



and be my Love



By PEGGY DERN
WNU RELEASE

THE STORY THUS FAR: Reynolds questions Meg at her home. There is a knock at the door, and Martha Evans, Tom Fallon's sister-in-law, enters. She wanted to tell them about the knife. Martha's story is that Alicia was not murdered with the knife that was found. That knife, she declared, was one she and Tom had taken away from Tom's wife, Letty, the invalid and mental patient. Martha declared that Tom did not know his wife's true condition, believing her to be getting better. "But she is violent at times," Martha insisted, as she told how Letty had attacked her with the knife one night. "That night you said you fell and hurt your ankle?" Meg asked. Martha denied it.

CHAPTER XV

Miss Martha said huskily, "Only I didn't fall—she pushed me down the steps."

Bob waited, and after a little, she went on huskily, "Tom and I saw to it that there was never any—any instrument around that she could use to hurt herself—or anybody else. Tom thought she was bedridden; I hadn't told him that she was growing stronger, that she could walk—not very far, but at least she was no longer helpless. I knew, of course, the danger that was growing around her—danger that she might slip away from me and—do some horrible thing—"

Bob said swiftly, "Then you mean that she managed to get away and kill Mrs. Stevenson."

Miss Martha flung up her head. Her eyes blazed. "She did nothing of the sort! Use your head, young man. It's a mile from our house to Mrs. Stevenson's place—she couldn't travel that far. And she hadn't been out of my sight one single minute since the night she attacked me," she blazed at him hotly.

Bob said gently, "We have only your word for that, Miss Evans."

Miss Martha's stocky body slumped a little and she said wearily, "Yes, of course—you have only my word for it—"

"And the knife, Miss Evans?" asked Bob very quietly.

She seemed to wince as though he had struck her. She drew a deep breath and lifted her head a little. Her shoulders sagged.

"Yes, the knife," she repeated. "That was—night before last. As I said, Tom didn't know that Letty could get out of bed, or walk; he thought it was a little foolish of me to keep every sharp-pointed instrument in the house under lock and key. He thought as long as we kept them out of her room, out of her reach—"

She shrugged tiredly and then she went on in that heavy, exhausted voice, "so he left a knife out on the kitchen sink night before last. I'd—had a good deal of trouble with Letty and I was very tired. I slept in her room, and I thought that she was sleeping soundly, and so I let myself go to sleep. When I woke up—I don't know what woke me, but—suddenly I was wide-awake, and—there was Letty standing beside my bed, bending over me, the moonlight on—that knife in her hand—"

She set her teeth hard in her lower lip, and her hands crushed each other, and in spite of her efforts at self-control, two swollen tears slipped from her eyes and down her white cheeks, leaving little marks in the thick powder spread so inexpertly there.

Megan went to her and put an arm about her, and for a moment, Miss Martha resisted; then she turned and hid her face against Megan, while the two men waited. Laurence was sick with pity for this tired, harassed woman who had carried her heartbreaking burden for so long with such indomitable courage; Bob's expression was intent, watchful—waiting.

"Whom did you see then?" demanded Bob.

"No one," answered Miss Martha firmly. Too firmly. Too emphatically. "I saw no one at all—no one."

Bob said sternly, "You're not telling me the truth, Miss Evans. Up to now, I believe you. But if you start telling me lies now, don't you see you're likely to make me believe that all you've told me is a lie!"

Miss Martha said grimly, "You can believe anything you want to, young man. I've told you all I'm going to tell you. And I've never told you what I did if I had not felt so sure that you'd jump to the conclusion that the knife Amos helped you find was the one that killed Mrs. Stevenson—and once you were convinced of that, you'd not stop until you'd hauled in some poor devil that was as innocent of that crime as—my poor Letty."

She got up and Bob said sternly, "I've not finished yet—"

Miss Martha eyed him as though he had been an importunate beggar, and said coolly, "Haven't you? Well, I have. Good day to you all."

She looked at Megan and said tonelessly, "Tom and I are—taking Letty home. We're leaving today, so this will be good-by—and—thanks for all you've done."

