

# THE GIRL AND THE DOLLAR BILLS

## INTRODUCING AN ODD TRACER OF GOOD DEEDS

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**H**E WAS LEFT HANDED, a seventh son and a man nobody could by any possibility have found in a crowd, so perfectly and unobtrusively neutral was his appearance. But he owned two unusual features: his name was Marie-Jean O'Patrick and he always saw things reversed. He had been christened by his mother, and his peculiar way of looking at things was likely inherited from his father—a male being who had never done anything right in his life and had died through a pure accident that got his obituary into the papers as a hero who had saved many lives at the expense of his own.

I first met him on the lanai of the Japanese Inn in Honolulu, on which occasion he laid down a luridly illustrated book of detective stories and informed me that they were his favorite reading. Later he told me in confidence that he expected some time to be a detective himself. "I have a line of my own," he whispered to the boom of the surf on the reef.

"All the other detectives seek out the object and the perpetrator of great crimes. I shall seek out the person who commits magnificent good deeds."

"You will have nothing to do," I insisted. "The names of such are in the papers every morning."

"I feel sure you are wrong," he said earnestly. "Many prodigious virtues

have gone unheralded and every city street is thronged with men and women who have committed enormous benefactions without any one even suspecting them of it. Think how much better it would be to read in the morning paper, under the heading

**WELL-DOER FINALLY RUN TO EARTH**  
AUTHOR OF TREMENDOUS BENEFACTION IS  
HOUNDED TO HIS LAIR IN THE MOUNTAINS

something like this:

"This morning at 3:15 a. m. Detective O'Patrick rounded up Thomas Jones for whom he had been searching two months as the author of the almost unparalleled benefaction committed in Steubenville, Ohio, last March, when Jones saved the health of over one hundred people by providing coal at his own expense during the blizzard that threatened to freeze out a large population.

"Jones fled immediately after committing this deed and it was only by unremitting efforts that Detective O'Patrick finally effected his capture. Jones resisted as long as he was able, but surrendered finally and will be returned to Steubenville to be rewarded."

"**NOW,**" continued Marie-Jean, "that would be really helpful, and I feel sure that many people will gladly pay for my services."

I arose. Mr. O'Patrick ceased to interest me. I did not see him again until five years later in New York city where he stopped me in Sixth avenue. I could no more have remembered him than I could recall the menu of the breakfast of year before the last eleventh of April. But he knew me, informed me in a whisper who he was, laid a finger on his lip and led me docile and amused (one is so easily amused in New York!) into a side-street café.

"Excuse my precipitancy in hailing you and bringing you in here," he said apologetically. "But I recall vividly our conversation at Waikiki Beach and

"As I left the pawnshop I felt the tears coming into my eyes"

I thought you might be interested to know that I have for some time been successfully practicing as a detector of virtue."

Slowly that foolish conversation we had in Honolulu returned to my mind. But Marie-Jean looked prosperous, if undistinguished, and—it was New York and nothing to do.

"Do you find it interesting?" I inquired.  
"Exceedingly so," he returned. "I am working on a case now which promises to have most extraordi-



The man said pleasantly: "I wish to pledge this dollar bill. How much will you advance me on it?"