

THE Exploits of Elaine

A Detective Novel and a Motion Picture Drama
 Presented by The Omaha Bee in Collaboration with the Famous Pathe
 Players and the Eclectic Film Co.
 Intro-
 ducing **Miss Pearl White,**
Arnold Daly and "Craig Kennedy"
 The Famous Scientific Detective of Fiction.

Written by Arthur B. Reeve

The Well-Known Novelist and the Creator of the "Craig Kennedy" Stories
 Dramatized into a Photo-Play by Charles Goddard
 Author of "The Perils of Pauline"

Cast of Leading Characters in the Motion Picture Reproduction by the Famous Pathe Players
ELAINE DODGE Miss Pearl White
CRAIG KENNEDY Mr. Arnold Daly
HARRY BENNETT Mr. Sheldon Lewis

Everything you read here today you can see in the fascinating Pathe Motion Pictures at the Motion Picture Theaters this week. Next Sunday another chapter of "The Exploits of Elaine" and new Pathe reels.

CHAPTER I.

"The Clutching Hand"

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"There must be something new in order to catch criminals nowadays. The old methods are all right—as far as they go. But while we have been using them, criminals have kept pace with modern science."

Craig Kennedy laid down his newspaper and filled his pipe with my tobacco. In college we had roomed together, had shared everything, even poverty, and now that Craig was a professor of chemistry in charge of the laboratory at the university and I had a sort of roving commission on the staff of the Star, we had continued our arrangement. Prosperity found us in a rather neat bachelor apartment on the Heights, not far from the university.

"It has always seemed strange to me," he went on slowly, "that no one has ever endowed a professorship in criminal science in any of the large colleges."

I tossed aside my own paper and retrieved the tobacco.

"Why should there be a chair in criminal science?" I replied argumentatively, settling back in my chair. "I've done my turn at police headquarters reporting, and I can tell you, Craig, it's no place for a college professor. Crime is—just crime. And as for dealing with it the great detective is born and bred to it. College professors for the sociology of the thing—yes; for the detection of it, give me Byrnes."

"On the contrary," persisted Kennedy, his clean-cut features betraying an earnestness which I knew indicated that he was leading up to something of importance, "there is a distinct place for science in the detection of crime. On the continent they are far in advance of us in that respect. We are mere children beside a dozen crime specialists over there whom I could name."

"Yes?" I queried, rather doubtfully. "But where does the college professor come in?"

"You must remember, Walter," he pursued, warming up to the subject which had evidently been on his mind for some time, "that it's only within the last ten years or so that we have had the really practical college professor who could do it. The silk-stocking variety is out of date now. Today we have professors of everything—why not professors of crime science?"

Still, as I shook my head dubiously, he hastened to clinch his point. "Colleges have got down to solving the hard facts of life, nowadays—pretty nearly all, except one. They still treat crime in the old way, study its statistics and pore over its causes and the theories of how it can be prevented and punished. But as for running down the criminal himself, scientifically, relentlessly—bah!—we haven't made enough progress to mention since the hammer and tongs method of your sainted Byrnes."

"Doubtless you will write a brochure on this most interesting subject," I suggested, "and let it go at that."

"No, I am serious," he replied, determined for some reason or other to make a convert of me. "I mean exactly what I say. I am going to apply science to the detection of crime, the same sort of methods by which we trace out the presence of a mysterious chemical or track down a deadly germ. And before I have gone far, I am going to enlist Walter Jameson as an aide. I think I shall need you in my business."

"How do I come in?" I asked.

"Well, for one thing, you will get a 'scoop,' a 'beat'—whatever you call it in that newspaper jargon of yours."

Kennedy during the previous year had traveled much, especially in London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna, where he had studied the amazing growth abroad of the new criminal science. Already I knew something, by hearsay, of the men he had seen—Gross, Lacassagne, Reiss and the immortal Bertillon.

"Fortunately, Walter," he pursued, "the crime-hunters have gone ahead in science faster than the criminals. It's to be my job to catch criminals. Yours, it seems to me, is to show people how they can never hope to beat the modern scientific detective."

"Go as far as you like," I exclaimed, convinced at last.

"And so it was that we formed this strange new partnership in crime science that has existed ever since."

The Murder of Banker Fletcher.

"Jameson, here's a story I wish you'd follow up," remarked the managing editor of the Star to me one evening after I had turned in an assignment of the late afternoon.

