



INITIALS ONLY

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"THE FILIGREE BALL" "THE HOUSE OF THE WHISPERING PINES"
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SYNOPSIS.

George Anderson and wife see a remarkable looking man come out of the Clermont hotel, look around furtively, wash his hands in the snow and pass on. Common attraction attracts them to the Clermont, where it is found that the beautiful Miss Edith Chaloner has fallen dead. Anderson describes the man he saw wash his hands in the snow. The hotel manager declares him to be Orlando Brotherson. Physicians find that Miss Chaloner was stabbed and not shot, which seems to clear Brotherson of suspicion. Gryce, an aged detective, and Sweetwater, his assistant, take up the case. They believe Miss Chaloner stabbed herself. A paper cutter found near the scene of tragedy is believed to be the weapon used. Mr. Chaloner tells of a batch of letters found in his daughter's desk, signed "D. B." All are love letters except one which shows that the writer was displeased. This letter was signed by Orlando Brotherson. Anderson goes with Sweetwater to identify Brotherson, who is to address a meeting of anarchists. The place is raided by the police and Brotherson escapes without being identified. Brotherson is found living in a tenement under the name of Dunn. He is an inventor. Brotherson tells the corner of his acquaintance with Miss Chaloner and how she repulsed him with scorn when he offered her his love. Sweetwater recalls the mystery of the murder of a washerwoman in which some details were similar to the Chaloner affair. Chaloner admits his daughter was deeply interested in the man in love with Brotherson. Brotherson gives the police a plausible explanation of his conduct. Sweetwater plans to disguise himself as a carpenter and seek lodgings in the same building with Brotherson.

CHAPTER XVI.—Continued.

And so it came to pass that at an hour when all the other hard-working people in the building were asleep, or at least striving to sleep, these two men still sat at their work, one in the light, the other in the darkness, facing each other, consciously to the one, unconsciously to the other, across the hollow well of the now silent court. Eleven o'clock! Twelve! No change on Brotherson's part or in Brotherson's room; but a decided one in the place where Sweetwater sat. Objects which had been totally indistinguishable even to his penetrating eye could now be seen in ever brightening outline. The moon had reached the open space above the court, and he was getting the full benefit of it. But it was a benefit he would have been glad to dispense with. Darkness was like a shield to him. He did not feel quite sure that he wanted this shield removed. With no curtain to the window and no shade, and all this brilliance pouring into the room, he feared the disclosure of his presence there, or, if not that, some effect on his own mind of those memories he was more anxious to see mirrored in another's discomfiture than in his own.

Was it to escape any lack of concentration which these same memories might bring, that he rose and stepped to the window? Or was it under one of those involuntary impulses which move us in spite of our ourselves to do the very thing our judgment disapproves?

No sooner had he approached the sill than Mr. Brotherson's shade flew way up and he, too, looked out. Their glances met, and for an instant the hardy detective experienced that involuntary stagnation of the blood which follows an inner shock. He felt that he had been recognized. The moonlight lay full upon his face, and the other had seen and known him. Else, why the constrained attitude and sudden rigidity observable in this confronting figure, with its partially lifted hand? A man like Brotherson makes no pause in any action however trivial, without a reason. Either he had been transfixed by this glimpse of his enemy on watch, or—daring thought! had seen enough of sepulchral suggestion in the wan face looking forth from this fatal window to shake him from his composure and let loose the grinning devil of remorse from its iron prison-house? If so, the movement was a memorable one, and the hazard quite worth while. He had gained—no! he had gained nothing. He had been the fool of his own wishes. No one, let alone Brotherson, could have mistaken his face for that of a woman. He had forgotten his newly-grown beard. Some other cause must be found for the other's attitude. It savored of shock, if not fear. If it were fear, then had he roused an emotion which might rebound upon himself in sharp reprisal. Death had been known to strike people standing where he stood; mysterious death of a species quite unrecognizable. What warranty had he that it would not strike him, and now? None.

Yet it was Brotherson who moved first. With a shrug of the shoulder plainly visible to the man opposite, he turned away from the window and without lowering the shade, began gathering up his papers for the night, and later banking up his stove with ashes.

