

The Abandoned Room

By Wadsworth Camp.

CHAPTER XIV

The Crying Through the Woods.

Bobby's inability to cry out alone prevented his alarming the others and announcing to Paredes and Doctor Groom his unwelcome presence in the room. During the moment that the shock held him, silent, motionless, bent in the darkness above the bed, he understood there could have been no ambiguity about his ghastly and loathsome experience. The dead detective had altered his position as Silas Blackburn had done, and this time someone had been in the room and suffered the appalling change. Bobby's fingers still responded to the charnel feeling of cold, inactive flesh suddenly become alive and potent beneath his touch. And a reason for apparent miracle offered itself. Between the extinction of his candle and the commencement of that movement—only a second or so—the evidence had disappeared from the detective's pocket.

Bobby relaxed. He stumbled across the room and into the corridor. He went with hands outstretched through the blackness for no candle burned in the upper hall, but he knew that Katherine was on guard there. When he left the passage he saw her, an unnatural figure herself, in the yellowish, unhealthy twilight which sifted through the stair well from the lamp in the hall below.

She must have sensed something out of the way immediately, for she hurried to meet him and her whisper held no assurance. "You got the cast and the handkerchief, Bobby?"

And when he didn't answer at once she asked with a sharp rush of fear: "What's the matter? What's happened?"

He shuddered. At last he managed to speak. "Katherine! I have felt death cease to be death."

Later he was to recall that phrase with a sicker horror than he experienced now.

"You saw something?" she said. "But your candle is out. There is no light in the room."

He took her hand. He pressed it. "You're real!" he said with a nervous laugh. "Something I can understand. Everything is unreal. This light—"

He strode to the table, found a match, and lighted his candle. Katherine, as she saw his face, drew back.

"Bobby!"

"My candle went out," he said dully, "and he moved through the darkness. I tell you he moved beneath my hand."

She drew farther away, staring at him.

"You were frightened—"

"No. If we go there with a light now," he said with the same dull conviction, "we will find him as we found my grandfather this afternoon."

The monotonous voices of the three men in the lower hall weaved a background for their whispers. The normal, familiar sound was like a tonic. Bobby straightened. Katherine threw off the spell of his announcement.

"But the evidence! You got—"

She stared at his empty hands. He fancied that he saw contempt in her eyes.

"In spite of everything you must go back. You must get that."

"Even if I had the courage," he said wearily, "it would be no use, for the evidence is gone."

"But I saw it. At least I saw his pocket—"

"It was there," he answered, "when my light went out. I did put my hand in his pocket. In that second it was gone."

"There was no one there," she said, "no one but you, because I watched."

He leaned heavily against the wall. "Good God, Katherine! It's too big. Whatever it is, we can't fight it."

She looked for some time down the corridor at the black entrance of the sinister room. At last she turned and walked to the banister. She called:

"Hartley! Will you come up?"

Bobby wondered at the steadiness of her voice. The murmuring below ceased. Graham ran up the stairs. Her summons had been warning enough. Their attitudes, as Graham reached the upper hall, were eloquent of Bobby's failure.

"You didn't get the cast and the handkerchief?" he said.

Bobby told briefly who had happened.

"What is one to do?" he ended. "Even the lead are against me."

"It's beyond belief," Graham said roughly.

He snatched up the candle and entered the corridor. Uncertainly Katherine and Bobby followed him. He went straight to the bed and thrust the candle beneath the canopy. The others could see from the door the change that had taken place. The body of Howells was turned awkwardly on its side. The coat pocket was, as Bobby had described it, flat and empty.

Katherine turned and went back to the hall. Graham's hand shook as Bobby's had shaken.

"No tricks, Bobby?"

Bobby couldn't resent the suspicion which appeared to offer the only explanation of what had happened. The candle flickered in the draft.

"Look out!" Bobby warned.

A misshapen shadow danced with a multiple vivacity across the walls. Graham shaded the candle flame, and the shadows became like morbid decorations, gargantuan and motionless.

"It's madness," Graham said. "There's no explanation of this that we can understand."

Howells' straight smile mocked them. As if in answer to Graham's voice sighed through the room. Its quality was one with the shadows, unsubstantial and shapeless. Bobby grasped one of the bed posts and braced himself, listening. The candle in Graham's hand commenced to flicker again, and Bobby knew that it hadn't been his fancy, for Graham listened, too.

It shook again through the heavy, oppressive night, merely accentuated by the candle—a faint vibration barely detaching itself from silence, straying after a time into the silence. At first it was like the griet

natural enough," Graham said. "Will you come, Bobby?"

