

Hidden Ways

By FREDERIC F. VAN DE WATER

CHAPTER XIII—Continued

Allegra's silence bothered me. Her profile was clear and sharp as the head on a coin in the uneven pulsing of lights beyond the taxi window.

"I lied to Agatha today. I don't usually do that. I told her, when Grove dropped out, that I couldn't get anyone to take me to the opera tonight. I never tried. I only said that I was disappointed and she did what I hoped she'd do."

Once or twice in a lifetime, fortune offers you the thing you want most and, remembering the way she has treated you, you don't believe it. I did not now. I thought I was reading wild meaning into her words. She turned toward me with an odd little smile and hurried on:

"I've been lonely and frightened and I—needed you, I guess. I needed to be alone with you and Tell All. I thought we could be—friends. And instead, you behave as though you were—well, a millionaire that a low-down gal was trying to compromise."

"If I have," I told her. "I beg your pardon, my dear. I think, though, that you've got the parts mixed up. You're the millionaire. Wait a minute—" I saw she was trying to break in and I hurried on:

"It galls you to have—misered your aunt. All right. What about me? She's lifted me out of a hallman's uniform; she's given me a job and her confidence. I have little integrity, maybe, but I'm not a complete so-and-so. It mightn't do you a bit of harm to consider the problems of someone else now and then."

The girl did not answer. She had turned her head and was looking out of the window. I did not wonder that so few persons in this world were ever nobly renunciatory. There was no pleasure in it. I said:

"And now that that is all cleared up to our mutual dissatisfaction, how about changing the subject?"

"It's not necessary," she answered and turning as though she had decided something, looked squarely at me. "We're almost home."

"And maybe that's just as well, too," I answered. "Thank you, Miss Paget—for a great many things."

Her laugh was like a breaking stick. Then she caught hold of herself.

"If you don't stop patting me on the head," she warned, "I'll take a poke at you. Will you answer one question for me—honestly? Just one?"

I could see the marquee of the Morello, just ahead, and a group of men who lingered on the curb beneath the street light.

"Will you?" Allegra asked again, and I wondered why her voice was so tense.

"I promise," I told her and belatedly wondered if I were pledging myself to disloyalty to Cochran. "Unless," I added, "it concerns someone else." For a few minutes I had forgotten the murder and Lyon's almost certain part in it. It came back to me now and made me a little sick. The cab slowed down. Allegra asked in a low, clear voice:

"You're in love with me, aren't you?"

The taxi had stopped and Walters was opening the door. I might have kept silent, but her hand clung to mine as I helped her out. I heard myself say:

"You'll never know how much." She hurried on into the foyer while I paid the fare. As I turned to follow, someone said:

"The society bellhop, himself."

Larry Duke was of the group that gathered around me. I knew the faces of others and the malease within me quickened into nausea. Why were reporters hanging, like vultures, about the Morello again?

"Any statement," Duke asked nastily, "on the most recent—unpleasantness, Count?"

The forestate of disaster was bitter in my mouth. Its savor made it easier to hold my temper.

"I'll leave the issue," I told Duke, "to the good sense of the American people."

I started away but someone else caught me by the sleeve.

"Listen, fella," he begged. "They've just found this Everett Ferriter's body at the bottom of the area. What's it all about?"

When I could speak, I said as steadily as I might:

"You tell me. Suicide?"

"Suicide, hell," Duke said with relish. "They caught your girl friend's brother in the Ferriter flat, right after Everett went out the window. And they're dusting off the hot seat for him, right now."

CHAPTER XIV

A reporter asked another question. The words made no sense. As I broke away, I stepped on someone's foot and he swore. I ran into the foyer.

It was not flight. Duke's tidings had rubbed out thought of self. My purpose was to reach Allegra as quickly as I might. I must get between her and the blow's full force.

There was a cop in the Morello's hall once more. I wondered if Allegra had read the portent of his presence. He scowled at me and said something I did not catch. My evening clothes must have daunted him, for he backed up and let me

pass. Then I saw her at the end of the gloomily ornate foyer.

She waited beside the elevator shaft but the car was upstairs. Wherefore, I was thankful and, at the same time, wretched. I must tell her what had happened, here and now.

She looked so small, in her broad-caded evening wrap—slender as a flame and unconscious that the wind of fresh tragedy rose to blow her about. She heard me coming and turned.

I saw in her smile a trace of the last words I had blurted. She thought I was a lover, returning to complete a pledge half-spoken. That made it harder. The world had changed since I had helped her from the cab.

The elevator might appear; someone else might intervene, at any second. There was no time for tact. A dirty job was best done quickly. I let her have it all in one breath.

