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OMAHA, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 17, 1921.

THE RED FISHER



By Owen Oliver

one. He took me with Robert Carr. You'll think that's only a figure of speech, but it isn't. There is a full bottle of strong sleepingdraught in my bedroom, marked off into 16 Cay portions by lines of glass. I would take whole bottleful if I could escape a picture of the Red Fisher waiting to pull me out of the river of sleep. The devil may be only a superstition that ages haven't quite wiped off the slate of heredity; but the picture is a fact. You can see it on the walls of Nugent's gallery:

874. The Red Fisher. Arthur Dane. It shows up best if you stand just beside the left-hand seat of the settee. You get the qualignity of the grin then. I stood just there then my duel with conscience began. I suppose I am not ultra-modern. I have a con-

It was on a rainy Friday afternoon three years ago, and I had a dull hour to kill. I passed the gallery. "I may as well be bored by myself as bored by pictures," I reflected. "I can't be more bored by pictures than I am by myself," I thought 50 yards down the road. I turned back and went in.

I saw my own thoughts rather than the pictures, until I found myself staring at the devil; a very proper Mephistopheles, long, lean, sardonic and habited in hard red. He sat upon an overhanging branch, dangling his pointed shoes above a glassy stream that came from nowhere into a green wood and ran out to nowhere again. A network bag lay upon the grass behind him, with his varied bait peeping through the meshes; a miniature of a pretty, enticing woman, and a cardinal's hat; a diploma, a seal of office, and a fat packet of bonds; a necklace of diamonds and a president's chair. A pale young monk lay dead upon the bank, aught by a saint's aureole; and a red-faced woman captured by a wicker flask. The wine was dribbling out and staining a little white daisy purple. The Red Fisher was angling now with a pretty mannikin. A wistful, elfish girl was swimming away from temptation; but she looked back over her round shoulder, and her pouting mouth opened a little as if she wanted to come back and snap. I wondered foolishly whether she was going to be caught; moralized tritely upon the vanities that catch women and men; and then suddenly-

"I wonder," I thought, "what bait he'd use

I turned over temptations hopefully in my mind, but could find none strong enough to haul me to the devil's bank. I was a dull bachelor woman, I told myself impatiently, half-past temptation, and growing into an old maid with a hundred weaknesses and no grand vice; not warm enough to nourish a sin.

"Isn't there anything you'd risk the hook for, Nina?" I asked myself. "Surely you aren't quite dried up yet." I looked into my secret mind, as if it were a picture book, and the burly form of Robert Carr grew slowly out of the mist within; dear old Robert, manly, and clever, and courteous, and kind! I felt my eyes widen and my mouth open and close with a snap. I am telling the truth. I did not know before how much I liked him, though I would have said any day and anywhere that he was the nicest fellow in the world. . . . Well, I did like him, in a perfectly proper way;

liked him very much. What of it?
"My dear Devil!" I said contemptuously. "You've chosen the wrong fly! I don't nibble at e husband of my friend sides he doesn't want me."

I gasped again at the self-betrayal of the last words; reddened and then turned very pale. I could see my face in a little mirror. I have a conscience, as I have said. There were many virtues that I had no great care for, but I cherished an idea of myself as loyal to my friends. Margaret was a cat of a woman, and I was another, but we were pals; had been all our lives. "Not her husband," I said, even in the dark depths of my mind; but the heart is deeper. That said I was lost if the Fisherman won over Robert Carr to help him angle for me. I must fly from temptation or risk the consequences.

risk, if there is one. There isn't. Robert loves his wife, if she doesn't care much for him. She is 10 times better looking than I. He likes pink, smiling young prettiness. He'd never want this pale, old snappish thing, except perhaps as a friend. . . . Poor boy! He needs some one to comfort him. Fish away, my dear Devil! I'll risk all I have and am to be a little help to dear old Bob."

I went to their house on the Saturday aftmated. Robert was gloomy. She was going to drag him away to the seaside on Monday; and his roots are in his business and his study.

"It's all very well for you," he grumbled. 'You'll have drives and excursions and dances and whist drives, and two or three admirers hanging around. I shall have nothing to do but potter along the beach. I hate pottering. I'd rather stay and work in town.'