Sweetwater, with a breath of decided relief, stepped back and threw himself on the bed. It had really been a trial for him to stand there under the other's eye, though his mind refused to formulate his fear, or to give him any satisfaction when he asked himself what there was in the situation suggestive of death to the woman or harm to himself.

Nor did morning light bring coun-

sel, as is usual in similar cases. He felt the mystery more in the hubbub and restless turmoil of the day than in the night's silence and inactivity. He was glad when the stroke of six gave him an excuse to leave the room. At half past six he found the janitor. He was, to all appearance, in a state of great excitement and he spoke very fast.

"I won't stay another night in that room," he loudly declared, breaking in where the family were eating breakfast by lamplight. "I don't want to make any trouble and I don't want to give my reasons; but that room don't suit me. I'd rather take the dark one you talked about yesterday. There's the money. Have my things moved today, will ye?"

"But your moving out after one night's stay will give that room a bad name," stammered the janitor, rising awkwardly. "There'll be talk and I won't be able to let that room all winter."

"Nonsense! Every man hasn't the nerves I have. You'll let it in a week. But let or no let, I'm going front into the little dark room. I'll get the boss to let me off at half past four. So that's settled."

He waited for no reply and got none; but when he appeared promptly at a quarter to five, he found his few belongings moved into a middle room on the fourth floor of the front building, which, oddly perhaps, chanced to be next door to the one he had held under watch the night before.

The first page of his adventure in the Hicks street tenement had been turned, and he was ready to start upon another.

CHAPTER XVII.

In Which a Book Plays a Leading Part.

When Mr. Brotherson came in that night, he noticed that the door of the room adjoining his own stood open. He did not hesitate. Making immediately for it, he took a glance inside, then spoke up with a ringing intonation:

"Halloo! coming to live in this hole?"

The occupant—a young man, evidently a workman and somewhat sickly if one could judge from his complexion—turned around from some tinkering he was engaged in and met the intruder fairly, face to face.

"Yes, this is to be my castle. Are you the owner of the buildings? If so—"

"I am not the owner. I live next door. Haven't I seen you before, young man?"

"If you go up Henry street it's likely enough that you've seen me not once, but many times. I'm the fellow who works at the bench next the window in Schuper's repairing shop. Everybody knows me."

"I've seen you. I've seen you somewhere else than in Schuper's shop. Do you remember me?"

"No, sir; I'm sorry to be imperilled but I don't remember you at all. Won't you sit down? It's not very cheerful, but I'm so glad to get out of the room I was in last night that this looks all right to me. Back there, other building," he whispered. "I didn't know, and took the room which



Eleven o'clock! Twelve o'clock! No change on Brotherson's part.

had a window in it; but—" The stop was significant; so was his smile, which had a touch of sickliness in it, as well as humor.

But Brotherson was not to be caught.

"I saw you," said he. "You were standing in the window overlooking the court. You were not sleeping then. I suppose you know that a woman died in that room?"

"Yes; they told me so this morning."

"Was that the first you'd heard of it?"

"Sure!" The word almost jumped at the questioner. "Do you suppose I'd have taken the room if—"

But here the intruder, with a disdainful grunt, turned and went out, disgust in every feature—plain, unmistakable, downright disgust, and nothing more!

This was what gave Sweetwater his second bad night; this and a certain discovery he made. He had counted on hearing what went on in the neighboring room through the partition running back of his own closet. But he could hear nothing, unless it was the shutting down of a window, a loud sneeze, or the rattling of coals as they were put on the fire. And these possessed no significance. What he wanted was to catch the secret sigh, the muttered word, the involuntary movement. He was too far removed from this man still.

How should he manage to get nearer him—at the door of his mind—of his heart? Sweetwater stared all night from his miserable cot into the darkness of that separating closet, and with no result. His task looked hopeless; no wonder that he could get no rest.

Next morning he felt ill, but he rose all the same, and tried to get his own breakfast. He had but partially succeeded and was sitting on the edge of his bed in wretched discomfort, when the very man he was thinking of appeared at his door.

"I've come to see how you are," said Brotherson. "I noticed that you didn't look well last night. Won't you come in and share my pot of coffee?"