"You'll have to take it, my dear. Everett Ferriter is dead and they think your brother had something to do with it."

Vaguely, all that evening, I had wondered how much of her high color was make-up. I knew now. Her face grew white. Her lips were gray, but they did not tremble. She took it standing and never wavered. Her eyes hurt me. She asked,

"What happened?" in a level voice, and I told her what Duke and the others had told me. She said, "He didn't do it."

I said, as cheerfully as I could:

"Reporters think in headlines. It's probably much less serious than they say. I only wanted to tell you before you walked into it."

"Where is he?" Her eyes held mine as though that impersonal contact kept her up.

I said, "Upstairs," and rang again for the elevator. After the far shrill of the bell, I heard the old machinery groan.

I stumbled over many things I wished to say—yet might not, and at last managed:

"I've hurt you but it seemed the only way. I'll leave you here, but I'll wait. If you, or your aunt, want me, you can telephone the foyer."

"Please," she whispered as the shaft door slid open, "please come up with me."

She stood, stiff and silent, on that journey upward. Toward its end, she turned as though her neck were stiff and asked:

"A cigarette?"

I lighted it for her and we stepped from the car. The door clanged behind us. She fumbled in her bag for her key. The first shock of the blow was wearing off. Her mouth worked and her fingers blundered. In front of the Ferriter flat, a plain-clothes man watched us. He chewed gum and his derby rocked with each movement of his jaws. Allegra said at last:

"Please ring the bell. I don't think," she added with a twisted smile, "we're likely to get anyone out of bed."

Annie, in a rumpled wrapper, opened the door. Her eyes were red and her breath came in small explosions.

"Where is Miss Paget?" Allegra asked crisply.

"In the livin' room," the woman faltered and closed the door behind us.

"And Mr. Paget?" the girl went on.

Annie wept. "Yonder," she wailed. "Them cops—" She jerked her head toward the Ferriter apartment and could say no more. I followed Allegra down the hall.

Miss Agatha Paget, her body folded precisely in a black silk dressing gown, sat in her wheel chair and smoked. The lids of her keen eyes were unreddened by tears. Her hair was drawn back by a thin braid from the face that had the bold calm of the hawk.

For an instant, as her niece ran to her and the old woman looked up for her kiss, I saw the hard features soften. The girl bent over her a long instant and then, with one hand locked in her aunt's, turned to me.

"He didn't want to come up," she defended. "I made him. Agatha, what is it? What's really happened?"

Miss Agatha drew on her cigarette and blew smoke through her beaked nose. I thought, as she looked at me, of the figurehead of a ship, worn and immune to storm. She asked dryly:

"Material for another chapter in the book, David?"

"No," I said. "I had no business barging in. Only if there is anything I can do—"

"Name something," she broke in. I stammered:

"Have you thought of a lawyer? I mean—"

"Long ago," she told me. "I think I got Tertius Grosbeck out of bed. If he doesn't take too long dressing, he should be here before Shannon finishes with Grove, across the hall."

She had lighted another cigarette while she spoke. I saw her hand twitch as she uttered her nephew's name. Allegra asked:

"Agatha, what happened? Everett is dead and—"

The old head jerked agreement. The old voice said without a falter: "Very dead. In the area, with a broken neck, I believe."

"But why—" the girl cried, and her aunt answered the anguish in her voice without waiting for more words.

"My dear, there was a struggle of some sort before he—fell. I heard it. So did everyone else whose windows open on the area—bumping and voices and then a yell and a fall."

Her thin shoulders drew together in the least possible shudder.

"Grove," said Miss Agatha, quite calmly, "was in the Ferriter apartment. They caught him coming out. You know he had a latchkey?"

She looked up sharply at her niece.

"Yes," the girl admitted.

Miss Agatha patted Allegra's hand.

"I wonder," she mused aloud, "if there aren't limits beyond which loyalty is no virtue. We both knew and yet—"

The bell rang and we heard Annie shuffle to the door.

"Because," the girl began, but her aunt took the thought away from her.

"Because Grove is such a stubborn young devil that we were afraid if we protested it would only drive him further. We were wrong, my dear. Marriage with Ione is better than the murder of her brother."

"He didn't!" Allegra exclaimed.

Miss Agatha nodded and bit through an invisible thread.

"You know it," she answered. "I know it. I don't think Captain Shannon who has kept Grove"—she glanced at the clock on the mantel—"for almost an hour now, is so certain. There is that struggle, which everyone heard, which turns a suicide theory rather sour."