"Don't potter," I advised. "Take to golf or something. Get an admirer yourself, if Maggie doesn't behave."

"That introduces a subject for me!" Margaret cried gayly. "Come with us, Neen, and take him off my hands for a fortnight. You can teach him golf, if you like; or sailing, He'd ove that! Nag him and wake him up! Wanted, an experienced lady, with a stimulating tongue to take entire charge of a dull infant! You just fit!"

"Poor Robert!" I said. "My sailing's all right; and my tongue! But I don't know golf. Don't be afraid, my dear chap. I won't add

to your troubles." "I'm sure you won't," he declared heartily. "Come and teach me sailing, Nina, I'd like it."

I went. There aren't too many red letter days in my calendar; but there wasn't a black one in that fortnight. Margaret spent the days on the pier, showing off her new hats and dresses, and smiling at competing cavaliers. She always had a train of adorers. O! She was a pretty woman! She danced all the evenings. Robert and I sailed away the days in a 20-foot half

decked boat. My father taught me sailing when

I was a child, and now I taught Robert. In the evenings we went to concerts and entertainments, or walked—generally walked. O! those walks. I never knew before that the sky was so full of stars! It did not occur to Robert to make love to me, and I did not try-I swear it-to put the notion in his mind. I just wanted him to be happier, and I made him. I was a fine pal, he told me, as we scudded back before the wind on the last afternoon. I remember

the salt spray on my lips, and my hair blowing loose, and the adoration in my heart when I looked at him. "I'm glad," I said. "I like to be your pal.

"Thank you," he acknowledged, "dear old girl! Lord knows, I need one. Margaret-He set his lips, "Our tastes differ a good deal,"

I nodded "It's just that," I consoled him. "Margaret is all right in her way. I am fond of her, you know." That was fairly true. "There's nothing in her little firtations, Bob." That you." had a large element of truth. She skated on thin ice, but she did not go in. "She's fond Bob, if you spoke to her frankly, if you said you,"



. . . He sat upon an overhanging branch, dangling his pointed shoes above a glassy stream

'I'd like us to get on better, Maggie. I much "Well," I decided deliberately, "I take the prefer you to any one else, and-

That was my supreme effort. God knows what it cost me. I would have gone through with it and tried to reconcile them if he had not interrupted me, but he held up his hand.

"I don't, Nina," he said, very, very quietly. "I haven't for several years. . . . Don't ask me questions."

'No," I promised faintly. "I won't." I opened my mouth a little to catch the salt wind. It seemed to me that there was ernoon, as I generally did. Margaret was ani- not air enough in the whole world, and that my heart was too small to hold my hot blood. I loved him as a mother loves her little child just then; this big, strong man. Our love should be silent and pure, I vowed, and everything else in my life should be set aside to do little

> things to brighten him. "We won't talk about troubles," I said cheer-"Let's make the best of the comfort we have. . . A good pal to sail a good boat! I'll put her nose into the waves and make her splash; and we'll get drenched and laugh like kids. Kids who are out with their

> pal!" "Their pal!" he echoed. "Let's shake hands on that!"

went back to town that evening.

"Come in often, Nina," he begged when we parted at the station. "Good luck, old He smiled at me then. He had such a nice

smile; and such a nice voice; so rich and round. I used to seem to hear it when I woke up at nights. I cried for him then. Things went badly between him and Margaret during the next year. He was too civil to her, and she was not civil enough to him. They had a bad quarrel, cold on his side and

hot on hers, and decided to occupy separate rooms. Margaret told me herself. Her pink face was very red, and she gritted her splendid "As he does not want me," she said, "the

inference is obvious." "That he thinks you want another man." answered sharply. "No, one in particular," she rejoined pet-

tishly. "I like dozens. That's my safety! He likes very few women. That's his danger. If you only like one you like too much." "If," I cried scornfully. "It's like you to try and put the blame on him. He's worth a dozen of either of us. You're a silly, suspicious woman. Are you working round to ob-

ject to me being friends with the poor, neglected boy?" I never had a greater insult than her look of amazement then.