"I—I can't eat," mumbled Sweetwater, for once in his life thrown completely off his balance. "You're very kind, but I'll manage all right. I'd rather, I'm not quite dressed, you see, and I must get to the 'shop.' Then he thought—'What an opportunity I'm losing. Have I any right to turn tail because he plays his game from the outset with trumps? No, I've a small trump somewhere about me to lay on this trick. It isn't an ace, but it'll show I'm not chicane.' And smiling, though not with his usual cheerfulness, Sweetwater added, "Is the coffee all made? I might take a drop of that. But you mustn't ask me to eat—I just couldn't."

"Yes, the coffee is made and it isn't bad either. You'd better put on your coat; the hall's draughty." And waiting till Sweetwater did so, he led the way back to his own room. Brotherson's manner expressed perfect ease, Sweetwater's not. He knew himself changed in looks, in bearing, in feeling, even; but was he changed enough to deceive this man on the very spot where they had confronted each other a few days before in a keen moral struggle?

"I'm going out myself today, so we'll have to hurry a bit," was Brotherson's first remark as they seated themselves at table. "Do you like your coffee plain or with milk in it?"

"Plain. Gosh! what pictures! Where do you get 'em? You must have a lot of coin." Sweetwater was staring at the row of photographs, mostly of a very high order, tacked along the wall separating the two rooms. They were unframed, but they were mostly copies of great pictures, and the effect was rather imposing in contrast to the shabby furniture and the otherwise homely fittings.

"Yes, I've enough for that kind of thing," was his host's reply. But the tone was reserved, and Sweetwater did not presume again along this line. Instead, he looked well at the books piled upon the shelves under these photographs, and wondered aloud at their number and at the man who could waste such a lot of time in reading them. But he made no more direct remarks.

Yet there was one cheerful moment. It was when he noticed the careless way in which those books were arranged upon their shelves. An idea had come to him. He hid his relief in his cup, as he drained the last drops of the coffee, which really tasted better than he expected.

When he returned from work that afternoon it was with an anger under his coat and a conviction which led him to empty out the contents of a small phial which he took down from a shelf. He had told Mr. Gryce that he was eager for the business because of its difficulties, but that was when he was feeling fine and up to any game which might come his way. Now he felt weak and easily discouraged. This would not do. He must regain his health at all hazards, so he poured out the mixture which had given him such a sickly air. This done and a rude supper eaten, he took up his auger. He had heard Mr. Brotherson's step go by. But next minute he laid it down again in great haste and fung a newspaper over it. Mr. Brotherson was coming back, had stopped at his door, had knocked and must be let in.

"You're better this evening," he heard in those kindly tones which so confused and irritated him.

"Yes," was the surly admission.

Then Mr. Brotherson passed on, and Sweetwater listened till he was sure that his too attentive neighbor had really gone down the three flights

between him and the street. Then he took up his auger again and shut himself up in his closet.

There was nothing peculiar about this closet. It was just an ordinary one with drawers and shelves on one side, and an open space on the other for the hanging up of clothes. Very few clothes hung there at present; but it was in this portion of the closet that he stopped and began to try the wall of Brotherson's room, with the butt end of the tool he carried.

The sound seemed to satisfy him, for very soon he was boring a hole at a point exactly level with his ear.

"Neat as well as useful," was the gay comment with which Sweetwater surveyed his work, then laid his ear to the hole. Whereas previously he could barely hear the rattling of coals from the coal-scuttle, he was now able to catch the sound of an ash falling into the ash-pit.

His next move was to test the depth of the partition by inserting his finger in the hole he made. He found it stopped by some obstacle before it had reached half its length, and anxious to satisfy himself of the nature of the obstacle, he gently moved the tip of his finger to and fro over what was certainly the edge of a book.

This proved that his calculations had been correct and that the opening so accessible on his side, was completely veiled on the other by the books he had seen "packed on the



This Proved That His Calculations Had Been Correct.

shelves. He had even been careful to assure himself that all the volumes at this exact point stood far enough forward to afford room behind them for the chips and plaster he must necessarily push through with his auger, and also—important consideration—for the free passage of the sounds by which he hoped to profit.

