

# The Mystery of The Yellow Room

By GASTON LEROUX

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"Nonsense!" said Daddy Jacques. "The murderer did not go that way." "Which way did he go, then?" "How do I know?"

Roulettable looked at everything, smelled everything. He went down on his knees and rapidly examined every one of the paving tiles. Daddy Jacques went on:

"Ah, you can't find anything, monsieur. Nothing has been found. And now it is all dirty. Too many persons have tramped over it. They wouldn't let me wash it, but on the day of the crime I had washed the floor thoroughly, and if his hobnailed boots I should not have failed to see where he had been. He has left marks enough in mademoiselle's chamber."

Roulettable rose. "When was the last time you washed these tiles?" he asked, and he fixed on Daddy Jacques a most searching look. "Why—as I told you—on the day of the crime, toward half past five—while mademoiselle and her father were taking a little walk before dinner here in this room. They dined in the laboratory. The next day the examining magistrate came and saw all the marks there were on the floor as plainly as if they had been made with ink on white paper. Well, neither in the laboratory nor in the vestibule, which were both as clean as a new pin, were there any traces of a man's footmarks. Since they have been found near this window outside, he must have made his way through the ceiling of the yellow room into the attic, then cut his way through the roof and dropped to the ground outside the vestibule window. But there's no hole, neither in the ceiling of the yellow room nor in the roof of my attic; that's absolutely certain. So, you see, we know nothing—nothing. And nothing will ever be known. It's a mystery of the devil's own making."

Roulettable went down upon his knees again almost in front of a small laboratory at the back of the vestibule. In that position he remained for about a minute. "Well?" I asked him when he got up.

"Oh, nothing very important. A drop of blood," he replied, turning toward Daddy Jacques as he spoke. "While you were washing the laboratory and this vestibule was the vestibule window open?" he asked.

"No, monsieur, it was closed. But after I had done washing the floor I lit some charcoal for monsieur in the laboratory furnace, and as I lit it with old newspapers it smoked, so I opened both the windows in the laboratory and this one to make a current of air. Then I shut those in the laboratory and left this one open when I went out. When I returned to the vestibule this window had been closed and monsieur and mademoiselle were already at work in the laboratory."

"M. or Mlle. Stangerson had no doubt shut it?" "No doubt." "You did not ask them?" "No."

After a close scrutiny of the little laboratory and of the staircase leading up to the attic Roulettable—to whom we seemed no longer to exist—entered the laboratory. I followed him. I was, I confess, in a state of great excitement. Robert Darzac lost none of my friend's movements. As for me my eyes were drawn at once to the door of the yellow room. It was closed and, as I immediately saw, partially shattered and out of commission. My friend, who went about his work methodically, silently studied the room in which we were. It was large and well lighted. Two big windows—almost bars—were protected by strong iron bars and looked out upon a wide extent of country.

visible microscopes, special photographic apparatus and a large quantity of crystals. Roulettable, who was ferreting in the chimney, put his fingers into one of the crucibles. Suddenly he drew himself up and held up a piece of half consumed paper in his hand. He stepped up to where we were talking by one of the windows.

"Keep that for us, M. Darzac," he said. "I bent over the piece of scorched paper which M. Darzac took from the hand of Roulettable and read distinctly the only words that remained legible: "Presbytery—lost nothing—charm, nor the gar—its brightness."

Twice since the morning these same meaningless words had struck me, and for the second time I saw that they produced on the Sorbonne professor the same paralyzing effect. M. Darzac's first anxiety showed itself when he turned his eyes in the direction of Daddy Jacques. But, occupied as he was at another window, he had seen nothing. Then, tremblingly opening his pocketbook, he put the piece of paper into it, sighing, "My God!"

During this time Roulettable had mounted into the opening of the fire-grate—that is to say, he had got upon the bricks of a furnace—and was attentively examining the chimney, which grew narrower toward the top, the outlet from it being closed with sheets of iron fastened into the brick-work, through which passed three small chimneys.

"Impossible to get out that way," he said, jumping back into the laboratory. "Besides, even if he had tried to do it, he would have brought all that iron-work down to the ground. No, no; it is not on that side we have to search."

Roulettable next examined the furniture and opened the doors of the cabinets. Then he came to the windows, through which, he declared, no one could possibly have passed. At the second window he found Daddy Jacques in contemplation.

"Well, Daddy Jacques," he said, "what are you looking at?" "That policeman who is always going round and round the lake. Another of those fellows who think they can see better than anybody else!"

"You don't know Frederic Larsan, Daddy Jacques, or you wouldn't speak of him in that way," said Roulettable in a melancholy tone. "If there is any one who will find the murderer it will be he." And Roulettable heaved a deep sigh.