"You!" she cried with her big blue eyes wide open. She had lovely soft eyes and mine are hard, beady things, "You!" She laughed. I'd have liked to take her full throat in my hands and strangle the sneer. "No, I'm not so absurd as that: You just take the place of a sister to him. . . . You and I have been rather like sisters, Neen. . . . Don't look hurt, dear old thing. I didn't mean that a man couldn't like you very much, only-you are far too good a pal to me to let him flirt with

"I am his pal also, Margaret," I said steadily, "and, since you mention the matter to me, of you really." That was quite true. "I think, I don't blame him nearly so much as I blam?

"I don't either," she agreed, "but still-I'm a cat, of course, but I only wanted just to have a little amusement. If he'd pulled me up as he ought to have done I'd have been pulled up after a kick or two, and-I suppose you know that I like him?"

"I suppose so." I answered. "but you've had a funny way of showing it."

"Well, you see, it may be only my fancy, but three or four years ago I thought that he cooled to me. If he'd been just angry or nasty and we'd quarreled I'd have made it up very nicely, but he didn't seem to want to make it up, and I thought-you'll laugh, but I did think that there must be some one else. I thought so the other day when we met-some one. I watched him talking to her. I am sure she likes him, anyhow."

"Who?" I demanded. My voice was more anxious than I liked.

"Joyce Reed," Margaret told me. "Joyce!" My laugh was very genuine. "You donkey! Why, she's about 24, and he's getting on to 40. He always likes kids, but he's quite fraternal to them. He doesn't even see her more than once in six months."

"Doesn't he? You know more of his doing

"More shame to you," I said vigorously. That was a red letter afternoon. We "Well, I don't think his doings concern Baby

Swamp; Famous De-

tective Solves Baf-

fling Mystery.

(Detective John Wilson Murray was for many years head of the detective force in Canada. During that time he had through his hands and personally solved some hundreds of cases, from embezziement to burglary, from forgery to murder. His fame became worldwide, and he was the personal friend of the heads of the police of nearly every country in the world. We was as well known in Scotland Tard as he was at Toronto, in Canada, or New York. For 20 years he was the terror of criminals throughout the whole of North America. In the underworld of crime he was throughout the whole of North America. In the underworld of crime he was known as "Old. Never-Let-Go." because once he started on a case, he did not let go till the criminal was dead or behind the prison bars. He traveled thousands of miles in one case to get his man, and in another he tracked down a criminal after spending three patient years collecting evidence to secure his conviction. The case given below is picked out from many others in which he was concerned, because it began in Engiand, ended in Canada, and filled the newspapers of European countries for many a long day during the time of the trial. Murray retired a few years ago, and Canada lost the most brilliant detective it ever had.)

By NAZARIENE DAAN KANNI-

BELLE.

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in the underbrush.

the authorities.

By NAZARIENE DAAN KANNI- they could not help observing that

The frightened and horror-stricken

field and began to examine it. George

the back of the dead man's head.

was a murder. They at once carried

the body to the little nearby town

of Blenheim and surrendered it to

The whole town viewed the dead

body, but no one could recognize it.

The Blenheim police at once wired

to Detective Murray, the head of the

Teronto criminal investigation de-

partment. He was known in Can-

ada, as well as in the United States.

The authorities were convinced

and from his hands and finger nails

he had never done a day's manual

long to Blenheim or any other run him down.

neighboring town. This much they

On describin

that of a young man, smooth-shaven, tor Murray said:

as Chief Inspector Murray.

woodsmen carried the body to the ciothes.

Joyce. Robert's tastes are mature. I don't suppose his doings concern any woman, but he

MHWICHE

had not broached the subject to me." "He might if you led him on a little," she suggested, with one of the pretty sideway looks that trap a man and warn a woman.

I rose to go. "Margaret," I said sternly. "You disgust me. Robert is my friend. His friendship is a precious thing to me. I don't mind saying that to you, or on the housetops! He is absolutely the best man I know. If you dream that would win his confidence and betray him to you, you are greatly mistaken. Look here! If I found him out I shouldn't tell you. That's

"No," she agreed. "I don't believe you would. You're a stiff creature! But you'd influence him. You're a better sort than you know. Influence him a little in this direction, Neen." she held out her grand arms. "He's my husband, and-" The red rushed over her handsome face and superb neck; even over her rounded arms-"I want him!"