But it was days before he could trust himself so far. Meanwhile their acquaintance ripened, though with no very satisfactory results. The detective found himself led into telling stories of his early home-life to keep pace with the man who always had something of moment and solid interest to impart. This was undesirable, for instead of calling out a corresponding confidence from Brotherson, it only seemed to make his conversation more coldly impersonal.

In consequence, Sweetwater suddenly found himself quite well and one evening, when he was sure that his neighbor was at home, he slid softly into his closet and laid his ear to the opening he had made there. The result was unexpected. Mr. Brotherson was pacing the floor, and talking softly to himself.

At first, the cadence and full music of the tones conveyed nothing to our far from literary detective. The victim of his secret machinations was expressing himself in words, words—that was the point which counted with him. But as he listened longer and gradually took in the sense of these words, his heart went down lower and lower till it reached his boots. His inscrutable and ever disappointing neighbor was not indulging in self-communings of any kind. He was reciting poetry, and what was worse, poetry which he only half remembered and was trying to recall—an incredible occupation for a man weighted with a criminal secret.

Sweetwater was disgusted, and was withdrawing in high indignation from his vantage-point when something occurred of a startling enough nature to hold him where he was in almost breathless expectation.

The hole which in the darkness of the closet was always faintly visible, even when the light was not very strong in the adjoining room, had suddenly become a bright and shining loop-hole, with a suggestion of movement in the space beyond. The book which had hid this hole on Brotherson's side had been taken down—the one book in all those hundreds whose removal threatened Sweetwater's secrecy, if not himself.

For an instant the thwarted detec-

tive listened for the angry shout or the smothered oath which would naturally follow the discovery by Brotherson of this attempted interference with his privacy.

But all was still on his side of the wall. A rustling of leaves could be heard, as the inventor searched for the poem he wanted, but nothing more. In withdrawing the book, he had failed to notice the hole in the plaster back of it. But he could hardly fall to see it when he came to put the book back. Meantime, suspense for Sweetwater.

It was several minutes before he heard Mr. Brotherson's voice again, then it was in triumphant repetition of the lines which had escaped his memory. They were great words surely and Sweetwater never forgot them, but the impression which they made upon his mind, an impression so forcible that he was able to repeat them, months afterward to Mr. Gryce, did not prevent him from noting the tone in which they were uttered, nor the thud which followed as the book was thrown down upon the floor.

"Fool!" The word rang out in bitter irony from his irate neighbor's lips. "What does he know of woman! Woman! Let him court a rich one and see—but that's all over and done with. No more harping on that string, and no more reading of poetry. I'll never—" The rest was lost in his throat and was quite unintelligible to the anxious listener.

Self-revealing words, which an instant before would have aroused Sweetwater's deepest interest! But they had suddenly lost all force for the unhappy listener. The sight of that hole still shining brightly before his eyes had distracted his thoughts and roused his liveliest apprehensions. If that book should be allowed to lie where it had fallen, then he was in for a period of uncertainty he shrank from contemplating. Any moment his neighbor might look up and catch sight of this hole bored in the backing of the shelves before him. Could the man who had been guilty of submitting him to this outrage stand the strain of waiting indefinitely for the moment of discovery? He doubted it, if the suspense lasted too long.

Shifting his position, he placed his eyes where his ear had been. He could see very little. The space before him, limited as it was to the width of the one volume withdrawn, precluded his seeing ought by what lay directly before him. Happily, it was in this narrow line of vision that Mr. Brotherson stood. He had resumed work upon his model and was so placed that while his face was not visible, his hands were, and as Sweetwater watched these hands and noticed the delicacy of their manipulation, he was enough of a workman to realize that work so fine called for an undivided attention. He need not fear the gaze shifting, while those hands moved as warily as they did now.

Relieved for the moment, he left his post and, sitting down on the edge of his cot, gave himself up to thought.

Suddenly he started upright. He would go meet his fate—be present in the room itself when the discovery was made which threatened to upset all his plans. He was not ashamed of his calling, and Brotherson would think twice before attacking him when once convinced that he had the department back of him.

"Excuse me, comrade," were the words with which he endeavored to account for his presence at Brotherson's door. "My lamp smells so, and I've made such a mess of my work today that I've just stepped in for a chat. If I'm not wanted, say so. I'd like a big room like this, and a lot of books, and—pictures."