He handed me a clipping from the evening edi-

tion of the Star, and I quickly ran my eye over the headlines:

"THE CLUTCHING HAND" WINS AGAIN.

NEW YORK'S MYSTERIOUS MASTER CRIMINAL PERFECTS ANOTHER COUP.

CITY POLICE COMPLETELY BAFFLED.

"Here's this murder of Fletcher, the retired banker and trustee of the university," he explained. "Not a clue—except a warning letter signed with this mysterious clutching fist. Last week it was the robbery of the Haxworth jewels and the killing of old Haxworth. Again that curious sign of the hand. Then there was the dastardly attempt on Sherburne, the steel magnate. Not a trace of the assailant except the same clutching fist. So it has gone. Jameson—the most alarming and inexplicable series of murders that has ever happened in this country. And nothing but this uncanny hand to trace them by."

The editor paused a moment, then exclaimed: "Why, this fellow seems to take a diabolical—I might almost say pathological—pleasure in crimes of violence, revenge, avarice and self-protection. Sometimes it seems as if he delights in the pure deviltry of the thing. It is weird."

He leaned over and spoke in a low, tense tone. "Strangest of all, the tip has just come to us that Fletcher, Haxworth, Sherburne and all the rest of these wealthy men were insured in the Consolidated Mutual Life. Now, Jameson, I want you to find Taylor Dodge, the president, and interview him. Get what you can, at any cost."

I had naturally thought first of Kennedy, but there was no time now to call him up, and, besides, I must see Dodge immediately.

Dodge, I discovered over the telephone, was not at home nor at any of the clubs to which he belonged. Late though it was, I concluded that he was at his office. No amount of persuasion could get me past the door, and, though I found out later and shall tell soon what was going on there, I determined, about 9 o'clock, that the best way to get at Dodge was to go to his house on Fifth avenue, if I had to camp on his front doorstep until morning. The harder I found the story to get the more I wanted it.

With some misgivings about being admitted, I rang the bell of the splendid, though not very modern, Dodge residence. An English butler, with a nose that must have been his fortune, opened the door and gravely informed me that Mr. Dodge was not at home, but was expected at any moment.

Once in, I was not going lightly to give up that advantage. I betheought myself of his daughter Elaine, one of the most popular debutantes of the season, and sent in my card to her, on a chance of interesting her and see her father, writing on the bottom of the card: "Would like to interview Mr. Dodge regarding Clutching Hand."

Summoning up what assurance I had, which is sometimes considerable, I followed the butler down the hall as he bore my card. As he opened the door of the drawing room, I caught a vision of a slip of a girl in evening clothes.

Elaine Dodge was both the ingenue and the athlete—the thoroughly modern type of girl—equally at home with tennis and tango, table talk and tea. Vivacious eyes that hinted at a stunning amber brown sparkled beneath masses of the most wonderful auburn hair. Her pearly teeth, when she smiled, were marvellous. And she smiled often, for life to her seemed a continuous film of enjoyment.

Near her I recognized from his pictures Harry Bennett, the rising young corporation lawyer, a mighty good looking fellow, with an affable, pleasing way about him, perhaps 35 years old or so, but already prominent and quite friendly with Dodge.

On a table I saw a book, as though Elaine had cast it down when the lawyer arrived to call on the daughter under pretense of waiting for her father. Crumpled on the table was the Star. They had read the story.

"Who is it, Jennings?" she asked.

"A reporter, Miss Dodge," answered the butler glancing superciliously back at me. "And you know how your father dislikes to see anyone here at the house," he added deferentially to her.

I took in the situation at a glance. Bennett was trying not to look discourteous, but this was a call on Elaine, and it had been interrupted. I could expect no help from that quarter. Still, I fancied that Elaine was not averse to trying to pique her visitor, and determined at least to try it.

"Miss Dodge," I pleaded, bowing as if I had known them all my life, "I've been trying to find your father all the evening. It's very important."

She looked up at me surprised and in doubt whether to laugh or stamp her pretty little foot in indignation at my stupendous nerve.



Craig Kennedy (Arnold Daly) Discovers That the Finger Prints the Murderer Has Left on the Bust Are Identical with His Own.

This is from the Motion Picture Production of "The Exploits of Elaine," by the Famous Pathe Players.

porter who tries to interview him here," she answered.

I was about to prolong the waiting time by some jolly about such a stunning girl not having by any possibility such a cannibal of a parent, when the rattle of the changing gears of a car outside told of the approach of a limousine.

