The YELLOW STREAK By Valentine Williams

THIRD INSTALLMENT.

HE swift tragedy of the winter after-noon had convulsed the well-organized repose of Hartley Parrish's household Nowhere had his master grasp of de-tail been seen to better advantage than in the management of his country home. Over-whelmed with work though he constantly was, accustomed to carry his business and often part of his business staff to Harkings with him for the week-ends, there was never the least confusion about the house. methodical calm of Harkings was that of a

But it was into a house in turmoil that Mary Trevert stepped when she left the drawing room and passed along the corridor to go to her room. Doors slammed and there was the heavy thud of footsteps on the floor above. The glass door leading into the gardens was open, as Mary passed it, swinging in the gusts of cold rain. In the gardens without there was a confused murmur of

In the hall a knot of servants were gossiping in frightened whispers with a couple of large, rather bovine country constables, who, bareheaded, without their helmets, which they held under their arms, looked

When, about six months before, Mary and her mother had begun to be regular visitors at Harkings, Hartley Parrish had insisted on giving Mary a boudoir to herself. This in response to a chance remark of Mary's in admiration of a Chinese room she had seen at a friend's house, Parrish had had decorated in the Chinese style, with black walls and black and gold lacquer furniture. The room had been transformed from a rather prosaic morning room with old oak and chints in the space of three days as a surprise for Mary. She remembered now how Parrish had left her to make the discovery of the change for berself. She loved color and line, and the contrast between this quaint and delightful room with her rather shabby bedroom in other's small house in Brompton had made this surprise one of the most delight-

ful she had ever experienced. a charmingly lacquered armchair in front of the log fire blazing brightly in the fire-She was conscious that a great disaster had overtaken her, but only dimly ous. For more poignantly than this dull sense of tragedy she was aware of a great aching at her heart and her thoughts, after hovering over the events of the afternoon, settled down upon her talk that after-. already how far off it seemed

with Robin Greve in the library. bin had always been her hero. She could see him now in the glow of the fire as he had been when in the holidays he had ne and snatched her away from a home an orgie of cream cakes at Gunter's aftera. He was then, a long, slim, handsome boy of irrepressible spirits and impulsive gen-erosity, which usually left him after the first few days of his holidays in a state of ned to her, they had been friends, but with a stronger feeling between them until Robin, having joined the army on the out-break of the war, had come to say good-bye

But by that time money troubles at home with which, as it seemed to her, she had been surrounded all her life, had grown so pressing that, apart from Lady Mary's reiterated counsels, she hercelf had come to recognize that a suitable marriage was the only way

out of their ever-increasing embarrassment. She and Robin, she recalled, with a feeling of relief, had never discussed the matter. He. France without seeking to take advantage of

idea of "proper provision" for her, she knew, meant wealth for her beyond anything she struggle with poverty which she and her mother had carried on for years was a thing of the past. Money meant freedom, freedom to live . . . and to love.

She stretched her hands out to the blaze.

Was she free to love? What had driven Hartley Parrish to suicide? Or who? She went over in her mind her interview with Robin Greve in the billiard room. He had spoken of other women in connection with Hartley Parrish. Had he used that knowldone after he had left her that afternoon

A tap came at the door. Bude appeared.
"I think you rang, miss," he said, in his
quiet, deep voice. "I was with the inspector, iss, and I couldn't come before. Was there

'Come in and shut the door, Bude," she "I want to speak to you." The butler obeyed and came over to where the sat. He seemed ill at ease and rather

me why you were certain that Mr. Greve was going to Mr. Parrish in the library when he passed you in the hall this afternoon?"

The butler smoothed his bands down his "I thought he Mr. Greve would be sure to be going to fetch Mr. Parrish in to tea, miss . . ." he replied, eying the girl

Mary Trevert continued gazing into the

"You know it is a rule in this house, Bude," she said, "that Mr. Parrish is never disturbed in the library . . ."

"Bude," her voice was very calm, "I want you to tell me the truth. You know that Mr. Greve went in to Mr. Parrish. . . .

Bude looked uneasily about him.
"Oh, miss," he answered almost in whisper, "whatever are you saying?"
"I want your answer, Bude," the girl said,

Bude did not speak. He rubbed his hands up and down his trousers in desperation. — "I wish to know why Mr. Parrish did this thing, Bude. I mean to know. And I think you are keeping something back!"

"Miss Trevert, ma'un," the butler said in a low voice, "I wouldn't take it upon me to say anything as would get anybody in this house into trouble. . ."