"Umph!" I said. My voice was indifferent enough: but my heart was knocking to and fro, and screaming that she should not win him back from me.

World's Greatest Detective Cases

Secret of De ad Man's they were chopping down was at was that the murderer had committagedy which sent that weird and

Eldridge discovered a bullet hole on years Chief Inspector Murray said:

The two woodsmen realized that it on the body which might hav

"I know what you're thinking," she charged me; "but you're wrong. I don't want him to

the end of the swamp. Joseph's ted the act deliberately, cautiously suggestive name flying over the foot slipped. He grabbed at what and methodically, as the trademark telegraph wires throughout the

he thought was a half submerged and the tailor's name were removed world, men had been lost in "Dead

log, and then he cried in horror. He from the clothes. In order to make Man's Swamp," and their rotting

was hanging on a dead man's body the dead man's indentification im- bones discovered years afterwards

On speaking of the case in later

"There was not the stichtest clue

thing I deduced was that to all ap-

pearance he was a new arrival from

Britain from the cut of his clothes.

The murderer had even cut away

dead man's hat had been removed.

The hat was later discovered in the

swamp where the two woodsmen

had come across the body quite ac-

that the murdered man did not be- that it would need all my wits to where in the world, seeing the face

Dead Man's Swamp.

When Chief Inspector Murray ficially it is known as the Blenheim hands and knees and scurried the

Princeton forest in Ontario.

could observe-that the body was "Dead Man's Swamp," Chief Inspec- of his identity.

Joseph and George Eldridge, two arrived at the police station he exwoodsmen, brothers, were chopping amined the body and observed that forest, and later to the world, it bewood on the edge of "Dead Man's the victim was fresh from Britain, came known by its sinister and so its face scratched by the bushes and Swamp." The time was one day in as he wore British-cut clothes and gruesome name of "Dead Man's his clothes covered with thick black rebruary, 1890. The particular tree underclothes. But what baffled him Swamp." For years before the (Turn to Page Mye, Column Three.)

helped me, and, in fact, the only wild.

any buttons which might have proceed he would have to identify helped me, and the label from the body.

cidentally. I realized then that I describing the body as best he could

was up against a murderer of cau- and requesting the press to publish

tious and methodical caliber, and it. He hoped that some one, some-

On describing the location of nize it and thus solve the mystery

"It is located in a lonely part of of the unknown had been discovered

Man's

back to her. I tried to alienate him; warned him against being fooled by her. Margaret's affectionate mood soon passed. I knew it would! Their dissension became sharper and more in evidence. They never went out together; and whenever one dined at home the other dined with friends, or "in town." It was generally she who was out; but Robert was "at the club" more than he used

plague. I'd be good to him-now. Try, Neen.

I: only each other."

"I'll try," I answered.

to rally him into interest before. I spoke to him frankly one evening when Margaret had gone out and I had dropped in. "Bob," I said, "you look upon me as a

to be. He was abstracted and silent very often

when I talked to him. I had always been able

pretty trusty friend, I think."
"Indeed," he assured me, "I do! I'd trust you blind. Nina."

"There's something on your mind, I know. Would it help you to tell a pal?" He leaned back in his chair and opened

his cigaret case. "No," I commanded, "a cigar! One of those you keep for special occasions. It will unruffle you. I'll get one. Give me the key of the cabinet." I took the key from him and fetched him one of his "extravagances," as he called

"There, old pal; the precious red band. See! Now you can talk."

"Good old Nina! How you know my ways and study me. . . You see, there are things that one can't talk about; things that concern other people."

"Talk about a man you know," I suggested, "and leave out people's names; and I'll advise you in the abstract." He shook his head.

