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The Affair at Flower Acres

by CAROLYN WELLS

BEGIN HERE TODAY.

Douglas Raynor is found shot through the heart in the early evening on the floor of the sun room of Flower Acres, his Long Island home. Standing over the dead man, pistol in hand, is Malcolm Finley, former sweetheart of Raynor's wife, Nancy. Eva Turner, Raynor's nurse, stands by the light switch. In a moment Nancy appears, white-faced and terrified. Orville Kent, Nancy's brother, comes in from the south side of the room. And then Ezra Goddard, friend of Finley; Miss Mattie, Raynor's sister, and others, enter upon the scene. Detective Dobbins heads the police investigation. An autopsy reveals that Raynor also was being systematically poisoned with arsenic. Lionel Raynor, son of Douglas Raynor by first marriage, cames to claim his father's estate. Finley meets Nancy on the verandah. "I must take you in my arms," he pleads.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

Just for an instant she swayed toward him, and then drew back, with a heart-breaking sigh.

"No—dear—I see I must be brave for both of us. Listen, Malcolm, I am in very deep waters—I can't tell the truth—I can't—"

"What! Then, Nan, if it's as bad as all that—you must have a lawyer, a good one, at once. You must tell him everything."

"But, listen, Mal—if this will of Lionel's holds—I am penniless."

"Never, while I am in the world! What's mine is yours—"

"But that won't do. I can't take your money—"

"Indeed you can! No one need ever know. I'll get Wadsworth for you—he's great—and most discreet. Yes, he's our man."

"And—and, Malcolm, whom will you get for yourself?"

"For myself? Why—oh, yes—of course, for myself. Why—well, you see, I hadn't thought of that. But it will be all right, Nan—trust me to make it all right."

"Oh, you are so splendid. Malcolm,—why did I marry that awful man? Oh, why did I?"

"Wait a minute—why did you, Nan?"

She looked at him a long moment, with a grave regard, and then said, "I can't tell you, Mal—I can't tell you, but, oh, I'm glad he's dead. There, I've said it, and I don't care! I'm glad, glad, glad! I couldn't have lived another day with him!"

"Hush, dear—don't say such things. Now, listen, Nancy, and do just as I tell you. I'm going to send for Lawyer Wadsworth, and he will take you in hand. Tell him everything—tell him about the—the tablets you put in Raynor's coffee cup—I saw you do it, dear. Tell Wadsworth all about it. Trust him, and he will do more for you than any other man I know of could do."

"But I can't—Mal, I can't tell anybody about the—about the—"

"I'll tell it then," and Miss Mattie stepped before them.

"Yes, I've been eavesdropping," she said, as they looked at her in dismay. "Or, I can scarcely call it that, as you took no pains to lower your voices very much. Nan, I heard you say how glad you are that your husband is dead. I didn't need that to tell me who killed him—hush, don't say a word—don't add perjury to your other crimes. And I don't say, Nan, but that you did lead a miserable life with him. I know how Douglas treated you—and, NancyI know why."

Miss Mattie's voice dropped to a whisper, but her face, although distorted with passion, was that of one who spoke truth.

"Let that rest for a moment, Nan, and tell me what you know about Douglas' will."

"Nothing more than I have told everybody. It was always kept in the secretary drawer. Some one has stolen it."

"Or Douglas destroyed it."

"That may be," Nan agreed. "He was very, very angry at me the day before—before he died, and he threatened to disinherit me—but I didn't think he would do so."

"He couldn't," said Miss Mattie. "A man can't disinherit his wife. And the will must be found. I hardly think he destroyed it."

"Why does old Gannon deny witnessing it?" Finley asked.

"Gannon is an old snake in the grass," Miss Raynor said. "He has some axe to grind, you may be sure. For I know he witnessed that will."

"The other witness, Peters, must be found," said Finley.

"You see, Nan," Miss Mattie went on, "I don't know as that will Lionel has remembers me—properly. In the later will Douglas left me a large bequest. He had much more money of late years, but if that will his son has claims it all, where will we be?"

"Where will we be, anyway?" Nan said, wearily. "But I don't propose to give up my rights without a struggle, and I'm going to have a talk with Lionel and I'm going now."