Mary Trevert tapped with her foot impa-"But what grounds have you for saying that Mr. Greve went in to Mr. Parrish? Mr. Greve declared quite positively that he went out by the side door and did not go into the library at all." "But, Miss, I heard him speaking to Mr. The girl turned round and the man saw fear in her wide open eyes. The butler put his hand on the back of her hair and leaned forward. "Better leave things where they are, Miss," he said in a low voice. "Mr. Parrish I daresay, had his reasons. He's gone to his ount now. What does it matter why his carefully studied English was forsaking "Please explain what you mean!" she "Why, Miss," replied the butler, "we w that Mr. Greve had no call to like

As he came into the lounge

he instinctively realized that

he had entered on unfriendly

The butler raised his hands in a quick

"God forbid, Miss!" he ejaculated in hor-

"What, then, do you know that is likely

The butler hesitated an instant. Then he

ing me questions, Miss, in a nasty, sus-

picious sort o' way. I told him what I told

him already, that just after I'd done serving

the tea Mr. Greve crossed the hall and went

"You didn't tell him everything, Bude?"

you'll pardon my frankness, but I know as how you and Mr. Greve are old friends and

I wouldn't take it upon me to tell the police anything as might. . . "

master, a kind and generous master as he

was kind and generous to every one in this

nouse. We must clear up the mystery of his

Mr. Greve nor anybody must stand in the

the house. The batler, trained through life

person to see Mr. Parrish alive I made sure

that Mr. Greve would say he had been in to

tell him tea was ready. But Mr. Greve, who

swer, said nothing. So I thought, maybe, he

had his reasons and I did not feel exactly as

She dropped back into her chair. She gave

There's nothing much to tell, Miss. When

way. Now tell me the truth!"

to receive orders, surrendered

of his death. Neither you nor I nor

Mary Trever stood up and faced the man. "Bude," said she, "Mr. Parrish was your

The butler took a step nearer.

Mr. Parrish, seeing how things were between you and the master. . . ." "You mean the servants know that Mr. Parrish and I were engaged. . . .

Bude made deprecatory gesture.
"Know, Miss? I wouldn't go so far as to 'know.' But there has been some talk in the servants' 'all, Miss. You know what young female servants are, Miss. . . "And you think that Mr. Greve went to Mr. Parrish to talk about . . . me?"

Mary Trevert's voice faltered a little. She coked eagerly at the other's fat, smooth

"I prescomed as much, Miss, I must con-

". heard nothing, Miss, except just only the sound of voices. After Mr. Greve had crossed me in the hall I took the salver I was carrying into the butler's pantry. I stayed there a minute or two and then I

from the box in the hall for the chauffeur to take to the post, the same as he does every evening. I went back to the hall and just as I opened the green balze door I heard voices from the library. . . .

of voices, rather loud like. I caught the sound because the door leading from the hall to the library corridor was ajar. Mr. Greve must have forgotten to shut it."

"What did you do?" "Well, Miss, I closed the corridor door. . . . "

"Why did you do that?"

"Well, Miss, seeing the voices sounded angry-like, I thought perhaps it would be betfer not to let any one else hear. . . . And Mr. Greve looked upset-like when he passed me. He gave me quite a turn, he did, when I saw his face under the hall lamp. "Did you stay there . . . and listen?

Bude drew himself up. That is not my 'abit, Miss, not 'ere nor in hany of the 'ouses where I 'ave seen serv-

The butler broke off. The "h's" were too much for him in his indignation.

"I didn't mean to suggest anything underhand," the girl said quickly. "I mean, did you hear any more?"
"No. Miss. I emptied the letter box and

took the letters to the servants' hall." "But," said Mary in a puzzled way, "why do you say it was Mr. Greve if you didn't hear his voice?"

Bude spread out his hands in bewilder-"Who else should it have been, Miss? Sir Horace and the doctor were in the lounge at tea. Jay and Robert were in the servants

The girl's head sank slowly on her breast. She was silent. The butler shifted his posi-"Was there anything more, Miss?" he

asked after a little while. "There is nothing further, thank you, Bude," replied Mary. "About Mr. Greve-I am sure there must be some mistake. he cannot have understood Mr. Humphries question. I'll ask him about it when I see him. I don't think I should say anything to the inspector about it, at any rate not until I've seen Mr. Greve. He'll probably speak to

you about it himself. . . Bude made a motion as though he were going to say something. Then apparently he thought better of it, for he made a little formal bow and in his usual slow and dignifled manner made his exit from the room.