"Miss Martha, whom did you see that night?" Bob demanded sharply. "I can forbid you to leave, you know—I can hold you as a material witness—"

"A witness to what? I wasn't within a mile of the Stevenson place," Miss Martha pointed out. "Amos is my alibi, just as I am his. I'd say that he and I are the two people

knew I had to come and tell you about it, since telling—you couldn't cause my poor Letty any trouble—now."

Bob nodded, sitting on the edge of the desk, his eyes fastened on Miss Martha's face.

"Amos, who saw the knife being hidden, spoke of a 'thing in white, about eight feet tall'—he mentioned."

There was the faintest possible trace of a smile in Miss Martha's tired eyes.

"I know," she told him quietly. "It was a bright moonlight night and you never know who may be roaming around late at night in these parts," and for just the barest instant her glance flickered towards Megan and away. "I didn't want anyone to see me—you can understand that, of course. And it occurred to me that that old place would be an ideal place to hide something you didn't ever want found. But if somebody saw me—and recognized me—you see?"

Bob nodded. "Of course," he answered quickly.

"Well, Tom was with Letty," Miss Martha went on. "I slipped out into



Then she turned and hid her face against Megan, while the men waited.

the kitchen, got the knife, and a sheet out of the linen closet. I also took a good stout walking stick that I sometimes use when I go to the grocery—there are so many half-savage dogs around—and I put one of Tom's hats on the end of the stick, and held the stick above my head, under the sheet. I imagine I must have looked pretty fearsome. But, you see, I wanted anybody who saw me to think he was seeing a ghost—and if such things as ghosts exist, surely their favorite place would be something like that old overgrown garden. I never dreamed that anybody seeing me would stop long enough to see what I was doing—or, if he did, that he would report it to anybody."

"You didn't see Amos?" asked Bob quickly.

"No," answered Miss Martha, and hesitated so oddly that Bob's attention was caught and it grew stronger.

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who couldn't possibly have had anything to do with the murder."

"But you did see someone that night—" began Bob.

She met his eyes straightly and said coolly, "Did I?"

Megan drew a deep breath and said levelly, "You saw me, didn't you, Miss Martha?"

Bob flung her a startled glance, but Laurence's mouth only tightened a little.

Miss Martha looked straight at Megan and then she sighed and nodded. "Yes, I saw you," she admitted.

Bob said quickly, "Look here, Miss MacTavish, you haven't told me anything about being up there that night—"

"You didn't ask me!" Megan reminded him.

"I said that if you were in bed and asleep, you couldn't have heard a scream—"

Megan nodded. "And I said, no, I couldn't—but you didn't ask me if I had been in my bed asleep," she reminded him again.

"Who was with you?" he asked sternly. "Don't tell me you went out alone at that time of night."

Megan said quietly, "No, I wasn't alone. I was when I left the house. But when I reached the Ridge—Mr. Fallon was there and we talked a little while."

Bob asked abruptly, "Your father was involved with Mrs. Stevenson, wasn't he?"

Megan gasped as though he had struck her, and Laurence said sharply, "Hi, lay off, Bob. You have no right to ask her such a question."

Bob met his eyes squarely and said coolly, "Haven't I?"

"As her counsel—" began Laurence heatedly, but Bob's grin was cool, amused, and it silenced him.

Bob lit a cigarette, first securing permission from Megan.

And then he looked at Miss Martha and said very gently, "Miss Evans, just why did you kill Mrs. Stevenson?"

It was so unexpected, and the tone of his quiet, even voice was in such contrast to the thing he said that for a moment everybody in the room went rigid; and outside the door, in the shadowy hall, there was a smothered gasp from the unseen, but listening, Anne.

Miss Martha sat very quiet for a moment, her body held upright by her grip on the arms of her chair. Without raising her face she lifted her eyes and looked straight at Bob.

He was watching her quietly, steadily, and in complete silence.

After a moment, Miss Martha sagged back in her chair, limp and beaten, all her defenses down.

"All right," she said, her voice a mere thread of sound. "I—did it."

Megan caught her breath on a strangled sob and swayed a little. And Laurence, without taking his eyes off Miss Martha's white, ravaged face, put his arm about Megan and drew her close.