She went away in search of the young man, and found him in the sun parlor.

"Can't we join forces, Lionel?" she said.

"Sit down and talk it over," he said, arranging a big cushion for her. "I'd like to be friends, Nan, if you can convince me you didn't kill my father. You can't expect me to be friendly with you, otherwise."

"Of course I didn't kill him," Nan said, "how can you even imagine such a thing?"

"You say that, but your face, your eyes, your whole expressions belies your words. Do you also deny poisoning him—or are you only disclaiming the shooting?"

The hard, sharp, black eyes of the young man looked closely into her own, and there was something in his manner, in his effect, that repelled Nan so utterly she was scarce able to speak to him.

"I think," she said, slowly, "that I prefer not to discuss anything with you. I will refer you to my lawyer."

Lionel Raynor gave a start. "A lawyer, have you one?"

"I shall have, very soon. Meantime, you may wait for my answers to your questions."

"Hoity, toity, is that the tone you're going to take toward me? Going to have a lawyer are you? And, pray, how are you going to pay him? Don't you know you're practically penniless? But I suppose your friend, Mr. Finley, will be only too glad to pay—"

But Nancy had risen and walked away.

At the doorway, she met Detective Dobbins, on his search, as always.

"No overshoes found," he announced. "Been all over the house, family, servants, guests—can't find a new rubber in the place. Plenty of old ones—good enough ones, too, but no brand new ones—and only a brand new one would have made that print. Most remarkable."

"But it can't be of real significance, can it, Mr. Dobbins?" Nan raised her sad eyes to his face. "hWy do you put such stress on it?"

"Why, it's a clew, Mrs. Raynor, don't you see—a clew! And it might be of utmost importance to you, Mrs. Raynor. For, if we can prove that rubber was on the foot of a man from the outside—an intruder—why, then it lets out everybody in the house—everybody!"

"Then, if you can't find a new overshoe in the house, it must have been an outsider?" Nan was interested now.

"Looks that way—yes, ma'am, it looks that way. Oh, you cheer up, Mrs. Raynor, things look pretty black against you, I'll admit that. But if I can pull you out, I will. Though we may have to implicate your friend, Mr. Finley."

The detective made this speech purposely, as a test of Nan's behavior. He gained little, for she presented only a mask-like calm of face, and an air of utter indifference.

"A deep one," he said to himself, as she walked slowly away, "yes, a mighty deep one—and, therefore, most likely a wrong one."

Nan wandered on, down to the gardens, down the hillside to the bridge over the brook, and seeing Dolly Fay, waved her hand in invitation.

And Dolly came, flying her sash-ends out behind her.

"Nancy, darling, how are you this morning? I can't stand it to have you so awfully sad all the time!"

"Dolly, dear, have you the packet safe—you know, the one I gave you to keep for me?"

"Oh, yes, Nan, of course."

"Run and get it then—I'll wait for you here—and we'll go for a walk."

Dolly obeyed, and soon the two were walking along the brookside down the path that led to the falls.

Nan carried the little parcel, noting by a glance that it had in no way been tampered with.

"What's doing about Mr. Raynor, Nan?" Dolly asked earnestly. "Whenever I ask mother or dad, they tell me to keep still. Orry won't tell me a thing, and that fool detective glares at me when I try to pump him. Old Grim Gannon—he's my friend, you know—but he says such awful things, I won't listen to him."

"What does he say, Dolly—or, no, don't tell me—I'd rather not know."

"Indeed, I wouldn't tell you—why, Nan, he says terrific things about you and about Mr. Finley, and about everybody, even including Miss Turner."

"Eva Turner?"

"Yes; that is, he didn't say anything definite, but I sort of gathered he thinks she's sly."

"Never mind, Dolly, I'd rather you wouldn't listen to such gossip, but if you do, don't repeat it to me. Now, look out, dear, I'm going to destroy this little parcel. It's nothing of any value."

Standing on the bank, just above a small but turbulent waterfall made by the brook over a stony decline, Nan tossed the packet lightly into the foaming, bubbling cascade.

