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JAPAN TEA

'Fresh from the gardens' 660

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 alcolm inley, former sweetheart of Raynor's wife, Nancy. Eva Turner, Raynor's nurse, stands by the light switch. Then Nancy; her brother, Orville Kent; Ezra Goddard, friend of Finley; Miss Mattie, Raynor's sister, and others, enter the room. Pennington Wise, a celebrated detective, and Zizi, his girl assistant, are called to tae the case out of the han 's of Detective Dobbins. The print of an overshoe on the floor of the sun room heightens the mystery. Now Zizi and Dolly Fay, a neighbor's girl go to the house of Grim Gannon, a servant, on the pretense of looking at his collection of butterflies.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

But Zizi was after something other than butterflies. After a cautionary glance outside at the old man, she shook a warning forefinger at Dolly and began to look around among the litter that was piled in corners or an tables and settees.

Then she opened the cupboard door, and with a look of disgust on her face, grabbed an umbrella and poked among the shoes and slippers that were flung in there in an untidy heap.

With he umbrella she dragged out one old shoe after another, and, at last, with a suppressed cry of triumph, she pulled out a shiny overshoe.

It was a man's rubber, and a new one—of the type called slip-ons. That is, it had almost no upper, it was little more than a sole, with a narrow rim of rubber to hold it on the foot.

A little more poking brought forth its mate, and Zizi kicked the other rubbish back into the closet, and picked up her find with eagerness.

"The rubbers," she whispered. "The very ones!"

"Oh, my!" Dolly said, clasping her little hands in dismay. "Then old Gannon is the murderer after all! I'm so sorry"—and the child broke into tears.

"Hush up," said Zizi, shaking her, "don't let him hear. We must take these to Mr. Wise at once. Come along."

She didn't especially want Dolly's company, but still less did she dare leave her there where she might divulge the secret of Zizi's find, and which Zizi was determined should remain a secret until she could tell Wise about it.

The finding of the rubbers was merely the last resort of a long hunt. Zizi had looked everywhere. They must be proved up by the print on the sun room floor—and then—

Zizi easily concealed the rubbers in her capacious coat pockets, and beckoning Dolly they left the room.

She paused on the porch to speak to Gannon, with intent to learn if he had any suspicion of her real errand to his room.

Apparently he had not, for he only said: "Well, girls, see the butterflies?"

"Yes," Zizi returned, "and they're wonderful. Shall you collect more, or is your stock complete?"

"I'll get more from South America when I go down there. I'm going to get off as soon as I can get my money from those lawyers."

Dolly looked at him, open mouthed. How could this man, who had killed his benefactor, speak so casually of getting away with the money he had so fearfully come by?"

"You must miss Mr. Raynor," Zizi said.

"I do," Gannon returned, and his glance at her was equally sharp. "He was a life-long friend, almost—"

"Yes, an uncertain friend."

"Uncertain is the word, ma'am," and Gannon looked reminiscent. "Now, Raynor'd be as nice and friendly as one could wish, and then again he'd be the very dickens and all—yes, ma'am, the very dickens and all!"

"Was he ugly to you—as well as to his wife?" Zizi went on.

"Was he! Well, he was! Why, the things Douglas Raynor has said to me and done to me, I wouldn't stand from any other mortal man! That I wouldn't! He was a bad man—it's all very well to say speak only good of the dead—but that man don't deserve a good word even in death!"

"You're not sorry he's gone, then?" Zizi said.

"Not I! He was my benefactor, some say. Well, he gave me this house, he gave me a sum of money in his will—but, what did I do for him?"

"What did you?" Zizi prompted him.

"I kept his secrets for him—that's what I did! When he married that lovely lady—when he persuaded her to marry him, he did it by a lie! He made her think her father a blackguard, when he was that blackguard himself—"

"And what were you?" cried Zizi, her eyes blazing. "What do you call yourself to stand by and see the lovely lady sold—and sold by fraud to a blackguard and a brute! What excuse do you give for your conduct?"