"What does that prove?" I rejoined, with a good sense of which I was proud. "He might have opened the lock with his left hand, which would have been quite natural, his right hand being wounded."

"He didn't open it at all," Daddy Jacques again exclaimed. "We are not fools, and there were four of us when we burst open the door." "What a queer hand! Look what a queer hand it is!" I said. "It is a very natural hand," said Roulettable, "of which the shape has been deformed by its having slipped on the wall. The man dried his hand on the wall. He must be a man about five feet eight in height."

In the vestibule—entered the yellow room with his bit of a vesta. We vaguely distinguished objects overthrown on the floor, a bed in one corner and in front of us to the left the gleam of a looking glass hanging on the wall near to the bed.

"That will do. You may now open the blinds," said Roulettable. "Yes, he's been under here, that's certain. In fact, there was nowhere else where he could have hidden himself. Here, too, are the marks of his hobnailed boots. When you entered, all four of you, did you look under the bed?"

"At once. We drew it right out of its place." "And between the mattresses?" "There was only one on the bed, and on that mademoiselle was placed, and M. Stangerson and the concierge immediately carried it into the laboratory. Under the mattress there was nothing but the metal netting, which could not conceal anything or anybody. Remember, monsieur, that there were four of us, and we couldn't fail to see everything, the chamber is so small and scantily furnished, and all was locked behind in the pavilion."

I ventured on a hypothesis: "Perhaps he got away with the mattress—in the mattress! Anything is possible in the face of such a mystery. In their distress of mind M. Stangerson and the concierge may not have noticed they were bearing a double weight, especially if the concierge were an accomplice. I throw out this hypothesis for what it is worth, but it explains many things and particularly the fact that neither the laboratory nor the vestibule bears any traces of the footmarks found in the room. If in carrying mademoiselle on the mattress from the laboratory they rested for a moment there might have been an opportunity for the man in it to escape."

"And then?" asked Roulettable, deliberately laughing under the bed. I felt rather vexed and replied: "I don't know, but anything appears possible."

"The examining magistrate had the same idea, monsieur," said Daddy Jacques, "and he carefully examined the mattress. He was obliged to laugh at the idea, monsieur, as your friend is doing now, for whoever heard of a mattress having a double bottom?"

My friend alone seemed able to talk intelligently. He called out from under the bed: "The mat here has been moved out of place. Who did it?" "We did, monsieur," explained Daddy Jacques. "When we could not find the assassin we asked ourselves whether there was not some hole in the floor."

"There is not," replied Roulettable. "Is there a cellar?" "No, there's no cellar. But that has not stopped our searching and has not prevented the examining magistrate and his registrar from studying the floor plank by plank, as if there had been a cellar under it."

The reporter then reappeared. His eyes were sparkling and his nostrils quivered. He remained on his hands and knees. Thus he made his way to the four corners of the room, so to speak, sniffing and going around everything—everything that we could see, which was not much, and everything that we could not see, which must have been infinite.

The toilet table was a simple table standing on four legs. There was nothing about it by which it could possibly be changed into a temporary hiding place. There was not a closet or cupboard. Mlle. Stangerson kept her wardrobe at the chateau. Roulettable literally passed his nose and hands along the walls, constructed of solid brickwork. When he had finished with the walls and passed his agile fingers over every portion of the yellow paper covering them he reached to the ceiling, which he was able to touch by mounting on a chair placed on the toilet table, and by moving this ingeniously constructed stage from place to place he examined every foot of it. When he had finished his scrutiny of the ceiling, where he carefully examined the hole made by the second bullet, he approached the window and once more examined the iron bars and blinds, all of which were solid and intact. At last he gave a grunt of satisfaction and declared, "Now I am at ease!"

"self a great deal of trouble," said Daddy Jacques ironically. Roulettable raised his head and said: "You have spoken the simple truth, Daddy Jacques. Your mistress did not have her hair in bands that evening. I was a donkey to have believed she did."

Then, with the suppleness of a serpent, he slipped under the bed. Presently we heard him ask: "At what time, M. Jacques, did M. and Mlle. Stangerson arrive at the laboratory?" "At 6 o'clock."

The voice of Roulettable continued: "Yes, he's been under here, that's certain. In fact, there was nowhere else where he could have hidden himself. Here, too, are the marks of his hobnailed boots. When you entered, all four of you, did you look under the bed?"

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was as tightly shut as an iron safe." "The Bete du Bon Dieu," muttered Daddy Jacques—"the Bete du Bon Dieu herself, if she had committed the crime, could not have escaped. Listen! Do you hear it? Hush!"

Daddy Jacques made us a sign to keep quiet and, stretching his arm toward the wall nearest the forest, listened to something which we could not hear.

