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### A Story of the Great Blizzard

By GEORGE V. EDSON

It was the night that the great blizzard of 1888 came whirling down from the clouds. I, a medical man, was out on the road driving home in my buggy (that was before the day of automobiles) about 1 o'clock in the morning. The snow grew deeper and deeper, and I began to get uneasy. My horse now and again would stop and look about him, apparently as uneasy as I. Dumb animals, though they are more easily frightened than men, sometimes manifest a strong sense of danger under what may appear ordinary circumstances.

There was a large, square brick house beside the road a few hundred feet ahead of me. I could distinguish its dark bulk, there being no lights within.

Meanwhile I was becoming benumbed and drowsy. I remember reaching a point directly before the house, getting out of the buggy and floundering to the door. I hoped to secure assistance to get my horse under cover. This is the last I have ever been able to recall of being out in that terrible blizzard.

The next thing before me was the door opening and a man, very pale and excited, saying: "Come in, doctor. We were fearful that you would not get here."

The house was lighted and servants were moving about hurriedly, just as I had often seen them doing in houses where some one was very ill. The man who admitted me led me upstairs and into a room where a girl apparently about eighteen years old lay on a bed. My conductor turned down the bedclothing, spotted with blood, and revealed towels that were used to stop hemorrhage. I cautiously removed them, but, seeing the red fluid pour out, I quickly replaced them.

While thinking what to do I glanced about the apartment. The furniture was such as was used during the early part of the nineteenth century, the bed on which the girl was lying having a canopy supported by four high posts. There were heavy curtains to the windows. Near a fireplace stood two persons, an old woman and a young man, who were looking at me appealingly, and I knew they were begging me to save the girl's life. I noticed that their dress was old fashioned. They resembled each other, and I guessed they were mother and son. The mother's arms were about her boy.

Cast a glance at the man standing beside me, I saw that he was about the age of the woman with her son and judged that he was the husband and father. On a lounge lay a sword, and there was blood on the blade. I formed a conclusion, largely from the young man's agonized appearance, that he had stabbed the girl.

I had no instruments with me, but I needed none, for I saw that the girl was dying. To stanch that flow of blood was beyond my skill. I replaced the bedclothing and stood over the invalid, avoiding the appealing gaze of the others until it was plain that all was over, then turned away. After leaving the room it seems to me now that I walked into oblivion, for I was not conscious of anything till I felt something hot passing down my throat. I opened my eyes and saw a man holding me, while another man was holding a flask.

I don't suppose that my vision, dream or whatever it was could have lasted over two or three minutes. The men saw me drive by the house they were in, a few hundred yards below, and, realizing that I was in danger, started after me. I had left my buggy and, bewildered by one of the whirlwinds that came without intermission, had fallen in the snow.

They put me back into my buggy and managed to get the team and me to their house, where a cheerful fire was blazing, and after another hot dose I was put to bed, where I slept soundly till morning. All that day the snow came down, whirling as it fell, and the next day also. It was seventy hours before the road became passable and I got away.

Before leaving I expressed a desire to go into the house before which I had been rescued. The persons with whom I had been lodged told me that it was vacant and the key in possession of a man and his wife living a short distance up the road. I begged them to borrow it for me, which they did, and I went to the house and entered it.

Now comes the singular part of my story. I had certainly not been in that house before, and yet I saw it just as I had seen it when admitted by the man who had led me to the bed of the stricken girl. The passageway was the same, the room was the same, and there stood the great four poster bedstead. But the bed was made up, and there was no one except myself present.

I inquired if any murder had been committed there, but no one remembered any such occurrence. At the same time I was told that the house was very old—more than a hundred years—and much might have taken place there that would not be known to succeeding generations.

What is my theory? Well, I am a medical man and in my old age am beginning to realize that there are many things in the universe beyond our ken. I have no theory, but I do not believe my vision was a mere dream.