"Why, Miss Martha?" asked Bob, very gently, with pity in his voice.

Miss Martha drew a hard breath and lifted her hands in a little gesture of helplessness before she gripped them once more about the arms of her chair. "I—hated her. She was a wicked woman. She made so much trouble for everybody. She had started spreading lies and slander about Tom. I was afraid that Letty might hear—in one of her periods of lucidity. Tom told me about the things she was saying. He had been foolish enough to go to her house one evening and face her with a story she was spreading about him and—Miss MacTavish—"

The tired voice died and she opened her eyes and looked at Megan and said faintly, "I'm—sorry, but I might as well tell you the whole story."

"So Mrs. Stevenson was broadcasting the fact that Miss MacTavish and Mr. Fallon were friends, and hinting that there was more to it than that, and you decided to have a talk with her—was that it?" Bob's gentle voice asked Miss Martha.

She rubbed her hands together as though the palms were damp and her voice steadied a little. "Yes, that was it," she said evenly. "And Mrs. Stevenson was curious about Letty's illness and she came prying and snooping. Tom and I knew that if the people here in Pleasant Grove knew that Letty was—of unsound mind, they might be afraid of her, for all that she was completely helpless, and that Tom might lose his job, or worse still, that he might be forced to—put Letty away in an institution. We couldn't bear the thought of that." Once more the voice died away, and without a sound Anne materialized beside Miss Martha's chair, offering her a glass in which there was some pungent-smelling, milky-colored fluid.

Bob waited patiently until Annie had performed her act of kindness and had once more vanished, as silently as she had come.

"So you went to have a talk with Mrs. Stevenson," Bob prompted Miss Martha, his tone gentle and friendly.

"Yes," said Miss Martha, and now she was pleating the crisp percale of her housedress over her knee with twitching fingers, her eyes on the task.

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WOMAN'S WORLD

Plan Trim New Dresses for Fall While Fabric Selection is Good

By Erta Haley

Easy to Sew



IT SOMETIMES is hard to realize during hot summer days that all the big stores and foresighted women are planning their wardrobes for fall, but that's a fact. If you plan your fall wardrobe now, your chances of getting better material in a wider selection of colors and weaves is greater than if you wait a few weeks.

Every woman likes a few trim new dresses for fall, and the matter is easily solved by selecting patterns and materials that will be figure flattering as well as practical.

One dress for the woman whose wardrobe does not permit the expenditure of too much money is a good basic style with several changes of collar and cuffs. She might like one set of collar and cuffs in a prim and dainty sheer fabric in frosty white. For more dressy wear, a good choice would be a gay stripe or plaid, in taffeta or one of the rayons.

Then again, the basic dress may not need collar or cuffs for really formal, dressy occasions. For this you might like to splurge on some clever costume jewelry—a touch of glitter at the neck, and a matching bracelet. Remember how popular pearl type necklaces were—and still are—and how much they do for a simple black, brown or navy blue dress? That's what I mean.

Basic Dress Must Flatter Figure

Unless you select the most figure-flattering basic dress you won't be able to do a thing with it. The side drape is only good on some figures. Others look better in gored or slightly flared skirts. Still others prefer neat pleats or strictly straight lines.



Select figure-flattering material.

All of these things must be important considerations in choosing a dress that will take the place of several. Select, too, one that has good sleeves and neckline. If you know for example that a V neck doesn't do a thing for you—and it doesn't do much for the very thin, flat-chested woman—then choose something with a little fullness in the bust.

If, on the other hand, you have a well-set pair of shoulders and are well-filled, stay away from too much material at the top of the dress.

Should you be planning several changes of collar and cuffs for the dress, then you will want a basic style that will be usable with collars most flattering to you.

Buy a good pattern, a good material, put the dress together as carefully as you know how, and you will then have the most important ingredients of the successful dress.

Black, navy blue, brown, dark green and gray are the classic colors for this type of dress. The one you look best in should be first, second and third choice.

Small Details Make Dress Fit Wearer

Recent figures prove what most of us have always suspected. That is that few women come close to the perfect figure. This means that small adjustments must be made on patterns and clothes to make them fit perfectly.