The calm in which they endured their wretchedness was too much for me. I said:

"One might fight to prevent a suicide, as well as to commit a murder."

Miss Agatha looked at me hard.

"Every now and then, David," she told me, "I admire your mind. It is so much like mine. Obviously, that's what happened. I doubt whether the police will accept our explanation."

Captain Shannon entered. At once, Miss Agatha and her niece drew down, over their emotion, the opaque shades of utter calm. Shannon ducked his head toward them and looked hard at me. Inwardly, he fumed. Anger or bewilderment had reddened his face and blurred his freckles. Outwardly he was calm and his voice was regretful.

"Miss Paget," said he, "I'm sorry, but we'll have to take him in."

I heard Allegra catch her breath. Miss Agatha's face did not stir. She asked:

"Then he, my nephew, has implicated himself?"

Shannon's exasperation got away from him. He rumbled his reddish-gray hair.

"We'll have to take him in," he repeated, "for obstructing justice, if nothing else. Implicated himself! The facts implicate him, Miss Paget. We can get nothing out of him. He'll not say a word, beyond that he tried to stop this Ferriter from jumping."

Tiny lines about Miss Agatha's eyes deepened with satisfaction.

"My own explanation," she said. Shannon shook his head like a worrying terrier.

"Unfortunately," he told her, "that's not all of it. Why was he in that flat? He won't say. How came he to have a latchkey? He won't say. Why, having one, didn't he admit it when the first murder was committed? Same answer. Where was he the afternoon this Blackbeard was stabbed? He was walking uptown."

His grunt was thick with disgust. I stuck my oar in.

"Mr. Paget came in a full hour after that killing. I saw him."

They all looked at me. There was no friendliness in Shannon's regard.

"Sure," he snorted. "Didn't everybody? Nobody could have killed Blackbeard, but his corpse is still in the morgue, isn't it? I'm thinking this second murder—or whatever—is going to solve the first."

Anger pushed him beyond discretion. He fished in his pocket and drew forth a folded sheet of typewriter paper.

"Among the things that your nephew won't tell," he said to Miss Agatha, "is why he wrote this note we found in his pocket."

I could have choked him for the pleased voice in which he read aloud:

"My dear: I have failed as usual and can stand no more. When another death may settle everything, I do not hesitate."

He seemed disappointed at the woman's lack of expression and thrust the paper back into his pocket, muttering, I had peered over his shoulder as he read and now I said to Miss Agatha:

"Typewritten and unsigned. It proves nothing."

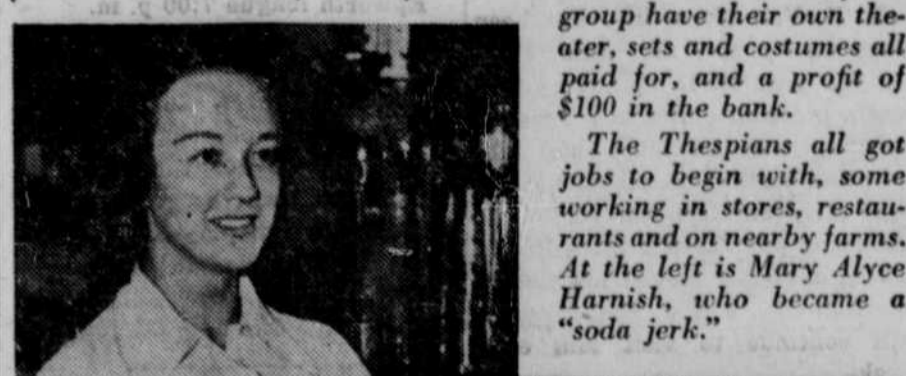
Shannon wheeled and glared. Knowledge of his own incantation made him still angrier.

"Written," he said and thrust out his heavy lower jaw, "on the typewriter in the front room yonder, as I've just proved, my lad."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Thesians Build Their Own Theater in Redwood Forest