Then without a backward glance, and looking a little frightened, she said, hastily, "Come along, Dolly, let's go home."

They climbed the bank and hastened back to Flower Acres.

"You won't mention this episode, dear?" Nan said.

"Of course not. You know I'll never do a thing you don't want me to, Nan. And beside, I know more things than that about the whole affair that I'm not going to tell."

"Why, Dolly, what do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing. But you're not the only one I'm keeping still about."

—(To be continued.)

THE SPORTS MODE.

A youthful interpretation in chartreuse green pleated silk crepe skirt, with same shade in blouse in novelty striped sheer woolen. The shoulder bow of silk crepe is its sole trimming. It is easily made, as is noted in small views and one of the smartest ideas for sports. It is frequently made of georgette crepe, crepe satin, chiffon voile, chiffon, flat silk crepe, silk pique and men's silk shirting fabric. Style No. 249 is designed in sizes 16, 18, 20 years, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure. Size 36 requires 2⅞ yards of 36-inch material for separate skirt and 2¼ yards of 36-inch material for blouse cut crosswise and 1 yard of 36-inch material for separate camisole. Price 2c in stamps or coin (coin preferred).

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Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number, and address your order to Wilson Pattern Service, 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto. Patterns sent by an early mail.

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Evacuation of the Rhineland

Brooklyn Eagle: To meet the enormous financial burdens which she is now willingly assuming, Germany is entitled to the help which prompt Rhineland evacuation will provide. It is to be hoped that the French, Belgian and British Governments will co-operate in a prompt decision to end the occupation.

Tut, Tut

Ohio State Journal: It doesn't look now as if the Vice-Presidency would be brought into prominence again under this Administration, unless Mrs. Gann should get caught using the wrong fork.

A Nautical Party

BY NETTIE RAND MILLER.

Take your friends for a sail around the world some hot summer afternoon or evening.

Your invitations could be written in green ink, on white cards cut in the shape of a sailboat. Here is a verse to use:

It's much too hot to stay at home
When you could sail the seas,
And see a mermaid that is real
And taste the salt-air breeze.
So come to my house on July —
And there by —— without fail,
To take a boat from our front porch
Around the world to sail.

Green mosquito netting hung around the walls, from ceiling to the floor, is the green of the sea. Old automobile and bicycle tires given a good coat of whitewash and hung about the porch and house make good life preservers and add much to the salty atmosphere. A tennis net strung around the front porch railing turns the porch into a ship's deck.

Your guests will arrive by yacht, racing to see which one if first to reach port. As each guest arrives at the porch, hand him a chart, at the top of which is written the name of his yacht, the name of ten ports and the direction in which his boat is to sail. Ports are represented by names written on inch squares of paper, placed in full view about the house. Each shipmaster must find the ports listed on his own chart. All start from the same dock at the same time, each captain sailing by the charted directions. As the ports are found the captain pins them to his chart. The first to complete the journey wins a prize.

Before setting sail on the eighty-minute tour around the world, partners for the voyage must be obtained from the ship's log. The girls' names are written on slips of paper and placed between the leaves of a large book. Each boy is asked to open the book and turn the pages; the first name he finds is his partner for the voyage.

For the world trip, long strips of paper are given out cut in the shape of real tickets. These strips contain as many numbers as there are places to be visited. Numbered cards inscribed with a short phrase or bearing some object to represent various places of world interest are hidden about the house and in the yard. The city of Washington could be represented by a card showing a picture of a basket of clothes with the words "two thousand pounds" written underneath. A piece of brown paper might represent the city of Manila. Wherever a numbered card is found the partners guess the name of the place it represents and write their guess opposite the corresponding number on their ticket. The couple first to complete the journey and bring in the most correct list of names for the places visited will receive the grand prize of the evening.

Your party of tourists will want to visit Fortune Island, where a real mermaid, dressed in billows of green mosquito netting, will tell each guest what his future holds. A couch in one corner of the yard with a grass-banked tub of water at one side will make a good island.

There can be a race home across the Atlantic. The green lawn is the ocean. With chalk draw circles here and there across the lawn. These white circles are islands. The contestants then race from the far side of the yard to the porch. The one rule of the game is that every island must be touched in making the journey.