"I'm no good at acting, Neen. I'm talking about myself. . . . Eight years ago I married Margaret. Nobody blamed us. We appeared to be just suited. We didn't really suit, Neen; not even on the honeymoon. I remember -bah! I'm gossiping like an old lady. Well, wherever the fault lay, we drifted away from each other. Possibly she didn't mean much harm by her flirtations; but they were sufficiently in evidence to humiliate her husband. I was too proud to own my hurt. I just gritted it out till I didn't care a hang. Well, not much. . . . Anyhow, I was very lonely for a long time, and then I found . . . a very wonderful woman. . . . O! a very wonderful

"You thought her so," I said. I sighed. "She was, and is. There has never been a word of love between me and her, Neen;

but we know." "Both of you?" I asked unsteadily. I caught sight of my face in the beveled mirror of a wall bracket just then; and it wavered. Pale, and with the young bloom gone, and never beautiful; but it looked loving, I thought. Ah! loving!

"Both of us," he said unhesitatingly. "Yes. Sometimes we have been near to the word; but we have paused in time. It is not my strength that keeps us as we are, but the strength that I get from her; my reverence and saw him alone. for her goodness and daintiness. She is above all women. She-

you are telling to your friend. . . . So truly

your friend, Bob, you know," "I know. . . . I don't want to sink in Not a word. It doesn't bear discussion." your estimation, friend. I will tell you how I looked at it. There is no wrong to Margaret, I said. For years she has not wanted me; and she has not scrupled to flirt with others. I do not say that she has been untrue to her marriage vow, as the world estimates

it. I do not know." "I do not know," I said in a faint whisper. If I did a shameful, damnable thing from first to last it was when I said that. Margaret was an honest woman then. I had not the

slightest doubt of it. "There can be no wrong to myself. For love of-her whom I love-I am a better man; and our love is innocent and pure. . The question was about the girl. I kept out of her way for some years, for fear that her love for me-I knew it-would spoil her life. Then I saw that she meant to die a maid for love of me. Why should not she as well as I have the comfort of friendship, I argued. Well, we have it. I think life is just the hours that we spend together. . . . Is it very

wrong, Neen?" "Only unwise," I said, still very faintly. "Is that all?"

"No." He put his cigar to his lips, but I "I'll light it," I offered.

saw that it had gone out. It was growing dusk, and when the match flared up I seemed to see the Red Fisher in

it, laughing triumphantly in the flare. "Hook me, then!" my mind told him fiercely. expected Robert's arm to go round me as stood beside his chair, offering him the light. I held his wrist with one hand to steady the

become known as Pine pool.

Chief Inspector Murray intimated

to the police that he would have to

summon all his wits to run down

the murderer, but before he could

Murray at once had the dead man

photographed and sent copies to nearly 1,500 newspapers in Canada,

the United States and Great Britain

of the unknown dead would recog-

Next, Murray went to "Dead

searched the spot where the body

Of- by the woodsmen. He went on his

Swamp" and diligently

If you could put the idea of making it up into did not come. his head? It's natural to him to do the kind "Thank you, Neen. You speil me. . . . The devil of it is that Margaret has taken thing if he thinks of it. You could say it's a one of her turns-turned toward me as she pity we squabble, because I can be nice, andmight to a new flame. She wants to make you could say you know I like him. . . . Will you, Neen? We never had sisters, you and it up. . . . Neen, I don't want her. I should not want her if the other woman weren't in the world. Don't tell me it's my duty to make That was a lie. I did not try to lead him it up! . . . That's what I have on my mind; what I wanted to ask you, my good friend."

There was a long, long silence. I sat with

cigar. . . . The touch that I hungered for

TEN CENTS

my chin on my hand staring into the fire; made a picture there with the black and gold and amber and the gray smoke. . . . Red Fisher dangled his feet merrily in the names; set his teeth and forgot to smile as he played me at the end of the line; wondered-so did I!-if I was firmly hooked. I swam round and round, I thought, till the water ran in fast ripples that I could hear. His-s-s-s. . . That was only the sound of the flames. . . . Flap-flap-flap. . . Only the puffs of the jets of coal gas catching fire. . . I put my hands on the arms of the chair. One more tightening of my nerves and I should go to Robert. I paused only for the right word. . . . Just his name. I would say "Bob, dear!" I drew a breath; half rose. . . And heard Margaret's voice in the hall, She had come home. . . What a magnificent woman she looked

when she switched on the light at the door! "I had a fancy to be domestic tonight," she said laughingly; "but I suppose you're going out, Bob?"