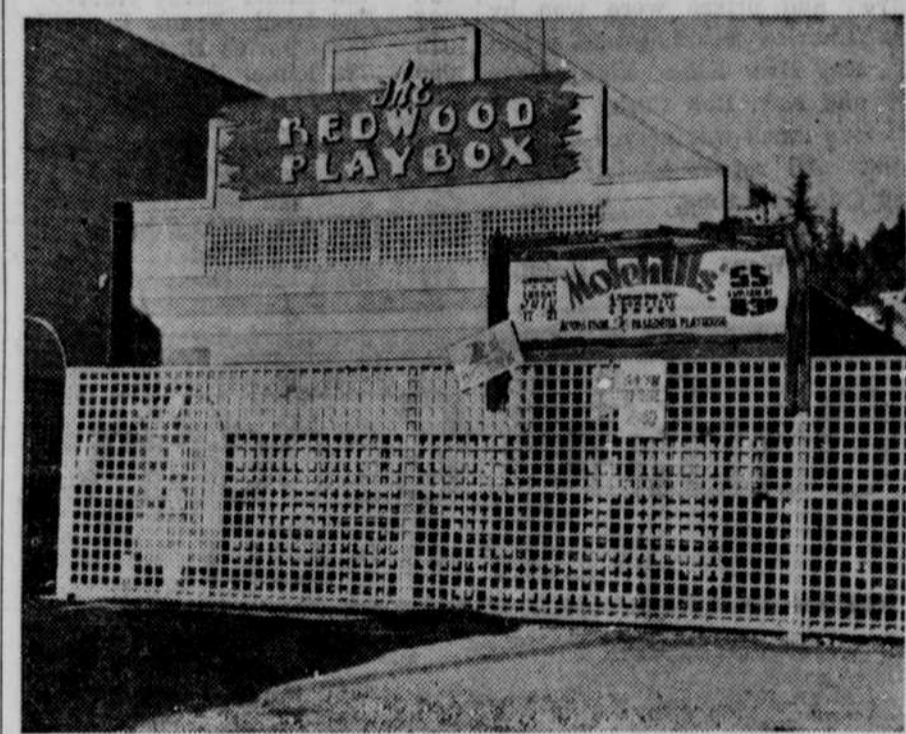
Having graduated from the Pasadena Community School of the Theater, eight young, enthusiastic Thesians decided that wherever people congregate a theater could be built, with reasonable hope of success. So they went to Garberville, California, a thriving community in the heart of the giant redwood forests, which attracts visitors from all parts of the world. Here they built the "Redwood Playbox"—the first of a series of stepping stones to stage or screen fame. At the end of their first "season" the Redwood Playbox group have their own theater, sets and costumes all paid for, and a profit of \$100 in the bank.



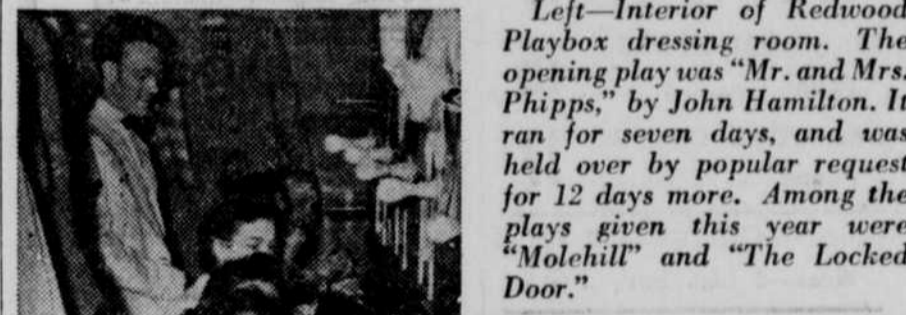
The Thesians all got jobs to begin with, some working in stores, restaurants and on nearby farms. At the left is Mary Alice Harnish, who became a "soda jerk."



Each member of the Redwood Playbox has majored in a special field, apart from their ability as an actor. One is a scenic designer, another a stage technician, a commercial artist, and so on. At the right is David Breneiser, a grocery clerk. All have fine singing voices.



Above—the attractive rustic redwood theater built by the Thesians during their spare time. It seats 75 people comfortably. The players made their own stage sets, sewed their own costumes and built their own technical equipment, consisting of tin can spot and border lights; a spaghetti box and a lot of ordinary house wire became a switchboard.



Left—Interior of Redwood Playbox dressing room. The opening play was "Mr. and Mrs. Phipps," by John Hamilton. It ran for seven days, and was held over by popular request for 12 days more. Among the plays given this year were "Molehill" and "The Locked Door."



Phyllis Benbow is shown by the guest book. Notables such as Spencer Tracy, Governor Culbert L. Olson of California, ex-President Hoover and others have been guests at the Playbox.



Keep Liver Healthy and Enjoy Life

By DR. JAMES W. BARTON
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

YOU have heard the expression that "life depends upon the liver," but an improvement on this expression might be "the enjoyment of life depends upon the liver." A healthy, active liver enables us to face our responsibilities and troubles with our best selves, whereas a sluggish liver, with slow moving bile, makes little trouble or responsibilities loom very large in our minds.