Six bells is the signal calling the company to supper. Under the archway suspend six bells. Hang them so low that the guests cannot pass without stooping. Blindfold each person in turn as he enters the dining room and tell him to pass through the door without tinkling a bell. He will find this hard to do, but the rest of the party enjoy the fun.

Be Kind But Firm

Failures Set Most Attention But the Majority of Children Do Well

Foster parents, when they take a little boy or girl into their home, are apt to be too kind and lenient, and then, when the novelty wears off, they find it difficult to gain control. This is well illustrated by the remark of a girl of nine after she had been returned at a foster home: "At first they were real good to me and I did anything I liked, but when they got real saucy and wanted to make me do things I didn't want to." It is difficult for many people to combine kindness and firmness and yet it can and should be done, and firmness in the training of children will later on be rewarded by a peaceful and endurable atmosphere.—J. J. Kelso.

VIRTUES

His virtues formed the magic of his song.—Inscription on the tomb of Cowper.

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ISSUE No. 26—'29

Summer Care of Good Looks

Hints to the Girl — Old or Young Who Cares About Her Appearance and Who Doesn't

We should all be aking our best curtsy to summer, for it is during the summer we have our greatest opportunity to "get better looking." Everything seems to conspire to help us in this pleasant task. The weather invites us into the open more often, and we work in the house with all windows and doors set wide open for the fresh air.

But you have to do your part, too; there have to be a few self-denials. You have to remember to hang your wide-brimmed old straw hat at the door or on the porch where you can snatch it up and put it on before going out into the noonday sun. You should keep a big loose pair of gloves with it, so your hands won't be burned or tanned to an ugly darkness. These two little things to remember not only will prevent sunburn and a weather-worn look to your skin, but the hat will often prevent a headache from a too hot sun.

There is a very excellent cream that you can buy from any good druggist or toilet-goods counter. It is the best of preventives for sunburn. When you get up in the morning, after you have bathed, you use the slightest film of this delicate cream all over your skin, wait a minute for it to take hold, and then dust your powder lightly over it. It takes scarcely two extra minutes in the morning to do this, and yet it will defend your skin from sunburn as few other things will.

The Powder to Use

Of course, if you have already exposed your face and neck to old Sol, or you become burned because of an enforced stay in the sun, don't forget to have a good cleansing or cold cream handy so you can anoint the hurt parts right away.

I know a delightful talcum powder, too, that is particularly soothing to a burned skin, though it is better to let your cream do the first corrective work; then you can use your powder.

And, speaking of powder, I wonder if you know a few little facts about using powder in summer.

The powder you use in summer should not be one of the very heavy powders; the lighter powders are better when the skin is warm and slightly moist.

Never put powder over a soiled skin.

Never put powder over a damp skin.

Never put powder on carelessly, obviously, nor use the wrong shade for your skin. All good powders can be bought in several different shades.

Salts of Lemon

In homes where there are children it is advisable to use a substitute for salts of lemon, as the real thing is poisonous. The substitute consists of a mixture of table salt and lemon juice.

Use salts of lemon for cleaning a slimy sponge. Mix a little with warm water, and immerse the sponge several times, squeezing well after each immersion. Rinse in clear, warm water, and suspend from a nail to dry.

A solution of salts of lemon will remove marking ink stains from linen. Apply to the affected parts with a camel-hair brush, allow to remain for a few minutes, then wash the whole article or garment in the usual way.

Copper vessels that have become blackened by contact with fire can be restored to their former brightness with salts of lemon. The solution must be removed immediately to prevent the acid eating into the copper.

Women Seen as Breadwinners in Future Generations.—Head line. Sounds as the bread might be put up as bridge prizes.—'Arkansas Gazette.'

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"Wider Markets"

Halifax Herald (Lib.): It is "hauling coals to Newcastle" with a vengeance when apples are imported into this province from half-way round the world! But there it is—a cargo of New Zealand apples will arrive in Halifax this month for distribution throughout Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario. And we are still hearing talk about the need for "wider markets,' when Antipodean butter and apples can be freighted that distance and sold here in our own market right under our very noses!

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