"I am going out," he told her, and rose. They looked hard at each other. Several times I thought they were going to speak. but they did not. She gasped when he had gone; clinched her hands. Presently she

clutched my arm. "He's going to her!" she hissed.

"Don't be a fool," I said. "He wants to get rid of me," she said in my ear. "He thinks-Neen, he's having me

watched!" "He would, if I were he," I told her-that was not true. I had no suspicion of her-"but he isn't. I should think it's your con-

science; if you have one." "Until tonight I had," she told me furiously, "new it's gone. I came home to try and put things right. I was ready to humble myself to him." She laughed wildly. "You side with him, of course. I daresay you'd try to

marry him, if I were gone!" Margaret!" "I didn't mean it, Neen. Don't you turn on me. You're the only pal I have. Women don't like me. . . Well, men do! . Can't you help me, Neen? I tell you I'm

desperate Do you understand?" "What do you mean?" I clutched her arm. "Why should I stay with a man who despises me when another adores me? I've been

a good woman till now, but . . . You don't know what temptation is—" "Who is it?" "I didn't say it was any one. . . . Don't stare at me like that! You look a-a

devil! . . . If I did, he'd have driven me to it; he's a cold brute. He--" "I won't listen to abuse of him," I said. "Don't go," she pleaded. I want help-I

I closed the door upon her. I called at Robert's office the next morning

"Bob." I said, "I've got to be disloyal to one friend or another. You have to come "Hush!" I said. "We are not talking of first. . . You are of all friends dearest her, but of you. This is your story, which to me. . . I can't see your life spoilt by a tie that you honor and she-if I were you I should have Margaret watched. . . .

> He rose slowly; staggered; rested his hand on the table. "Nina?" he said hoarsely. "You know that

"Have her watched," I said sharply. Then I turned and walked out. I went away for a month. When I came back he had taken proceedings for his divorce.

I don't know what kink in my character took me to the court. He had kept me out of it, of course, and I needn't have gone. Margaret was foolish enough to fight the case. I don't think she expected to save herself, only wanted to say what she said in the box.

"I have done things that lay me open to suspicion," she said, looking like a beautiful, pale statue, "things that I should not have done. I deserved to lose my husband's affection! But I tried to win it back. He did not want me back. That made me desperate,

and I-" "You have not answered my plain question, madam," Robert's counsel interrupted. He repeated the question-I need not name it-and she fainted in the box. The judge suggested to her counsel that it was a matter for his discretion whether "this painful cross-examination" should proceed when his client recovered. She did not reappear and her counsel accepted judgment against her. sometimes wonder whether she merely let judgment go by default to give Robert his freedom. The man protested her innocence, but he married her afterwards. I do not trouble very much about Margaret even now. I did not trouble about her at all then. My brain was in a mad whirl thinking of the time

to wait for him. He did not come.

It was his idea of my "goodness" and "delicacy" that delayed him, I suppose. He thought that I should not wish him to speak yet. I meant him to keep that idea all our lives. I decided to go back to town and wait patiently till we met in the usual course of friendship. He was away in the country, I found. His mother told me.

when Robert would come as a free man to

me. I went away to the sea, which we loved,

possible, the murderer had even re- and all trace of their identity had "You were a friend of Margaret's." she said, moved the buttons from the man's disappeared. The place is a tangled but I think you wish for Robert's happiness.' mass of thick briars, and on the "Indeed," I said, "I do, Mrs. Carr. Believe edge of it is a deep pool which has me I was, and am, a friend of Robert's too. . He deserves happiness; and if it deone inhabits this lonely part of the pended on my wishforest except the creatures of the

I drew a deep breath; wondered whether the foolish fellow feared that I would refuse him for some scruple, because I had been Margaret's friend.

"Then," she said, "you will like to know that he has it. . . . He is staying with the Reeds. There is no engagement yet; but he and Joyce. . .

I do not remember the rest. I found myself wiping my face with my handkerchief and feeling as if I had just "come to" at the dentist's from laughing gas.

"It is very hot," I said; "very hot. . I feel as if something is sticking in my

The Red Fisher knew what it was. (Copyright, 1921, by the Chicago Tribune.)

NEXT SUNDAY

"Playing Safe"

A story of romance and adventure, by Henry C. Rowland.