

# THE RED CIRCLE

## By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"  
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.  
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE  
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

## SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother, Mrs. Egan, are in the Red Circle. June is a woman of the Red Circle on a woman's name outside a certain automobile. June, married with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Smiling Sam." Jim's old crime partner, Max Lamar, dressed as a boy, recovers Mary's coat from the police. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. At the seaside June steals her invention plane from Todd Egan and stinks them in the sea with her boy's clothes. Sent to Surftown by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle paints the Red Circle on her hand and robs the guests at a ball. Mary sees her wash off the mark and points her out to Lamar who follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels and goes after "Smiling Sam." On the edge of a cliff pursuer and pursued engage in deadly combat.

## NINTH INSTALLMENT

## "DODGING THE LAW"

The beach comber was shuffling along the sands, like some furtively uncouth night animal. He was a forlorn spectacle—unshaven, ill clad. For a week, now, he had dwelt in a tumble-down shack at the far end of Surftown beach.

Only after dark did he venture forth in search of food or firewood. The few people who had seen him on these night prowls thought him a mere tramp and nicknamed him "Mike."

This evening Mike was scouring the shore for driftwood. His gaze was caught and gripped by something that layed and reeled eccentrically on the verge of the cliff, far above him.

He looked more closely. There, silhouetted against the brightness of the midnight sky, he could make out two close-locked bodies fighting for very life on the cliff edge.

Mike stared upward, spellbound. Then he shouted. The night wind carried away his cry of warning. Galvanized into feverish activity, he cast aside his carefully hoarded armful of wood and ran to the base of the cliff.

Forgetful of his own safety, Mike began to swarm up the steep trail, toward the summit.

Max Lamar was yielding, inch by inch, to the fearful pressure of his foe. With every ounce of his 240

pounds, and with every atom of his mighty strength, "Smiling Sam" Egan was striving to drag Lamar to the cliff brink and hurl him over.

Max realized his enemy's intent, and fought like a wildcat to overcome the terrible handicap of weight. He wrenched one arm free and struck.

His left fist battered thuddingly against the sweating flesh of Egan's upturned face.

Egan shifted his hold, so as to pinion the fiercely driven left arm, and twisted his broad face to one side to evade the shower of blows.

The maneuver enabled Max to tear free his right arm. Bracing himself, he threw every atom of his weight and his waning strength into a short-arm uppercut. His fist caught Sam at the point of the jaw.

Egan's mighty arms relaxed their hold under the impact of the blow. Before he could brace himself, Lamar struck again. Egan reeled backward, dizzy and all but helpless. With boxer's intuition, Max knew a third blow would end the fight. He braced his feet to deliver it, throwing his right foot several inches behind the left.

The right foot did not touch ground. Instead, it swung out into space. For Lamar was on the very edge of the precipice. Understanding his peril, he flung himself forward.

The movement caused a cave-in of the crumbling verge, beneath his right foot. He threw out his arms to save himself. But it was too late to recover his balance. Over the edge his body crashed.

Sam, his brain clearing from the

gen chloride, cyanogen bromide, ammonia, hydrogen sulphide, sulphur dioxide, phosphine and arsine. When gas attacks are reported, a natural assumption is that chlorine or bromine has been employed, because these gases are usually to be had in large quantities at low cost. Next in availability and effectiveness are phosgene, nitrosyl chloride, and other products of chemical industries. Besides being abundant and cheap, it is requisite that the gases be heavier than air, retain their offensive properties when

largely diluted with air, be easily transported in liquid form, and be as little as possible absorbed by water or neutralized by chemical solutions used on face sponges. In defense, alkaline and weak acid solutions are used for saturating the face masks, soda-lime being probably the best neutralizer for the most poisonous gases—chlorine, bromine, nitrogen dioxide, hydrocyanic acid, sulphur dioxide, and phosgene. The heavy offensive gases do not all act by suffocating or choking, but some—such as nitrochloro-

form, benzyl chloride and bromide, and various organic substances—disable by causing a flow of tears.

Striving to Please. Jimmy Beamish had enlisted in his "group" and was training near Newcastle. His wife, on a visit to the "toon," became very ill. Thinking her end was near, she said:

"Jimmy, lad, where are ye gannin to bury me?"

"Well, Bess," he said. "As had thowts ov Newcastle."

"No, binney," she said. "As cudden lie in Newcastle. You must tuck me back to Durham. Ta wadden like to be buried about here."

"Tut, tut, Bess," exclaimed Jimmy. "Think ov the expense ov tyckin' ye all the way to Durham."