"Look at them, then. I like to see a man interested in books. Only, I thought if you knew how to handle wire, I would get you to hold this end while I work with the other."

"I guess I know enough for that," was Sweetwater's gay rejoinder. But when he felt that communicating wire in his hand and experienced for the first time the full influence of the other's eye, it took all his hardihood to hide the hypnotic thrill it gave him. He found himself gazing long and earnestly at this man's hand, and wondering if death lay under it. It was a strong hand, a deft, clean-cut member, formed to respond to the slightest hint from the powerful brain controlling it. But was this its whole story. Had he said all when he had said this?

Fascinated by the question, Sweetwater died a hundred deaths in his awakened fancy, as he followed the sharp, short instructions which fell with cool precision from the other's lips. A hundred deaths, I say, but with no betrayal of his folly. The anxiety he showed was that of one eager to please, which may explain why on the conclusion of his task, Mr. Brotherson gave him one of his infrequent smiles and remarked, as he buried the model under its cover, "You're handy and you're quiet at your job. Who knows but what I shall

want you again. Will you come if I call you?"

"Won't I?" was the gay retort, as the detective, thus released, stooped for the book still lying on the floor. "Paolo and Francesca," he read, from the back, as he laid it on the table. "Poetry?" he queried.

"Rot," scornfully returned the other, as he moved to take down a bottle and some glasses from a cupboard let into another portion of the wall.

Sweetwater, taking advantage of the moment, sidled towards the shelf where that empty space still gaped with the tell-tale hole at the back. He could easily have replaced the missing book before Mr. Brotherson turned. But the issue was too doubtful. He was dealing with no absent-minded fool, and it behooved him to avoid above all things calling attention to the book or to the place on the shelf where it belonged.

But there was one thing he could do and did. Reaching out a finger as deft as Brotherson's own, he pushed a second volume into the place of the one that was gone. This veiled the auger-hole completely; a fact which so entirely relieved his mind that his old smile came back like sunshine to his lips, and it was only by a distinct effort that he kept the dancing humor from his eyes as he prepared to refuse the glass which Brotherson now brought forward.

"None of that!" said he. "You mustn't tempt me. The doctor has shut down on all kinds of spirits for two months more, at least. But don't let me hinder you. I can bear to smell the stuff. My turn will come again some day."

But Brotherson did not drink. Setting down the glass he carried, he took up the book lying near, weighed it in his hand and laid it down again, with an air of thoughtful inquiry. Then he suddenly pushed it towards Sweetwater. "Do you want it?" he asked.

Sweetwater was too taken aback to answer immediately. This was a move he did not understand. Want it, he? What he wanted was to see it put back in its place on the shelf. Did Brotherson suspect this? The supposition was incredible; yet who could read a mind so mysterious?

Sweetwater, debating the subject, decided that the risk of adding to any such possible suspicion was less to be dreaded than the continued threat offered by that unoccupied space so near the hole which testified so unmistakably of the means he had taken to spy upon this suspected man's privacy. So, after a moment of awkward silence, not out of keeping with the character he had assumed, he calmly refused the present as he had the glass.

Unhappily he was not rewarded by seeing the despised volume restored to its shelf. It still lay where its owner had pushed it, when, with some



"None of That!" He Said, awkwardly muttered thanks, the discomfited detective withdrew to his own room.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Uses of Papyrus.

The Papyrus plant, which once flourished in large quantities in Egypt, but is now almost extinct there, still abounds in the Jordan Valley, as well as in the neighborhood of Jaffa and Sidon. It grows best in a marshy soil, easily attaining a height of eight to ten feet. The stems of the plant, which are hollow, like bamboo, are leafless, and as thick as a man's arm at the lower part, tapering away to a point. This wood, says a writer in the Wide World Magazine, is used today in the east for a variety of purposes, both ornamental and useful. At Jaffa it is converted into sandals, boxes, various articles of furniture, and even into boats. In ancient times, particularly when the Pharaohs reigned in Egypt, the papyrus was cultivated and converted into paper, and many museums can boast of specimens of these ancient papyri manuscripts.