As they crossed the dining room they heard a stirring in the kitchen. Graham threw open the door. Jenkins stood at the foot of the servants' stair. The old butler had lighted a candle and placed it on the mantel. The disorder of his clothing suggested the haste with which he had left his bed and come downstairs. He advanced with an expression of obvious relief.

"I was just coming to find you, Mr. Robert."

"What's up?" Bobby asked. "A little while ago I thought you were all asleep back here."

"One of the women awakened him," Graham said. "It's just as I thought."

"Was that it?" the old butler asked with a quick relief. But immediately he shook his head. "It couldn't have been that, Mr. Graham, for I stopped at Ella's and Jane's doors, and there was no sound. They seemed to be asleep. And it wasn't like that."

"You mean," Bobby said, "that you heard a woman crying?"

Jenkins nodded. "It woke me up."

"If you didn't think it was one of the maids," Graham asked, "what did you make of it?"

"I thought it came from outside. I thought it was a woman prowling around the house. Then I said to myself, why should a woman prow around the Cedars? And it was too unearthly, sir, and I remembered the way Mr. Silas was murdered, and the awful thing that happened to his body this afternoon, and I—only he delayed one collection. So I made up my mind I'd sleep on it, because I knew he had it in for me, Mr. Robert. I supposed I'd mail it in the morning, but I decided I'd think it over anyway and not harrow myself walking through the woods."

"Katherine and you and I," he said, "fancied the crying was in the room with us. Jenkins is sure it came from outside the house. That is significant."

"Wherever it came from," Bobby said softly, "it was like some one mourning for Howells."

Jenkins started. "The policeman!"

Bobby remembered that Jenkins hadn't been aroused by the discovery of Howells' murder.

"You'd know in a few minutes anyway," he said. "Howells has been killed as my grandfather was."

Jenkins moved back a look of unbelief and awe in his wrinkled face. "He boasted he was going to sleep in that room," he whispered.

Bobby studied Jenkins, not knowing what to make of the old man, for into the awe of the wrinkled face had stolen a positive relief, an emotion that bordered on the triumphant.

"It's terrible," Jenkins whispered. Graham grasped his shoulder.

"What's the matter with you, Jenkins? One would say you were glad."

"No. Oh, no, sir. It is terrible. I was only wondering about the policeman's report."

"What do you know about his report?" Bobby cried.

"Only that—that he gave it to me to mail just before he went up to the old room."

"You mailed it?" Graham snapped.

Jenkins hesitated. When he answered his voice was self-accusing. "I'm an old coward, Mr. Robert. The policeman told me the letter was very important, and if anything happened to it I would get in trouble. He couldn't afford to leave the house himself, he said. But, as I say, I'm a coward, and I didn't want to walk through the woods to the box by the gate. I figured it all out. It wouldn't be taken up until early in the morning, and if I waited until daylight it would only be delayed one collection. So I made up my mind I'd sleep on it, because I knew he had it in for me, Mr. Robert. I supposed I'd mail it in the morning, but I decided I'd think it over anyway and not harrow myself walking through the woods."

"You've done a good job," Graham said excitedly. "Where is the report now?"

"In my room. Shall I fetch it, sir?"

Graham nodded, and Jenkins shuffled up the stairs.

"What luck!" Graham said. "Howells must have telephoned his suspicions to the district attorney."

He must have mentioned the evidence, but what does that amount to since it's disappeared along with the duplicate of the report, if Howells made one?"

"I can fight with a clear conscience," Bobby cried. "I wasn't asleep when Howells's body altered its position. Do you realize what that means to me? For once I was wide awake when the old room was as its tricks."

"If Howells were alive," Graham answered shortly, "he would look on the fact that you were awake and alone with the body as the worst possible evidence against you."

Bobby's elation died.

"There is always something to tangle me in the eyes of the law with these mysteries. But I know, and I'll fight. Can you find any trace of a conspiracy against me in this last ghastly adventure?"

"It complicates everything," Graham admitted.

"It's beyond sounding," Bobby said, "for my grandfather's death last night and the disturbance of his body this afternoon seemed calculated to condemn me absolutely, yet Howells' murder and the movement of his body, with the disappearance of the cast and the handkerchief, seem designed to save me. Are there two influences at work in this house—one for me one against me?"

"Let's think of the human elements," Graham answered with a frown. "I have no faith in Paredes. My man has failed to report on Maria. That's queer. You fancy a woman in black slipping through the woods, and we hear a woman cry. I want to account for those things before I give in to Groom's spirits. I confess at times they seem the only logical explanation. Here's Jenkins."

"If trouble comes of his withholding the report I'll take the blame," Bobby said.

Graham snatched the long envelope from Jenkins' hand. It was addressed in a firm hand to the district attorney at the county seat.