"As cannot help it, Jimmy; ye'll hae to tuck me thor, for As cannot lie quiet in Newcastle."

Jimmy thought for a moment in silence.

"Weel, weel, Bess," he said, at last. "An'll tell ye what An'll de; An'll gie ye a trial in Newcastle, an' if ye divvent lie quiet thor, An'll tuck ye to Durham."—London Answers.

American Chop Suey. One pound hamburger steak, one medium-size slice pork, one medium-size onion, one small can tomatoes and spaghetti, half can tomato soup. Fry out pork in frying pan, slice onion and add, remove pork when well cooked, leaving fat. Then add steak, tomatoes and spaghetti, then half can soup. Cook about ten minutes.

At sight and smell of the feast that filled the big lunch basket.

Noislessly he crept from his hiding place. On tiptoe he made his way toward the table. Yama was stooping forward, arranging a handful of silver at one of the three plates.

Sam leaned over him, and with lightning motion caught up the edges of the tablecloth and swathed the Jap's meager body in them.

Knocking the cloth-ends firmly behind the back of the squealing and vainly struggling little butler, Sam made a rush for the food basket, snatched it up and bounded lumberingly off among the rocks, seeking a safe place where he might hide and devour his fragrant prize.

Eagan had sense enough not to go back to his cave with his plunder. That was much too near the scene of his theft. Possible searchers would see the cavern-mouth and explore it. He must get far enough away to dodge pursuit, before settling down to the delights of his stolen banquet.

Ahead of him was a hillock made up of broken bowlders in whose niches a man could elude a whole cordon of police. And toward this hillock, Eagan ran.

His way took him along a rocky bit of beach, where he most needs jump from stone to stone. The tide was in. The water swirled thirstily among the rocks as he rushed onward.

He came to a place where he could not stride from bowlder to bowlder to

women were sitting on a rock, in the sunshine; and toward them a man was hurrying. The man's back was toward Sam; but the watcher recognized the two women as June Travis and Mary. June and her old nurse had set forth on their morning walk along the sands and had paused at the rock to pick out a site for the picnic lunch the day had planned for later in the day. As they sat in the sunshine, June pointed to a flat-topped bowlder, farther inshore, as an ideal natural lunch-table.

They were about to go over and investigate it when a quick step behind them in the sand made them turn. Max Lamar was coming toward them. Mary shuddered, involuntarily, and shrank back. But June, with a smile of genuine welcome, held out her hand in greeting to him.

Suddenly, her arms still extended, and before her fingers could touch his, she exclaimed in quick sympathy:

"You're hurt! You're badly hurt! What is it?"

Mary, at the girl's alarmed exclamation, glanced at Lamar. His right hand was bandaged. His under lip was cut. "What is it?" repeated June, anxiously. "How are you hurt, Mr. Lamar? Tell me."

"That?" said Lamar lightly, as he held up his bandaged hand. "Oh, that's just a little souvenir from your dear old friend, 'Smiling Sam' Eagan."

"Tell me!" urged June. Briefly—and still treating the theme in jest rather than seriousness—Max told her the story.

"Last night, when this tramp took me home," he ended, "I was so rattled I let him get away without half thanking him."

"Excuse me, Mr. Lamar," said a voice behind Max. "They told us at the hotel that you'd started for the beach. May we interrupt you for a minute?"

Lamar got up from the rock, glancing not unfriendly at the two men who had broken in on his talk. Then he recognized the interlopers his face cleared.

"Hello, Boyle!" he said cordially. "Hello, Jacobs! Miss Travis, will you excuse me? I shan't be long. I'll be back in five minutes."

He moved away, the two detectives walking one on either side of him. "Sorry to butt in, Mr. Lamar. Chief's

orders. Here's a letter from him. If you don't want to read all of it, I'll give you the gist now. We're down here looking for Charles Gordon—you remember? The lawyer who embezzled \$75,000 worth of Farwell corporation securities and then got away from a couple of our men? Well, we've traced him down here. Got a pretty good line on him, too. And we've run down to gather him in. Chief wants to know if you'll help us out. Not that there's any need. But—"

"Gordon!" exclaimed Max, a light of memory leaping into his face. "Gordon! Charles Gordon, the crooked lawyer! That's the man!"

"We have a tip that he's living in a hut, down below here, on the shore. Just beyond that point over there. We were on our way there and we were keeping a lookout for you at the same time. What's the matter with your hand?" he broke off.

"Your lip's cut, too," put in Boyle. "How does the other fellow look after the scrimmage? Is he in the hospital or buying a championship medal?"

