeking to serve. At last I looked up, there was the car before me with my lady's face framed in its window and the chauffeur standing beside the door.

"If you will forgive me, perhaps I can give you a lift."

This unadorned apology acted on me as a charm. All my resentment vanished.

I got to my feet, laid a coin on the table and picked up my hat.

As I took my seat beside her— "I'm to blame," I said, "and I've nothing at all to forgive. I'm afraid I shook you up. But I—I hadn't re-

hearsed this meeting and I guess I went off half-cocked. I'd better just tell you my tale."

"One moment—where shall I take you?"

"If you please, to the church of St. Jacques."

As the car moved off—

"I'm Helena Yorick," said the girl, "and Yorick is the name of my home, some seven miles off."

I gave her my name at once and then, without waiting longer, plunged into my tale.

"When I had done—

"Are you sure you weren't followed?" she said.

"I'm sure I wasn't," said I.

With my words the car stopped at the church.

"Well, you can't get out here," said the girl. "We must find a much quieter place. Besides, you must hear my story."

She gave some direction to the chauffeur and then sat back in her seat.

"My father died last November, leaving my brother and me. We're Austrians, you know; but my mother taught me English—she was American. My brother is younger than I am, and he's away just now; so I run the castle, although, of course, he's the Count. This duty takes me to Salzburg once a month. I made the journey by car four days ago. On the way an attempt was made to waylay me, and when I got through—I was driving—they chased me for thirty miles. I had a man with me called Florin. Three generations of Florins have served our house. His father's my warden—has charge of all the keys. Well, six men act as night watchmen, taking the duty by turns. Old Florin chooses the men, and his son was one of the six. He was on duty last night, and this morning he couldn't be found." Her voice began to quaver, and I heard her smother a sob.

"I'm most dreadfully sorry," I said. "And if you'll let me help you, we'll bring the blackguards to book. But you see my cousin was right. Florin was nothing to them, but he got in their way."

"Yes," said the girl, "that's clear. The night watchman got in their way." With a sudden movement she turned. "But you must keep out of this. Can't you go home?"

"I'm not going home," said I. "I'll see this through."

"Don't be foolish," she said. "This quarrel is mine—not yours. Young Florin was not your man."

"The point is this," said I. "That you don't want to fight them with me is natural enough. I've given you information which it was right you should have, and that, I frankly admit, is the end of my duty to you; but I owe that dead man a duty, and I'm going to do it."

I broke off to mop my face. "My cousin's with me," I added, "and so is his man."

"I wish," said the girl, "I could have a word with your cousin. Do you think he could meet me this evening at—at a farm that I know?"

"I'll bring him with me," said I, "wherever you please."

Lady Helena looked away.

"You can come if you like," she said. "But I want to see him."

Then she took up a large-scale map and showed me the farm. This went by the name of Plumage, and lay some four miles from Annabel, quite by itself.

"At five o'clock, then?" says she.

I nodded.

"We shall be there."

"And now," she said, "I shall drop you. Please don't stand still when you're out; start walking at once. And thank you very much for doing your duty to me. And— and don't forget that that's ended."

As I took her slim hand, her steady eyes met mine.

"True," said I. "But my duty to Florin remains; and I'm not so sure as I was that he called upon me for vengeance."

"What else?" said the girl.

"He loved his mistress," I said. "As he died, he may have been thinking that she would be short a man."

And then I went out of the car and was sauntering down the pavement. Except for a crone with a bucket, there seemed to be no one in sight.

As the Rolls swept over a crossing and on to the Salzburg road—

"I'm almost sure," said Geoffrey, "that we've stolen a march on our friends. Of course they may stick to Barley, but that I doubt. And in any event he'll give them the slip at Salzburg."

"At Salzburg?" I cried.

"That's right," said my cousin. "He'll be in that city tonight. Tomorrow he'll come back to VIII-

ach, and there we shall pick him up as soon as it's dusk."

"You're taking no chances," said I.

"D'you blame me, John? I mean, the return of your letter was pretty good work. Talk about a riposte. . . . And you may have been seen with my lady; in which case, as she observed, the job, whatever it is, will go by the board, and Pharaoh and Co.'s one idea will be to do you in."

It was long past noon when we stole into Annabel.

Geoffrey berthed the car in the shade of some limes which grew fifty yards from the inn, on the opposite side of the way.