"It's answering," he said at length. "I must kill it. It is too wicked, but it's the Bete du Bon Dieu, and every night it goes to pray on the tomb of St. Genevieve, and nobody dares to touch her for fear that Mother Angenoux should cast an evil spell on them."

"How big is the Bete du Bon Dieu?" "Nearly as big as a small retriever—a monster, I tell you. Ah, I have asked myself more than once whether it was not she that took our poor mademoiselle by the throat with her claws. But the Bete du Bon Dieu does not wear hobnailed boots, nor fire revolvers, nor has she a hand like that!" exclaimed Daddy Jacques, again pointing out to us the red mark on the wall. "Besides, we should have seen her as well as we would have seen a man."

"Evidently," I said. "Before we had seen this yellow room I had also asked myself whether the cat of Mother Angenoux—"

"You also?" cried Roulettable. "Didn't you?" I asked. "Not for a moment. After reading the article in the *Matin* I knew that a cat had nothing to do with the matter. But I swear now that a frightful tragedy had been enacted here. You say nothing about the Basque cap or the handkerchief found here, Daddy Jacques."

"Of course the magistrate has taken them," the old man answered hesitatingly. "I haven't seen either the handkerchief or the cap, yet I can tell you how they are made," the reporter said to him gravely.

"Oh, you are very clever," said Daddy Jacques, coughing and embarrassed. "The handkerchief is a large one, blue with red stripes, and the cap is an old Basque cap, like the one you are wearing now."

"You are a wizard!" said Daddy Jacques, trying to laugh and not quite succeeding. "How do you know that the handkerchief is blue with red stripes?"

"Because if it had not been blue with red stripes it would not have been found at all."

Without giving any further attention to Daddy Jacques my friend took a piece of paper from his pocket and, taking out a pair of scissors, bent over the footprints. Placing the paper over one of them, he began to cut. In a short time he had made a perfect pattern, which he handed to me, begging me not to lose it.

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We have a few first-class farm mortgages for sale which we can dispose of to persons having money for investment to net them 6 per cent interest. These mortgages are guaranteed both as to principal and interest. MCLAUGHLIN, PEEL, FULTON & STINSON, Barristers, Lindsay

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27 horses, workers and drivers  
10 driving horses nearly all young  
1 mare by Alcerousin  
1 brown horse first-class worker  
1 grey gelding aged but sound  
1 brown gelding 11 years old  
2 heavy colts 2 past, Clydes  
1 mare colt by Royal Archer  
1 colt 2 past by Royal Archer  
10 head of new milch cows and fat cattle  
1 new milch cow and calf 2 days old  
1 cow been in one month and calf  
2 two year old heifers fat  
2 new auto seat top buggies  
3 set single harness new  
4 set old single harness  
4 second hand buggies  
1 second hand wagon  
1 doz lan rugs and rubber rugs  
1 doz binder whips new, any price  
1 doz wharlike whips any price  
TERMS—Sixty days on approved notes at rate of 6 per cent on all sums over \$20, under \$20 cash.  
This will be one of the best sales of the season as the stock is all in good condition.  
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## WANTED

**WANTED**—Teacher, for School Section No. 7, Mariposa, Duties to commence August 15th, 1910. State salary and experience. Apply to Henry Bowes, sec-treas., Oakwood P. O.—w3 d18.

**WANTED**—Qualified teacher, Protestant, for S. S. No. 11, Verulam. Salary \$450. Apply JAS. POULSON, Fenelon Falls, Ont.—d1w3.

## Live Stock Insurance

I am agent for the General Live Stock Insurance Co. of Montreal, and can take risks on all kinds of live animals. Dr. Broad, office 46 Peel-st.

## STRAYED

**STRAYED**—Into the premises of the undersigned, lot 20, Con. 9, Eldon, on June 23, 1 yearling colt. Owner can have same by proving property and paying expenses. James A. McNabb, Kirkfield, Ont.—w3.

## FARM FOR SALE

**FOR SALE**—The Farrell Farm, east half lot 7, and south east quarter lot 18 Con. 9, Ops, 150 acres. No better land in township. Sale required to wind up estate. For further particulars apply to STEWART & O'CONNOR.—wt1.

**FARM FOR SALE**—Known as the Ewers homestead, Wanchester, 2 miles from Port Perry, containing between 95 and 100 acres. Clay loam Bids or communications received and particulars from NORMAN EWERS, 69 Alexander-st., Toronto.—wt1.

**FARM FOR SALE**—Containing 140 acres, more or less, being part of lot 14 and 15 in 8 con. Mariposa. Brick house, frame barn, 40 by 104 with stone wall and first class stabling. Water in front of horses and cattle with taps. Good hog pen. Driving house. Hen house, cement floors in them all. A never-failing well, well fenced, adjoining the thriving village of Oakwood, known as the W. A. Silverwood farm. Would like to sell at once. For further particulars apply to Elias Bowes, Real Estate agent, Lindsay.