"He's at large," replied Lamar, eagerly grasping the change of subject. "And he's 'Smiling Sam' Eagan."

"What?" cried both men in a breath. "I saw him last night, and I gave chase. I caught up with him at the top of the bluff over there. We had a tussle and—"

"And what?" demanded Boyle. "And he got away," finished Max, lamely. "Now, if you want a real capture, why not start in after Eagan?"

"Our guns are loaded for runaway lawyers," returned Jacobs—"not for Sam Eagan. When we've got Gordon neatly caught we can take a whirl at Smiling Sam."

He left them and walked hastily back to where June and Mary sat. His face was clouded and sad. June at once read the trouble in his alert eyes. "Bad news?" she asked.

"The worst sort of bad news—for me," he made worried answer. "And for the 'tramp' who saved my life. The 'tramp,' by the way, is Charles Gordon, an embezzling lawyer. He's in hiding here. Those two men are central office detectives and—"

"They are looking for him?" queried

toward the shelter of the headland rocks.

"He'll never make it," she muttered, "unless—"

She slammed shut the door leading from the bedroom to the front room. Picking up one of a handful of scattered matches on the bedroom table, she lighted the dirty little kerosene lamp.

At the same moment the two detectives burst open the outer door and piled into the front room. There, for a second, they halted in wonder. Before them was the slightly open door of the bedroom. Through the crack between door jamb and doorway, appeared a white hand—a woman's hand—and part of an arm.

The hand grasped a burning kerosene lamp whose smoky chimney wobbled dangerously. Yes, and on the back of the white hand shone a circlet of scarlet.

"The Red Circle!" ejaculated Boyle; and started forward—a human bound upon a scent.

"Back!" shrieked a woman's voice from behind the half-shut door—a voice that echoed through the bare shack like a silver bugle's call. "Back! If you take another step forward I'll throw this lamp!"

"Rush her!" yelled Boyle. "We'll get 'em both. Gordon and the Red Circle woman! Rush her!"

He bounded forward as he spoke. Jacobs at his heels. And across the little room, like a flaming meteor, whizzed the lamp.

The blazing lamp crashed to the floor at Jacob's feet. There was a flare, an explosion, and the room was thick with blinding smoke.

Jacobs reeled back, gasping; his lungs bursting agonized with the kerosene fumes he had swallowed. He fell prostrate across the wooden flooring which the burning kerosene had already begun to ignite.

Boyle stooped and groped through the smoke for the swooning man, found him and dragged him through the choking fumes to the outer door.

Meanwhile, as soon as she had launched the lamp at her antagonists, June had wheeled about and leaped through the bedroom window.

June, excited. "They've traced him to Surftown?"

"Worse. They've traced him to his hut. They're on the way there. At least, they were. See, they're starting back, now, to meet a boy who is going to guide them. And—Chief Allen writes asking me to help them. I—"

"But," urged June, "you can't. You can't! Why, he saved your life. He—"

"Do you suppose I've forgotten that?" retorted Lamar, miserably. "That's why I tried to delay them. I'd give my left arm to be able to get there ahead of them and warn him. But how can I? I'm a sworn officer of the law and—"

"But I'm not!" cried June, springing to her feet. "And I'm going to warn him!"

Around the headland she vanished, just as the two detectives met the boy who was to guide them and started off at a fast walk toward the point. They did not see June. But she, glancing over her shoulder as she rounded the headland, saw them advancing. And she quickened her own run.

Before her was the shack—closed, seemingly deserted. She reached it in a few seconds. She noted that while the door was apparently locked a window at the rear was not. Without hesitation, she flung open the window and climbed on over the sill.

June found herself in a cubbyhole of a room whose only articles of furniture were a tumbledown cot bed and a rickety table, on which stood an oil lamp.

A crazy door led from this tiny bedroom to the room beyond. June threw wide the door—and confronted a scared, cowering man, who blinked at her in dumb terror.

"Mr. Gordon!" she said, incisively, as if talking to a delirium victim. "The police are after you. Get out of that bedroom window and make for the rocks. I'll hold them till you're out of reach. Go!"

She seized him by the arm, as she spoke, drawing him toward the window. As she did so, a thunderous knocking sounded at the outer door followed by a sharp summons of:

"Open, in the name of the law!" Gordon hesitated no longer. He bent and kissed June's hand. Then, he bolted out through the rear window and ran like a chased rabbit



Lamar's Gaze Was Fixed on Her Own Right Hand.