"There's no question," Graham said. "That's it. We mustn't open it. We'd better not destroy it. But if it were it won't be easily found, Jenkins. If you are questioned you have no recollection of Howells

having given it to you. Mr. Blackburn promises he will see you get in no trouble."

The old man smiled.

"Trouble!" he scoffed. "Mr. Blackburn needn't fret himself about me. He's the last of this family—that is Miss Katherine and he. I'm old and about done for. I don't mind trouble. Not a bit, sir."

Bobby pressed his hand. His voice was a little husky: "I didn't think you'd go that far in my service, Jenkins."

The old butler smiled slyly: "I'd go a lot further than that, sir."

"We'd better get back," Graham said. "The blood hounds ought to be here, and they'll sniff at the case harder than ever because it's done for Howells."

They watched Jenkins go upstairs with the report.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

Brief City News

Lighting Fixtures—Burgess-Granden Have Root Print It—Beacon Press. Dr. L. E. Moon, 429 Brandeis Bldg. Against Skip-Stop Plan—The West Leavenworth improvers have voted against the skip-stop plan for street cars.

Wounded Soldiers Enroute—Forty wounded soldiers, traveling in hospital cars and destined for Pacific coast points will arrive in Omaha Wednesday over the Northwestern and depart over the Union Pacific.

Had Load of Booze—Doshun Moksimovich, South Omaha baker, was arrested at Plattsmouth, Neb., with 340 pints of whisky and was taken to Lincoln Tuesday to enter a plea before federal court, in session here.

Want to Locate Henry Kehi—Postoffice authorities have been asked to help locate Henry Kehi, who 16 years ago lived at 1225 South Sixteenth street. His son, William Edward Kehi, 723 Twelfth avenue, Seattle, Wash., wants to get into communication with him.

Many at Brotherhood Dinner—The Brotherhood dinner at the North Presbyterian church Monday night was well attended, covers having been laid for close to 150 men. The dinner was served by the women of the church and was thoroughly enjoyed. One of the features of the evening was the address of Dr. Weir, head of the brotherhood. He detailed what the organization is accomplishing in the way of church activities and the interest that it is creating in the religious societies of the Presbyterian church. Dr. Weir was introduced by N. H. Loomis of the First Presbyterian church.

Fine fireplaces goods at Sunderland's.

Woman Demands \$89 When Clothes Are Wet by City Filling Hose

A little misdirected water may cost the city \$89.

Mrs. W. W. Dawson said her clothing was damaged to that extent when a hose being used to fill a city flushing wagon at Thirteenth and Farnam streets became disconnected and splashed her from head to foot.

She asks for \$17.50 for a hat; \$42.50 for a dress; \$14 for shoes; \$7.50 for a silk petticoat and \$7.50 for a pair of gloves.

Commissioner Butler said his department paid for cleaning and pressing the damaged clothes.

But Mrs. Dawson demands that they be replaced.

All of which goes to show the high cost of women's attire!

Suit Over Car of Beer Proves Eight Years Old

A case wherein the Jetter Brewing company is suing the Northwestern Railroad company for \$125 damages for the alleged delay in the delivery of one carload of beer was being heard in Judge Leslie's court Tuesday morning. However, the excitement all died down when it was brought out that the shipment was made in the year of 1910, and the only feature of the case is the gulping of dry parched throats every time "a carload of beer" is mentioned before the jury and court attendants.

Woman Found Dead in Room.

Viola Oliver, 2327 1/2 South Sixteenth street, age 55 years, negro cook at the Merriam hotel, was found dead in her room by police Tuesday morning. It is believed that she has been dead for several days. She is said to have died of influenza.

STOP DANDRUFF! HAIR GETS THICK, WAVY, BEAUTIFUL

Girls! Draw a cloth through your hair and double its beauty.

Spend a few cents! Dandruff vanishes and hair stops coming out.

To be possessed of a head of fluffy, beautiful hair; soft, lustrous, heavy, wavy and free from dandruff, is merely a matter of using a little Danderine.

It is easy and inexpensive to have nice, soft hair and lots of it. Just get a small bottle of Knowlton's Danderine now—all drug stores recommend it—apply a little as directed, and within ten minutes there will be an appearance of abundance, freshness, fluffiness and an incomparable gloss and lustre, and try as you will, you can not find a trace of dandruff or falling hair; but your real surprise will be after about two weeks' use, when you will see new hair—fine and downy at first—yes hair—but really new hair—sprouting out all over your scalp. Danderine is, we believe, the only sure hair grower, destroyer of dandruff and cure for itchy scalp, and it never fails to stop falling hair at once.