"You go in," he said, "and have a look at the rooms. I imagine they're quite all right, but you never can tell."

I left him filling his pipe and walked to The Reaping Hook.

This was a pleasant inn, standing back from the road.

As I entered the great, stone taproom, it was clear that all was not well.

It now seemed clear that some brawl or other had lately disordered the house and I began to wonder whether the host was absent because he had suffered some hurt. The poor woman's state, however, forbade my questioning her, and indeed as soon as she saw me, she threw her apron over her head and abandoned herself to her grief. I, therefore, turned to the scullion and asked him where his master might be, but the man seemed dull of comprehension and I had to

shake him by the shoulder before at last he muttered that the host was upstairs.

I made my way to the staircase which rose from the hall, and a moment later had gained a fine, broad passage which ran the length of the house. The door of a room was opened, and the maid who had passed me came out, wide-eyed and breathless.

"What's the matter?" I cried.

"Where's your master?"

She pointed to the room she had left and fled downstairs.

I now began to think that the man must be dead for he was a mild old fellow and not at all the sort that drinks himself into a fury and puts his household in fear. I walked to the door and stood listening before I knocked.

For a quarter of a minute I listened, but heard no sound, and my hand was raised, ready to knock, when somebody spoke—and before he had spoken three words, I knew why the house was disordered and why I had not been received: I knew why the maid was trembling and why the housewife was in tears; and I knew that, be they never so pleasing, the rooms at The Reaping Hook were not for Geoffrey and me. . . . for the voice was the voice of Pharaoh, who was recommending the landlord to do as he said.

"I had never stopped the Rolls and as Geoffrey leaped for the step I let her go. In an instant two shots were fired, and a bullet went by my face to splinter the driving mirror. And then we were flashing through the village.

Geoffrey was speaking.

"I'm much obliged, my son. But another time you simply must do as I say. It's you you're after, not me. And now please put her along. I've holed their petrol-tank, so I hardly think they'll start; all the same I believe in distance."

Twenty minutes later we glided out of a by-road on a grass-grown track where this curled into a thicket, I threw out the clutch.

"My God," said Geoffrey, and wiped the sweat from his face. "And after all that trouble to cover our tracks. Fate beats the band sometimes. And now tell me exactly what happened."

I told him the truth.

"Colossal," says he. "Colossal. There's no other word. However, there's no harm done." He pulled out a map. "And now let's see where we are. We ran through a village called Wagen some four miles back."

We were twenty-two miles from Plumage, and the hour was just one o'clock.

"Tea with the goddess," he said, "at five o'clock. What could be better? But I don't want to wait till then. Besides, we must find a lodging."

Plumage lay more than two miles from the high road. The farm was set on the floor of a fair-sized valley that ran due west. The dwelling itself was handsome, white and gray and low, with shutters of olive green.

We stole down the lane in silence and as I brought the car to rest, Lady Helena Yorick came out of the house and behind her a great Alsatian, a very beautiful hound.

Here for the first time I saw how truly lovely she was.

I introduced my cousin and the lady gave him her hand.

"I know your work," she said. "You painted my mother's brother six years ago."

"In Philadelphia," Geoffrey said. "He carried his head as you do and he had the same blue-black hair."

"For a moment they spoke of her mother's American home.

"Plumage," said Geoffrey, "deserves its beautiful name. Will you let me paint it one day, when the battle is done?"

Lady Helena laughed.

"I see," she said, "that you have been reading the map."

For a moment I stared. Then—

"This isn't Yorick?" I cried.

"No," said Geoffrey. "But it's on the Yorick estate. Yorick itself is three miles beyond these woods."

"And six miles from Annabel," said Lady Helena. "Remembering that, Mr. Bohun, do you still propose to stay there?"

"No," said Geoffrey, "we don't. We've—er—changed our minds."

"I'm glad to hear it," said the girl. "Mr. Spencer is rather headstrong, and he doesn't seem to consider that he's rather too young to die."

Lady Helena then turned to the bench on the left of the door.

"Let's thrash this out," she said. She took her seat in the middle and we sat one on each side.

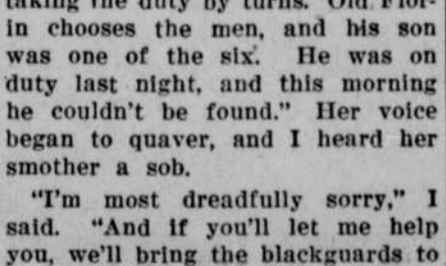
"You may take it from me," she said, "that this is no ordinary case. I know what these men are out for, and they're not going to stand any rot.