The house telephone, standing on the long and gracefully designed desk with its elab from her reverie in her chair by the fire. By the clock on the mantel shelf she saw that it was a quarter past eight. She rem that once her mother had knocked at her door and bidden her come down to dinner. She had refused the invitation, declined to "That you, Mary?" -

Robin was speaking.

"May I come up and see you? Or would you rather be left alone?" His firm, pleasant voice greatly comforted her. Only then she realized how greatly she craved sympathy. But the recollection of Bude's story suddenly interposed itself like a barrier between them.

speak to you!" Her voice was dispirited. self as she replaced the receiver, got up and unlocked the door, "but I must know!" A gentle tap carre at the door. Robin came ckly and crossed to where she stood by

"My dear!" he said, and put out his two

them there and made no sign that she had observed his gesture. He looked at her in surprise. "This has been terrible for you, Mary," he said. "I wish to God I could make you real-

ize how very, very much I feel for you in what you must be going through. The phrase was formal, and he brought it out irresolutely, chilled as he was by her reception. She was looking at him dispassion-

fingers nervously intertwining. She kept

"Won't you sit down?" she said. "There

is somthing I wanted to say!" He was looking at her now in a puzzled fashion. With rather feigned deliberation he chose a chair and sat down facing the fire. in the room-threw its rays on his face. His chin was set rather more squarely than his wont and his eyes were shining.

'Mary."-he leaned forward towards herplease forget what I said this afternoon. It was beastly of me, but I hardly knew what She made a little gesture as if to wave his

apology aside. Then, with her hands clasped in front of her, scanning the nails, she asked, almost casually:

"What did you say to Hartley Parrish in the library this afternoon?" Robin stared at her in amazement.

But I was not in the library?" he an-The girl dropped her hands sharply to

"Don't quibble with me, Robin," she said. What did you say to Hartley Parrish after you left me this afternoon in the billiard

He was still staring at her, but now there was a deep furrow between his brows. He was breathing rather hard. "I did not speak to Parrish at all after I

His answer was curt and incisive. "Do you mean to tell me." Mary said. "that after you left me and went down the in to Hartley nor spoke to him?"

"Then how do you account for the fact that almost immediately after you had crossed Bude in the hall he heard the sound of voices in the library?"

Robin Greve stood up abruptly. "Bude, you say, makes this statement?"

" Certainly!"

"To whom, may I ask?" He spoke, sharply and there was a challenging ring in his voice. It nettled the girl. "Only to me," she said quickly, and added You needn't think he has told the police

kerchief from his sleeve, wiped his lips, and replaced it. The girl saw that his hands "Why do you say that to me?" he demanded rather flercely.

Very deliberately Robin plucked his hand-

Mary Trevert shrugged her shoulders. "This afternoon," she said, "when I told you of my engagement to Hartley you began by abusing him to me, you rushed from the we all know that Hartley was working, and a few minutes after Bude hears voices raised in anger proceeding from there. The next thing we know is that Hartley has . . . She broke off and looked away.

Mary "-Robin's voice was grave and he and I have known one another all our lives. You ought to know me well enough by now stand that I don't tell you lies. When I say I haven't seen or spoken to Hartley Parrish since lunch this afternoon, that is

"How can it be the truth?" the girl in sisted. "Horace and Dr. Romain were in the lounge. Bude was in the hall, the other men servants were in the servants not accounted for and a minute before Bude heard these voices you go down the corridor towards the library. I can understand

Mary," answered the young man sternly, "I know you're upset, but that's no justifi-cation for persisting in this stupid charge against ma. I tell you I never saw Parrish or spoke to him, either, between lunch and when I saw him lying dead in the library. I am not going to repeat the denial. But you may as well understand now that I am not in the habit of allowing my friends to doubt my word!

Mary flamed up at his tone. "If you are my friend," she cried, "why can't you trust me? Why should I find this out from Bude? Why should I be humiliated by hearing from the butler that he kept this evidence from the police in order to please me because you and I are friends? I am

only trying to help you, to shield you . . ." "That will do, Mary," he said. "No, you must hear what I have to say. If you insist on disbelieving me, you must. But I don't want you to help me. I don't want you to shield me. I shall make it my business to see that Bude's evidence is brought before the detective inspector from Scotland Yard who is being brought down here to handle

"A detective from Scotland Tard?" the girl repeated.