The big front door opened, and Elaine flung herself in the arms of an elderly, stern, faced, gray-haired man. "Why, Dad," she cried, "where have you been? I missed you so much at dinner. I'll be so glad when this terrible business gets cleared up. Tell—me. What is on your mind? What is it that worries you now?"

I noticed then that Dodge seemed wrought up and a bit unsteady, for he sank rather heavily into a chair, brushed his face with a handkerchief and breathed heavily. Elaine hovered over him solicitously, repeating her question.

With a mighty effort he seemed to get himself together. He rose and turned to Bennett.

"Harry," he exclaimed, "I've got the Clutching Hand!"

The two men stared at each other.

"Yes," continued Dodge, "I've found out how to trace it, and tomorrow I am going to set the alarms of the city at rest by exposing—"

Just then Dodge caught sight of me. For the moment I thought perhaps he was going to fulfill his threat.

"Who the devil—why didn't you tell me a reporter was here, Jennings?" he sputtered indignantly, pointing toward the door.

Argument, entreaty, were of no avail. He stamped crustily into the library, taking Bennett with him and leaving me with Elaine. Inside I could hear them talking, and managed to catch enough to piece together the story. I wanted to stay, but Elaine, smiling at my enthusiasm, shook her head and held out her hand in one of her frank, straight-arm handshakes. There was nothing to do but go.

At least, I reflected, I had the greater part of the story—all except the one big thing, however—the name of the criminal. But Dodge would know him tomorrow!

I hurried back to the Star to write my story in time to catch the last morning edition.

Meanwhile, if I may anticipate my story, I must tell of what we later learned had happened to Dodge so completely to upset him.

Ever since the Consolidated Mutual had been hit by the murders, he had had many lines out in the hope of enmeshing the perpetrator. That night, as I found out the next day, he had at last heard of a clue. One of the company's detectives had brought in a red-headed, lame, partly paralyzed crook, who enjoyed the expressive nomenclature of "Limpy Red." "Limpy Red" was a gunman of some renown, evil faced, and having nothing much to lose, desperate. Whoever the master criminal of the Clutching Hand might have been he had seen fit to employ "Limpy," but had not taken the precaution of getting rid of him soon enough when he was through.

Therefore Limpy had a grievance, and now descended under pressure to the low level of snitching to Dodge in his office.

"No, governor," the trembling wretch had said as he handed over a grimy envelope, "I ain't never seen his face—but here is directions how to find his hangout."

As Limpy ambled out, he turned to Dodge, quivering at the enormity of his unpardonable sin in gangland: "For God's sake, governor," he implored, "don't let on how you found out!"

And yet Limpy Red had scarcely left with his promise not to tell, when Dodge, happening to turn over some papers, came upon an envelope left on his own desk, bearing that mysterious clutching hand!

He tore it open, and read in amazement:

"Destroy Limpy Red's instructions within the next hour."

Dodge gazed about in wonder. This thing was

getting on his nerves. He determined to go home and rest.

Outside the house, as he left his car, pasted over the monogram on the door, he found another note, with the same weird mark and the single word:

"Remember!"

Much of this I had already gathered from what I overheard Dodge telling Bennett as they entered the library. Some, also, I have pieced together from the story of a servant who overheard.

At any rate, in spite of the pleadings of young Bennett, Dodge refused to take warning. Into the safe in his beautifully fitted library he deposited Limpy's document in an envelope containing all the correspondence that had led up to the final step in the discovery.

It was late in the evening when I returned to our apartment, and, not finding Kennedy there, knew that I would discover him at the laboratory.

"Craig," I cried as I burst in on him, "I've got a case for you—greater than any ever before."

Kennedy looked up calmly from the rack of scientific instruments that surrounded him—test tubes, beakers, carefully labeled bottles.

He had been examining a piece of cloth, and had laid it aside in disappointment near his magnifying glass. Just now he was watching a reaction in a series of test tubes standing on his table. He was looking dejectedly at the floor as I came in.

"Indeed?" he remarked, coolly going back to the reaction.

"Yes," I cried. "It is a scientific criminal who seems to leave no clues."

Kennedy looked up gravely. "Every criminal leaves a trace," he said quietly. "If it hasn't been found then it must be because no one has ever looked for it in the right way."

Still gazing at me keenly, he added: "Yes, I already knew there was such a man at large. I have been called in on that Fletcher case—he was a trustee of the university, you know."

"All right," I exclaimed, a little nettled that he should have anticipated me even so much in the case. "But you haven't heard the latest."