If you want to prove how pretty and soft your hair really is, moisten a cloth with a little Danderine and carefully draw it through your hair—taking one small strand at a time. Your hair will be soft, glossy and beautiful in just a few moments—a delightful surprise awaits everyone who tries this.—Adv.

Nuga-Tone

The Great Invigorator. Builds Up Weak, Worn-Out Men and Women. You Get Results or Money Back.

BUILDS VITAL FORCE

Gives You a Keen Appetite, Good Digestion, Rich Red Blood, Overcomes Malarial Poison.

Nuga-Tone strengthens and soothes the Nervous System; overcomes Nervousness; banishes Indigestion, Constipation, Biliousness, Liver Trouble, no more Bloating, Sour Stomach, Pains in Stomach or Bowels after eating, no more Bad Taste in Mouth, Foul Breath, Coated Tongue; no more Sleeplessness, Dependancy or Worry; no more Aches and Pains.

Nuga-Tone just puts new life into a person through and through. Sends a stream of vitalizing blood to all parts of the body, overcomes the sickly pallor, the dull complexion; puts roses in the cheeks and sparkle in the eyes!

DRUGGISTS GUARANTEE IT!

Each bottle of Nuga-Tone lasts you a whole month and costs but One (\$1.00) Dollar. Get a bottle—just use it twenty (20) days and if you are not satisfied that you feel better, look better and are better, just take the remainder of the package back to the druggist and get your \$1.00 back. Isn't this a fair offer? Get a bottle to-day at Sherman & McConnell Drug Co.'s Stores or any good drug store. Try it.

THIS IS THE AGE OF YOUTH

Strands of Gray Hair May Be Removed

Strands of gray hair are unattractive and very unnecessary and accelerate the appearance of approaching age. Why not remove all traces of gray in the hair and possess an even shade of beautiful dark hair in bounteous quantities by the use of "La Creole" Hair Dressing? Used by thousands of people every day—everywhere—with perfect satisfaction. No one need be annoyed with gray hair—hair streaked with gray, diseased scalp or dandruff when offered such a preparation as "La Creole" Hair Dressing. Apply it freely to scalp and hair, rubbing it in well, and after a few applications you will be delightfully surprised with the results.

USE "LA CREOLE" HAIR DRESSING for gray or faded hair and retain the appearance of youth. Used by gentlemen in every walk of life to restore an even dark color to their gray hair, beard or mustache. For sale by Sherman & McConnell Drug Store and all good drug stores everywhere. Mail orders from out-of-town customers filled promptly upon receipt of regular price, \$1.20. "La Creole" Hair Dressing is sold on money-back guarantee.—Adv.

FOR STUBBORN COUGHS AND COLDS

Dr. King's New Discovery has a fifty year record behind it

It built its reputation on its production of positive results, on its sureness in relieving the throat irritation of colds, coughs, grippe and bronchial attacks.

Dr. King's New Discovery? Why my folks wouldn't use anything else! That's the general nationwide esteem in which this well-known remedy is held. Its action is prompt, its taste pleasant, its relief gratifying.

Half a century of cold and cough checking. Sold by druggists everywhere. 60c and \$1.20.

Bowels Out of Kilter?

That's nature calling for relief. Assist her in her daily duties with Dr. King's New Life Pills. Not a purgative in the usual dose, but a mild, effective, corrective, laxative that teases the bowels into action and chases "blues." 25c.

When Writing to Our Advertisers Mention Seeing It in The Bee

BURGESS-NASH COMPANY

The Christmas Store for Everybody

Tuesday, December 3, 1918 — STORE NEWS FOR WEDNESDAY — Telephone Douglas 2100

A SENSATIONAL OFFERING WEDNESDAY OF Women's and Misses' New WINTER COATS

In the Downstairs Store at **\$15.95**

Affording By Long Odds the Biggest and Best Values of the Entire Season



The coats are made of velvet, wool velour, heavy coatings and mixtures, trimmed with velvet, fur and self-material collars and finished with buttons, belts and large, roomy pockets.

The range of styles is extensive, with sizes for women and misses, and the most wanted colors are included as well as plenty of black. We say again, the values are extreme.

Burgess-Nash Co.—Downstairs Store

The Most Joyful Christmas

Since A. D. 1 will be that of A. D. 1918, Christmas gifts should be personal and permanent.

RYAN JEWELRY CO.

Typewriters and Adding Machines

All Makes for Rent. We buy, sell, exchange and repair

Central Typewriter Exchange
(Established 15 Years)
Doug. 4121, 1905 Farnam

Glasses "Correctly" Fitted

O. J. BRADSHAW
Doctor of Ophthalmology
Securities Bldg.
322 (Third Floor)
16th and Farnam.