"Yes, a detective. Humphries is puzzled by several points about this case and has asked for assistance from London. He is right. Neither the circumstances of Parrish's death nor the motive of his act are clear. Bude's evidence is sufficient proof that somebody did gain access to the library this afternoon. In that case. . ..

"In that case," mid Greve slowly, " it may not be suicide . . Mary put one hand suddenly to her face

as women do when they are frightened. She shrank back.

You mean

Murder!" The girl gave a little gasp. Then she stretched out her hand and touched his arm. But, Robin," she spoke in quick gasps, you can't give the police this evidence of Bude's. Don't you see it incriminates you? Don't you realize that every scrap of evidence points to you as being the man that visited Mr. Parrish in the library this afternoon? You're a lawyer, Robin. You understand these things. Don't you see what I

He nodded curtly.

Perfectly," he replied coldly. "Bude will do what I tell him," the girl hurried on. "There is no need for the police to know . .

'On the contrary," said the other imperturbably, "it is essential they should be told

The girl grasped the lapels of his coat in her two hands. Her breath came quickly and she trembled all over."

"Are you mad, Robin?" she cried. "Who should have wanted to kill poor Hartley? Why should you put these ideas into the heads of the police? Bude may have imagined everything. Now you'll be sensible and

Very gently he detached the two slim hands that held his coat. His mouth was set in a firm line.

"We are going to sift this thing to the m, Mary," he the consequences. You owe it to Parrish and you owe it to me .

The telephone trilled suddenly. Robin picked up the receiver. "Yes, Bude," he said.

There was a moment's silence in the room broken as the clock on the mantelpiece chimed nine times. Then Robin said into "Right! Tell him I'll be down imme-

diately!" He put down the receiver and turned to A detective inspector has arrived from

London. He is asking to see me. I must go downstairs." Mary. her elbows on the mantelpiece, staring into the fire. At the sound of his

voice she swung round quickly. "Robin" she cried.

But she spoke too late. Robin Greve had left the room A quality which had gone far to lay the foundations of the name which Robin Greve was rapidly making at the bar was his strong intuitive sense. He had the rare ability of canny flair for driving instantly at the heart of a situation, which rendered him in the courts a dexterous advocate and a redoubt

Now as he came into the lounge from the big oak staircase he instantly realized that he had entered an unfriendly atmosphere. Greve's attention was immediately at tracted toward the stranger, whom he surmised to be the detective from Scotland Yard. He was a big, burly man with a heavy lark mustache, straight and rather thin

"This Mr. Greve?" The detective had a trick of dropping his eyes to his boots. When he raised them the ffect was to alter his whole expression. His eyes, well open, keenly observant, in perpetual motion, lent an air of alertness, of shrewdness to his heavy, florid countenance.

"That is my name," said Robin, answering his question. "I am a barrister. I have met some of your people at the Yard, but I

"Detective - Inspector Manderton," interjected the big man, and paused as though to say, "Let that sink in!"

Robin knew him well by repute. His qualities were those of the bulldog, slow moving, obstinately brave and desperately tenacious. His was a name to conjure with among the criminal classes, and his career was starred with various sensational tussles with desperate criminals, for Detective-Inspector Manderton, when engaged on a case, invariably "took a hand himself," as he phrased it, when an arrest was to be made.

His motto, as he was fond of saying, was Well, Mr. Greve," said the detective in a loud, hectoring voice, "perhaps you will be good enough to tell me what you know of

perfectly knitted right collarbone remained to

remind him of this propensity of his.

this affair?" Robin flushed angrily at the man's manner. But there was no trace of resentment in his ce as he replied. He told Manderton what he had already told Humphries, how he had gone from the billiard room across the hall and down the library corridor to the side door into the grounds intending to have a stroll before tea, but, finding that it was threaten-ing rain, had returned to the house by the

The detective scanned the young man's face closely as he spoks. When Robin had

finished the other dropped his eyes and seemed to be examining the brilliant polish of his boots. He said nothing, and again Robin became aware of the atmosphere of hostility toward him which this man radi-

"It is dark at five o'clock."

Manderton turned to Bude. "Getting on that way, sir," the butler

"Are you in the habit, sir," the detective turned to Robin now, " of going out for walks in the dark?"

Greve shrugged his shoulders. "I had been sitting in the billiard room.