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While Boyle was seeking to get Jacobs out of the burning shack, she was speeding along the sand toward the rock where she had left Lamar and Mary.

Gordon, too, had profited mightily by her delay. From the rocks he made his way to the highroad that led from Surftown to the city. An auto truck, city-bound, chugged past, just as he reached the road. With a lithe spring, he swung himself up to a precarious seat at its tailboard.

As she ran, June looked backward. The shack was a pillar of flame.

Presently, as she rounded the point, she dropped to a sedate walk. Mary and Lamar were coming forward from the rock, to meet her. She forced her labored breathing into some sort of regularity and answered the eager question in their eyes by calling out to them:

"I was too late. He had gotten away. But I saw the detectives going toward the shack. It seemed to be on fire—or something."

"A fire?" echoed Lamar, looking toward the smudge of smoke that began to crawl upward over the jutting shoulder of the point. "I should say so. And, look how everyone is running! Let's go to see it."

Lamar reached the scene of the blaze to find a crowd already there. The fire shared public attention with two men, one of whom held the other's head on his knee.

Max shouldered his way through the group that hemmed in these two. Boyle looked up and recognized him. "He's coming 'round, all right, Mr. Lamar," he said. "Smoke was too much for him. Gee, but we had one queer time in that shack!"

"In the shack?" repeated Lamar. "You surely never went into that blazing hovel to look for your man?"

"We sure did," responded Boyle. "Only it wasn't blazing then. We bust in the door and started for an inner door. And then a woman's hand stuck out through the opening and—it had a lighted lamp. Threw the lamp at us and—"

"A woman?" questioned the amazed Lamar. "A woman—threw a lamp at you?"

"It was a woman, all right," insisted Boyle. "No man ever had such a little white hand. Besides—"

"Besides," gasped Jacobs feebly, "the hand had a Red Circle on the back."

"No!" gasped Lamar, dumfounded. "No! It couldn't have been! Not—"

"It was, though," declared Boyle. "We both saw it. We—"

"Miss Travis!" broke in Lamar, as he caught sight of June, who had just come up. "Do you hear this? These men say a woman was in that shack—that she threw a lamp at them—that there was a Red Circle on her hand."

"No, really?" exclaimed June. "A woman—with the Red Circle?"

She checked herself abruptly. Lamar's gaze was fixed on her own right hand, carelessly displayed to his view. Her guilty glance fell to the back of her hand. It was snowy, velvety, shapely. No sign of the Red Circle was visible on its smooth surface.

"Can—can you explain it?" she faltered. "Can you explain how a woman—with the Red Circle—could have—?"

"No," he said brusquely, as he fought to shake off a feeling of strange mistrust that encompassed him. "No, I can't. I—I can't!"

Then, with an effort, changing the subject, he went on:

"My letter from Chief Allen begs me to come back to town and consult with him on the Gordon case. I must catch the noon train, if I can. Good-by."

Abruptly he turned away, ignoring the girl's pretty gesture of farewell.

Mrs. Travis came down to the beach, at noon, in her car. On the front seat, beside the chauffeur, rode Yama. The tonneau was half filled with hamper and baskets.

From the table bowlder they had chosen for their luncheon board earlier in the morning June and Mary waved to Mrs. Travis.

"Here," directed June, as the Jap came plodding up, "here is the rock. Yama. Spread the lunch there, and put the car cushions on those rows of stones to each side. Call us when you're ready. And be ready as soon as you can. I'm starved. Mrs. Travis wants to see where the fire was this morning. We will be back in five minutes. Try to have everything on the table by that time."

The three women strolled away. Yama, as they left him, set to work with a will to get the luncheon ready within the brief five minutes allotted him.

As the Jap was not gifted with eyes in his back, he did not see a frowny head emerge from a cave-mouth in the lower part of the bluff, a few yards behind him.

Sam Eagan had tried to sleep his hunger away, until such time as it might be safe to venture out on the open beach without fear of meeting the police. Suddenly his nostrils had been tickled by the smell of food.

Then, at once, his whole starved system clamored ravenously for something to eat. His craving for food had redoubled since morning. Now it drove away caution and common sense. He must eat, though he go to prison for life, in payment for his meal.

Eagan thrust out his head from the cave. He saw Mrs. Travis walking away with June and Mary. He saw just below him a dapper little Jap engaged in setting a picnic table. He saw—heavenly sight!—a great basket of food just behind the busy Jap.

No hale man who has gone hungry for thirty hours will blame the fugitive for laying aside his armor of prudence

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## COAST GUARDS SAVED DEER