"They're after something which isn't mine to give them and which they will never get.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Hewn Out of Rock
The water reservoir of Gibraltar is hewn out of the Rock and holds 9,000,000 gallons.

Simple Set of Bibs For the Little One
By GRANDMOTHER CLARK



Plenty of bibs must always be handy for the little one and a mother is always ready to make up a few more if they cost as little as these do and also require a little handwork.

This package No. A-4 contains a set of three bibs stamped with designs like shown above on a fine quality heavy sheeting. Binding and thread are not included. The embroidery is in simple outline stitch. Send 15 cents to our stamped goods department and receive this set by mail.

Address Home Craft Co., Dept. A, Nineteenth and St. Louis Ave., St. Louis, Mo. Enclose a stamped addressed envelope for reply when writing for any information.

Funny Business
The University of Kansas' "dime-a-day" bureau went to the wall with assets of 45 cents and a handful of practical jokes. Leo Gottlieb, who operated the bureau only a week, offered dates for men or coeds at 10 cents and "25 cents if satisfied." He admitted practical jokers furnished two-thirds of his business.

Wear Merely Means to Proper Ends of Humanity
Let wealth be regarded by any society as an end in itself, and that society shall be cursed and paralyzed alike in its wealth and in its poverty from top to bottom. Our own society is only not cursed so completely as it might be because there are luckily a considerable number of people of all classes in whom the instinct for a better life persist. But these are not sufficiently strong and self-conscious to form a determining factor in the philosophy and politics of the nation.

Let wealth be regarded by some society of the future as a mere means to the proper ends of human life, and whether it is rich or poor on the whole, its wealth will be fairly distributed, and that society happy and healthy.

RATES FOR DYING
Hollywood extras who pretend to die before the cameras earn varying sums. For dying in bed the pay is only \$2.50. Dying on the battlefield brings in \$5. Falling from a balcony or down a flight of stairs after being killed pays as high as \$50.

Be sure of Success
And bake that Holiday Cake with the famous

CLABBER GIRL
Baking Powder

A fairy story from the post office is very unusual, but the Danish post office is sending them out in millions.

It is a hundred years since Hans Anderson was born, and running through the leaves in the books of stamps that bear his picture is the famous but sad story of the little girl who sold matches and struck the last three or four she had to try to keep warm before she died.

Fairy Story Is Told on Danish Postage Stamps

CUTICURA SOAP
Tender, easily-irritated, sensitive skins require a toilet soap that will do more than merely cleanse. It must keep the skin in good condition, freeing it from all cause of irritation. Cuticura Soap contains the delicately medicated, emollient properties of Cuticura which bring to the skin a condition of healthful cleanliness.

Price 25c. Sold at all druggists.

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GET YOU THROUGH

MUD OR SNOW . . . WITHOUT CHAINS
THIS new tire solves winter driving problems for farmers. When you equip your car and truck with Firestone Ground Grip Tires you can get through unimproved roads in any weather. These remarkable tires make their own road, and give you super-traction in mud, snow or loose earth. They are self-cleaning and they do not clog up.

NO farmer can afford to be without a set of these Ground Grip Tires—they are made with patented features used in no other tire.

See your nearby Firestone Auto Supply and Service Store or Firestone Tire Dealer today and avoid winter driving troubles.

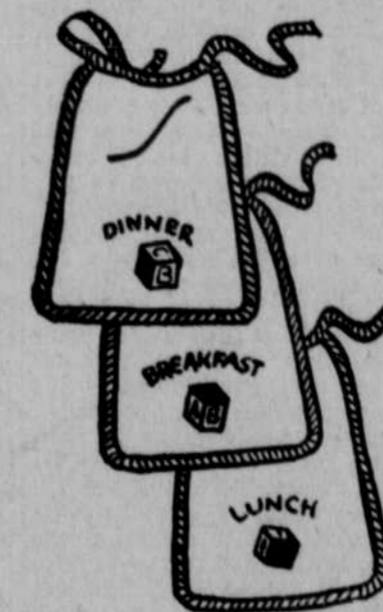
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Asked Him Where His Master Might Be.



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4.75/5.00-19.....	8.50
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