It was rather stuffy, so I thought I'd like some air before tea!" "You left Mins Trevert in the billiard

"Yen."

" Why?" Greve put a hand to his throat and eased

"The gong had sounded for tea," the detective went on imperturbably; "surely it would have been more natural for you to have brought Miss Trevert with you?"

I didn't wish to!" Mr. Manderton cleared his throat. "Ah" he grunted, "You didn't wish to. I should like you to be frank with me, Mr. Greve, please. Was it not a fact that you and Miss Trevert had words?"

He looked up sharply at him with contracted pupils. "You took a certain interest in this young

"Mr. Manderton "-Robin spoke with certain hauteur-" don't you think we might leave Miss Trevert's name out of this?"

"Mr. Greve," replied the detective bluntly, Robin made a little gesture of resignation.

Before the servants . . . "Come, come, sir!" the detective broke in, "with all respect to the young lady and yourself, it was a matter of common knowledge in the house that she and you were well, old friends. It was remarked, Mr. Greve, I may remind you, that you looked very upset like when you left the billiard room to," he paused perceptibly, "to go for your stroll in the dark!"

Robin glanced quickly round the group. Jay averted his eyes. As for Bude, he was the picture of embarrassment.

You seem to be singularly well posted in the gossip of the servants' hall, Mr. Manderton," said Robin hotly. It was a foolish remark, and Robin re-

gretted it the moment the words had left "Well, yes," commented the detective slowly, "I am. I shall be well posted on the whole of this case presently, I hope, sir!"

His manner was perfectly respectful, but reserved almost to a tone of menace. "In that case," said Robin, "I'll tell you something you don't know, Mr. Manderton Has Bude told you what he heard after I had passed him in the hall?"

Interest flashed at once into the detecive's face. He turned quickly to the butler. bin felt he had scored. "What did you hear?" he said sharply.

Bude looked round wildly. His large, fishlike mouth twitched and he made a few "It was only, perhaps, an idea of mine,

sir," he stammered. "Just a sort of idea. . . I daresay I was mistaken. My hearing ain't what it was, sir. . . ." Don't you try to hoodwink me," said Manderton, with sudden ferocity, knitting

his brows and frowning at the unfortunate butler. "Come on and tell us what you heard. Mr. Greve knows, and I mean to. Out with it!" Bude cast a reproachful glance at Mr.

Robin. Then he said: "Well, sir, a minute or two after Mr. Greve had passed me I went back to the hall, and through the open door of the corridor leading to the library I heard voices!

"Voices, eh? Did you recognize them?" "No, sir. It was just the sound of talk-You told Miss Trevert they were loud voices, Bude!" Robin interrupted.

"Yes, sir," replied the butler, "they were loudish in a manner o' speaking, else I " Why not?" The detective rapped the question out

"Why, because the library door "How do you know that?" Because Miss Trevert and Dr. Romain both tried the handle and couldn't get in!"

"Ah!" said Manderton, "you mean the door was locked when the body was found. Now as to these voices. Were they men's

"Yes, sir. I should say so."
"Why?" Because they were deep like! "

"Was Mr. Hartley Parrish's voice one of The butler spread out his hands. That I couldn't say! I just heard the

murmur like, then shut the passage door "Well, sir, I thought . . , I didn't

want to listen. "You thought one of the voices was Mr Greve's, eh? Having a row with Mr. Parrish, eh? About the lady, isn't that right?" 'Aren't you going rather too fast?" said

Robin quietly. But the detective ignored him. Come on and answer my question, my man," he said harshly. "Didn't you think it was Mr. Hartley Parrish and Mr. Greve here having a bit of a dust-up about the

young lady being engaged to Mr. Parrish?" Well, perhaps I did, but . . ." Like a flash the detective turned on Robin. "What do you know about this?" he de-

manded flercely.
"Nothing," said Greve. "As I have told you already, I did not see Mr. Parrish alive again after lunch, nor did I speak to him. What I would suggest to you now is that upon this evidence of Bude's depends the vitally important question of how Mr. Parrish met his death. Though he was found with a revolver in his hand, none of us in this house know of any good motive for his sticide. I put it to you that the man who can furnish us with this motive is the owner of the voice heard by Bude in conversation with Mr. Parrish, since obviously nobody other than Mr. Parrish, and possibly this unknown person, was in the library block at the time. And I would further remark, Mr. Manderton, that until the bullet has been extracted we do not know that Mr.

"No," said the detective significantly, "we

(Continued Next Sunday)