"What is it?" he asked with provoking calmness.

"Taylor Dodge," I blurted out, "has the clue. Tomorrow he will track down the man!"

Kennedy fairly jumped as I repeated the news.

"How long has he known?" he demanded eagerly.

"Perhaps three or four hours," I hazarded.

Kennedy gazed at me fixedly.

"Then Taylor Dodge is dead!" he exclaimed, throwing off his acid-stained laboratory coat, which had once been a smoking jacket and hurrying into his street clothes.

"Impossible!" I ejaculated.

Kennedy paid no attention to the objection. "Come, Walter," he urged. "We must hurry before the trail gets cold."

There was something positively uncanny about Kennedy's assurance. I doubted—yet I feared.

I was well past the middle of the night when we pulled up in a night-hawk taxicab before the Dodge house, mounted the steps and rang the bell.

Jennings answered sleepily, but not so much so that he did not recognize me. He was about to bang the door shut when Kennedy interposed his foot.

"Where is Mr. Dodge?" asked Kennedy. "Is he all right?"

"Of course he is—in bed," replied the butler.

Just then we heard a faint cry, like nothing exactly human. Or was it our heightened imaginations, under the spell of the darkness?

"Listen!" cautioned Kennedy.

We did, standing there now in the hall. Kennedy was the only one of us who was cool. Jennings' face blanched, then he turned tremblingly and went down to the library door, whence the sounds had seemed to come.

was a large room. In the center stood a big flat-topped desk of heavy mahogany. It was brilliantly lighted.

At one end of the desk was a telephone. Taylor Dodge was lying on the floor at that end of the desk—perfectly rigid—his face distorted—a ghastly figure. A pet dog ran over, sniffed frantically at his master's legs and suddenly began to howl dismally.

Dodge was dead.

"Help!" shouted Jennings.

Others of the servants came rushing in. There was for a moment, the greatest excitement and confusion.

"Father!" shrieked a woman's voice, heart-broken. "Father! Oh—my God—he—he is dead!" It was Elaine Dodge.

With a mighty effort, the heroic girl seemed to pull herself together.

From the one-sided, excited conversation of the butler over the telephone, I gathered that Bennett had been in the process of disrobing in his own apartment uptown, and would be right down.

Together, Kennedy, Elaine and myself lifted Dodge to a sofa and Elaine's aunt, Josephine, with whom she lived, appeared on the scene, trying to quiet the sobbing girl.

Kennedy and I withdrew a little way, and he looked about curiously.

"What was it?" I whispered. "Was it natural, an accident, or—murder? The word seemed to stick in my throat. If it was murder, what was the motive? Could it have been to get the evidence which Dodge had that would incriminate the master criminal?"

Kennedy moved over quietly and examined the body of Dodge. When he rose his face had a peculiar look.

"Terrible!" he whispered to me. "Apparently he had been working at his accustomed place at the desk when the telephone rang. He rose and crossed over to it. See! That brought his feet on this register let into the floor. As he took the telephone receiver down a flash of light must have shot from it to his ear. It shows the characteristic electric burn!"

"The motive?" I queried.

"Evidently his pockets had been gone through, though none of the valuables were missing. Things in the desk show that a hasty search had been made."

Just then, the door opened and Bennett burst in.

As he stood over the body, gazing down at it, repressing the emotions of a strong man, he turned to Elaine and in a low voice exclaimed: "The Clutching Hand did this. I shall consecrate my life to bring this man to justice!"

He spoke tensely, and Elaine, looking up into his face, as if imploring his help in her hour of need, unable to speak, merely grasped his hand.

Kennedy, who in the meantime had stood apart from the rest of us, was examining the telephone carefully.

"A clever crook," I heard him mutter between his teeth. "He must have worn gloves. Not a finger print—at least here."

Perhaps I can do no better than to reconstruct the crime as Kennedy later placed these startling events together.

Long after I had left, and even after Bennett left, Dodge continued working in his library, for he was known as a prodigious worker.

Had he taken the trouble, however, to pause and peer out into the moonlight that flooded the back of his house, he might have seen the figures of two stealthy crooks crouching in the half shadows of one of the cellar windows, one crook at least masked.

The masked crook held in his hands carefully the ends of two wires attached to an electric feed, and, sending his pal to keep watch outside, he entered the cellar of the Dodge house through a window, whose pane they had carefully removed. As he came through the windows he dragged the wires with him, and after a moments reconnoitering, as

(Continued on Page Eleven, Column One.)