### Self Accused

By M. QUAD

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I had been practicing law in the town of Lancaster for about four years when James Higgins, merchant, was murdered. According to the testimony of his wife, they were aroused at midnight by a noise downstairs, and he went down to investigate. She heard angry words, followed by a shot, and, giving the alarm, it was found that the husband had been shot through the heart.

The first suspect arrested was the hostler at the barns of one of the hotels. He had been seen on the streets at midnight; he was known to have a pistol; he betrayed many signs of guilt when arrested. I was employed in his defense and after half an hour's talk with him came to the conclusion that he was guilty. He didn't admit his guilt, but at the same time he didn't deny it with the warmth expected of an innocent man. It was an accident altogether that I made a series of discoveries. This man planned with another to break open the passenger depot and rob the safe. They had been surprised in their work by a tramp, and the hostler was afraid to talk to me or any one else of the murder case for fear of being found out in the lesser crime. When once I had the things straightened out it did not take long to upset the case of the police. I had scarcely done this when I was upset myself.

A building contractor named Otis came to me to make a confession. He had reasons to suspect that Higgins had ruined his home, and when there was no longer any doubt in his mind he had determined to kill the man.

I went to work on the case, but was bowled over at the very outset. Mrs. Otis declared in the most emphatic way that she had never spoken a dozen words to Higgins and her husband had never intimated that he had the slightest cause for jealousy of any man, and, better than all, she could prove that from 10 o'clock in the evening until two hours after midnight on the night of the murder he was home and in bed and quite ill. This she did prove by two witnesses. Otis had told me a purely imaginative story, and he stuck to it for several days, but at length denied everything. There were those who said he was "off" in his head, but he talked and acted as a sane man and returned to his business as soon as released.

The police now returned to their first theory. The deed had surely been done by some one who had entered the house for plunder. After some days they arrested a saloonkeeper in a town some five miles away, claiming to have a straight case against him, and the man had been under arrest three or four days when I came into the case again. A young man named Salters, who was a student of the state normal school, came to my house at 10 o'clock at night to make a confession. He was the murderer of Higgins. Higgins had accidentally got hold of some love letters which the young man had written, and had refused to give them up for less than \$100. Not having the money to pay and being rendered desperate, he had gone to search the house at night. Salters told of the conversation when Higgins came down the stairs—how he got in and got out and all the details. I advised him to go to the police, and, as in the other case, they locked him up and felt sure that they had at last got the right man.

I was not retained by young Salters, who said that he would make no defense, but I set out to clear up a few points to satisfy my own curiosity. I was not long in ascertaining that he was not in love with any girl and had never been known to write a love letter, also that he was in a town twenty miles away on the night of the murder. When these facts became known to the police they had to drop their case, though Salters protested to the last that he was guilty.

There was one more instance, and it partook of the ridiculous at once. A one legged man named Wells, a resident of the town, gave himself up to the police as the murderer. He claimed to be a somnambulist and that the deed was done while he was asleep. He didn't think he ought to be punished, but he wanted to be tried and acquitted. Not one true statement did he make in his story, and he was told to take his leg and get out.

The hunt for the true criminal was kept up for a year, but he was never discovered. The police were no doubt right in the first theory. The man entered the house for plunder, and, being discovered, if not attacked, he fired the fatal shot and then escaped. It is more than likely that he was a stranger in the town.

You will naturally ask why those people charged themselves with the crime when they were not the least bit guilty. A physician could probably give you a clearer answer. My theory is that they had an intense argument with themselves how the crime was committed or how they would have committed it if they actually did commit it. Such cases are rare, and it must be for some such reason that courts often refuse to accept a plea of guilty and give the accused a fair trial for his life and liberty. There are people, as every lawyer and detective knows, who are anxious to be witnesses in a case and will perjure themselves on the stand without seeming to be aware of it, and it is carrying out this singular line of conduct or train of thought that one may come to accuse himself.

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