Adjust clothes to your figure.

Some women run narrow in the shoulders and need an extra dart there or at the collar to make the dress lie smoothly. Shoulders, of course, can be built up with padding

so that they will balance the figure, but this is an individual problem that must be handled directly in front of the mirror.

Another important problem in fitting is the bodice. To give a well-molded line, it's advisable to take one or two darts under the arms to get this effect. How much of a dart, and just where it should lie, is best determined by basting and fitting.

Just where the hemline should fall is another point that has troubled many of us for a long time. This should not be determined, I feel, so much by what the fashion is, but rather by where the line is most attractive to you. If you are short and plump you will want a longer skirt to give you the long line that is most flattering. The shape of the legs is often the most important factor in the length of the skirt.

Waistlines and sleeve lengths are another detail which would be judged by the figure. For this there is no guide like the full length mirror.

Another detail which can be used with the basic dress is to have one of those soft sheer wool or wool jersey jackets to wear over it. These are some gathered-at-the-waist styles that are nice. There are others that are more tailored.

If you wish to have a bolero jacket as another change of costume with the basic dress, select one made of material and then choose a contrasting print for lining it and make a belt of the print to have with the dress.

Lingerie Touches

A dress will always do more for you if you have proper clothing to wear underneath it. A bulky slip can ruin the good lines of a dress, and a sagging slip is a mark of poor grooming.

Slender figures can wear bias cut slips; the stout figure should have one with gores.

Pay just as much attention to the seams on the slip as the fit. A too-small bias-cut slip will ride up and yield little comfort.

Select the correct length for your height. They now come in short, medium and tall lengths and everyone can be fitted properly. Leave only the minor adjustments for the straps.

Seams on slips should be flat and double-stitched. The zig-zag stitched seams wear well, but they may look wrinkled if you are wearing a sheer dress.

The top of the slip gets hard wear and should be flat and self-stitched around the edge. Lacy tops are pretty and dainty, but if a lightweight dress is worn, a simple slip will give the best lines underneath the garment.

Fashion Forecast

A good fall pick-up for last year's suit or this year's too is a smart stitched dickey. It's fine foil for the felt hats which are destined to appear soon.

If you're buying a good skirt for day wear, select at least two boucles to go with it for extra wear. One may be tailored and in bright, jewel-like colors, while the other may be crisp tubbable white.

Tailored frocks for business and school carry ever-popular saddle stitching, leather belts and other bright accents that liven the costume.

You'll notice some influence from men's wear in some of the sports wear. Some plaid jackets are tailored like the men's, and there are coats, so very sporty looking, that have four pockets.

SEWING CIRCLE PATTERNS

Sailor Dress for Young Girls Date Frock, Keyhole Neckline



8059
4-12 yrs.



8052
11-18

sleeves and softly rounded hipline. Make the wide belt of the same fabric or use one of the smart new purchased ones. A honey of a frock.

Crisp and Fresh

IDEAL school frock for the grammar school crowd. Sailor dresses are a favored style with young girls—they're so crisp and fresh looking. Make this one in a bright check or plaid material and have the collar in snowy white trimmed with contrasting braid. She'll love it for that first day back at school.

Pattern No. 8059 is for sizes 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. Size 6, 2½ yards of 36-inch fabric; ¾ yard for contrasting collar; 3 yards braid.

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AS NEW as tomorrow is this enchanting date dress designed especially for juniors. It features the popular keyhole neck, deep



Way to locate a tiny leak in a roof is go into the attic on a bright sunny day. Then no matter how small the hole, the light will show through.

A pair of tweezers is useful for plucking threads that have been caught in sewing-machine stitching.

For a good swinging-gate support, use an old wagon wheel buried and staked down so the hub is level with the ground. The gate is bolted to the axle, which is then placed in the hub.

Rub tin and iron utensils with unsalted fat and they're rust-proof for even a long period of rest.

A child's sprinkling can is very convenient for watering house plants.

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Pattern No. 8052 comes in sizes 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 18. Size 12 requires 3½ yards of 35 or 36-inch fabric.
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