TODAY'S HEALTH COLUMN

Some idea of the work done by the bile salts in the body is outlined by Drs. A. C. Ivy and A. L. Berman, Chicago, in Minnesota Medicine, who reminds us that the bile salts promote the formation of bile, keep fatty acids in solution, aid in the digestion of fats and their absorption into the blood, enable the blood to absorb iron and calcium (two very necessary minerals) more readily, have a laxative action, and take an important part in destroying poisons in the intestine.

As mentioned before, this action of the bile in causing the large intestine to move its wastes along and prevent constipation, is one of the big factors in enabling us to face our daily work and responsibilities with the courage man naturally possesses. The fact also that the bile can destroy the poisons or harmful wastes that would poison the blood stream means much in maintaining our everyday courage.

How to Keep Liver Healthy.

The bile can be manufactured by the liver and flow freely from liver only if the liver is kept healthy.

How can the liver be kept healthy? I have spoken a number of times of the two ways you can keep your liver working properly; first by not eating large meals, especially of fats and second, by bending, twisting, and breathing exercises which "squeeze" the liver, stimulate the circulation and speed up the flow of bile from the liver and gall bladder.

Where there is stasis or sluggishness of the gall bladder, Drs. Ivy and Berman suggest the use of bile salts to increase the flow of bile.

Where there is acute gall bladder disease, the use of bile salts or other remedies should be prescribed only by a physician.

Ulcerative Colitis Yields to Oil Enemas

WHAT is called ulcerative colitis, where the lining of the colon is greatly inflamed and ulceration present, the symptoms may be so severe that surgery is necessary to obtain relief. For years, mild anti-septic enemas have been used once or twice a day, and sometimes oil enemas, which were left in the colon overnight. What may prove of much help in severe cases is enemas of cod liver oil.

Dr. H. Gainsborough in the Lancet, London, reports his results of using cod liver oil enemas in six cases of ulcerative colitis.

Preliminary Treatment.

Before using the cod liver oil enemas, patients were given complete rest in bed and starch and opium enemas to reduce the diarrhoea and irritability of the colon. These starch and opium enemas kept the colon so quiet that the patients were able to hold the cod liver oil enemas in the colon all night. This gave the cod liver oil all these hours to help heal the ulcers and raw surfaces. At the beginning of the treatment the patient was able to hold the cod liver oil enemas only a short time and they were given during the day. Later they were given at bed time and held by the patient till morning. The beginning dose was two ounces at a time, gradually increasing up to eight ounces.

Three of the six patients whose illness had lasted 3, 6 and 15 months, respectively, were cured and have remained cured for the last two years. One patient suffering for 12 years remained well 15 months and then relapsed; another suffering six years relapsed after 15 months, but was cured after further use of the cod liver oil enemas. The sixth patient was not helped.

QUESTION BOX

Q.—Can infected teeth and tonsils cause heart disease?

A.—Yes.

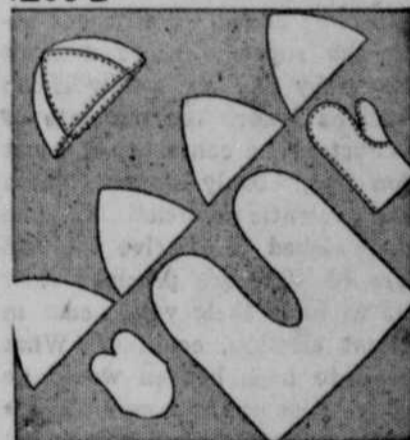
Q.—What harm could sodium dilantin cause when taken under physician's direction for petit mal epilepsy?

A.—Sodium dilantin gives severe reactions in some cases. This treatment should at first be directly under a physician's supervision. It has come into more general use lately.

Accessory Set for Sports or Campus



1265-B



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Isn't This Why You Are Constipated?

What do you eat for breakfast? Coffee, toast, maybe some eggs? What do you eat for lunch and dinner? White bread, meat, potatoes? It's little wonder you're constipated. You probably don't eat enough "bulk." And "bulk" doesn't mean the amount you eat. It's a kind of food that forms a soft "bulky" mass in the intestines and helps a movement. If this is your trouble, may we suggest a crunchy toasted cereal—Kellogg's All-Bran—for breakfast. All-Bran is a natural food, not a medicine—but it's particularly rich in "bulk." Being so, it can help you not only to get regular but to keep regular. Eat All-Bran regularly, and drink plenty of water. Made by Kellogg's in Battle Creek. If your condition is chronic, it is wise to consult a physician.

World Goes Round
The world is a wheel, and it will all come round right.—Disraeli.

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WATCH

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THE SPECIALS