**FARM FOR SALE**—West part of lot 7, Con. 14, Mariposa, 145 acres, about 95 under cultivation, the balance pasture. Good buildings, 2 1/2 acres in orchard and small fruits. Apply to Wm. L. Stone, Woodville.—w5

**FARM FOR SALE**—Lot 15, con. 2, Fenelon, containing 9 1/2 acres, more or less, adjoining the village of Islay. 90 acres cleared and about 4 1/2 acres hardwood bush. New frame barn 50x65 on stone wall with first-class stabling complete, cement floor. Log house, well finished inside, partly plastered and partly boarded. School post office and blacksmith shop within a few rods of farm, 6 miles from Cambray station. Grass Hill and Cameron grain markets. The property of JOHN R. COWISON. For further particulars apply to Elias Bowes, Real Estate Agent, Lindsay.—wt1.

## FARM FOR SALE

**FARM FOR SALE**—100 acre farm more or less, for sale, being lot 5 in Con. 10, Eldon. Good log house, good frame barn and stone stabling. 2 good wells. All cleared and in good state of cultivation. Well fenced, 1 1/2 acres orchard. Some plum and pear trees. Wants to sell at once. For further particulars apply to Elias Bowes Real estate agent, Lindsay.—w4.

**FARM FOR SALE**—100 acres more or less for sale in Fenelon, good frame barn, 50 acres cleared, balance tamarac swamp, never failing spring, land not cut up by stream. Near a school, post office, blacksmith shop. Would make a good ranch or grain farm. For further particulars apply to Elias Bowes, real estate agent.—w4.

**FARM TO RENT**—West 1/2 lot 12, Con. 8, Fenelon, containing 120 acres all cleared, 70 acres grain land, the balance hay or pasture. Good bank barn with wind mill, hay slings, also stone hog pen, hen house, driving shed and a comfortable house, two good wells, large orchard. No stumps or stone piles on the farm, 1 mile from school, church and post office. Five miles from Fenelon Falls. Possession to plough this fall. Possession on 1st of March, 1911. Apply to the owner, Albert E. Minthorne, Rosedale, Ont.—w3.

**FARM FOR SALE**—Situated one and one-half miles from Fairbairn, being lot 30, in Con. 7, Verulam, containing 200 acres and also the east half of lot 30 in the 6th. con. 150 acres clear and in first-class state of cultivation, well watered by a never-failing spring creek and good wells, windmill on barn, with water-bowls and piping, well fenced. For further particulars apply to ALEX. CONNELL, Bury's Green, Ont.—w3.

**FARM FOR SALE**—Improved farm of one hundred and fifty acres, more or less, being composed of the South Half of Lot Twenty (20) in the Tenth and the West part of Lot Twenty (20) in the eleventh Concession of the Township of Ops. This land is good clay loam, suitable for any kind of grain, drained, and all cleared but about fifteen (15) acres of pasture, through which there is running water. Situated three miles East of Lindsay, on good gravel road. There is a frame dwelling, kitchen and woodshed. Large frame barn 45x75 feet with stone foundation and stabling for all kinds of stock. Apply to MOORE & JACKSON, Solicitors, Lindsay, Ont. or A. BLACKWELL, 1 Notre Dame Street, West, Montreal.—wt1.

**FARM FOR SALE**—The N 1/2 of Lot 5, Con. 2, and the East Pt. of the S 1/2 of Lot 4, Con. 2, in the Township of Emily, 150 acres. About 140 acres cleared, balance woodland and swamp. Two miles south of Omamee. Well built on Good orchard. Well watered by a running stream, spring and wells. Good all round farm and in good condition. School convenient. For terms and particulars apply to Mrs. David Toole, Lock box 205, Omamee, Ont.—w4.

**FARM FOR SALE**—100 acres, east half lot 16, con. 9, Ops, all cleared, good frame house and frame barn with stone stabling. 5 miles from town of Lindsay; the Hooley property. Terms easy; wants to sell at once. For further particulars apply to ELIAS BOWES, Real Estate Agent, Lindsay.—wt1.

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in Toronto this week. Mrs. Randolph McDonald, of Rose- Passed through town on Tuesday on their way to Toronto.

Whalen has given them a... They are doing first class work and several of the farmers are likely to follow Will's example.

Bert Jewell... Ms. and Mrs. Les Mack...

is not tired of having a... yet, as he is putting up a cement...

Best wishes go with them. Mr. Ebi Hill takes the farm they leave. In memory of Mrs. Maggie...

Form The Good Habits