"Only that Raynor made me."

"Ah, he had a hold on you, then?"

"That he did! A strangle-hold—as he had on many others. And when he lied to the lady, when he pretended that she must marry him or disgrace her father, her brother and herself—my hands were tied—I could do nothing."

"When did Mrs. Raynor learn of her husband's deceit?"

"Only a few weeks before she shot him."

Zizi looked at him curiously. Dolly stood staring, her face the picture of perplexity. She wanted to speak, but Zizi's warning looks restrained her.

"Yes," Gannon reeated, "she never knew about it till a month or so ago. Her brother now, he never knew of it—I should say, until after Raynor was dead. You see, Mrs. Raynor she'd suffer anything and everything rather than any sorrow or trouble should touch her brother. They're a devoted pair."

"And you think Mrs. Raynor killed her husband?" Zizi said.

Gannon shifted uneasily.

"I ain't got no opinion—for publication, miss," he said. "I'd rather not tell what I think."

"I should say you wouldn't!" exclaimed Dolly, unable to keep silent another instant.

Whereupon Zizi dragged her away.

"You go home, Dolly," she said, "and don't you mention one word of all this to a single soul. If you do you'll make more trouble than even Pennington Wise can clear up. Do you promise?"

"Yes, I promise, Zizi. Oh, whoever thought that old curmudgeon did it? Just to get his money to go to South America!"

"Never mind all that now, Dolly. You just run home, and go about your own affairs. And if you love Mrs. Raynor, you keep still—for her sake."

"I will, oh, Zizi, I will," and Dolly obeyed orders.

Zizi went slowly on to the Raynor house.

She found Pennington Wise with Mrs. Raynor and Finley, all in Nan's sitting room.

Very grave talk was in progress and as Zizi entered Nan was saying: "I must stand by my confession, Mr. Wise. I must insist that I shot my husband. I hoe a jury will not deal with me too severely, for I assure you I was tortured beyond the lot of most women. I never loved Mr. Raynor; I was tricked into marriage with him; I consented to it to save my father's honor and reputation and, too, to save my brother from knowledge of our father's guilt—as I supposed. Then, when I learned that my father had never been guilty at all, but that my husband had lied to me—can you wonder at my hatred of him? Also, remember that he was a drug addict—and that when denied the morphine he craved, he became a veritable fiend. I felt I must try to save him from the inevitable fate of such indulgence, so I honestly tried. But it was all too much for me. I almost lost my mind—perhaps I did lose my mind—" The sad face looked suddenly brighter, as if in hope that a mental unbalance would help to exonerate her.

"No, Mrs. Raynor, you haven't lost you mind—" and Zizi came in and sliped into a seat next to Nan, and took her white hand in her own two little brown ones. "You're all right, mentally, morally and physically. Penny, here are the overshoes."

From her coat pocket Zizi produced the rubbers and handed them over to Wise.

The detective took them, and without a word, turned them over to look at the soles. A single nod of his head showed Zizi that he now knew all, that whatever was the story the rubbers told, it was final and complete.

But the effect on Nancy Raynor was as disastrous as it was unexpected. She turned perfectly white, she trembled like a leaf, and had Zizi not flung an assisting arm round her, she would have fallen from her chair.

"Those are my husband's—those are Mr. Raynor's overshoes!" she exclaimed.

"Are you sure?" asked Wise.

"Of course I'm sure. He bought them about a week before he died. They are a new model—he had never worn them."

"This," and Wise held up the right one, "this is the overshoe that made the footprint on the floor of the sun room."

"Yes"—Nan almost choked—"I—I wore them—I put them on—"

(To be continued.)

"THEN OLD GANNON IS THE MURDERER AFTER ALL. I'M SO SORRY!"

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ISSUE No. 46—'29

WHAT New York IS WEARING

Illustrated Dressmaking Lesson Furnished with Every Pattern

By Annebelle Worthington

2969

The jacket suit for the little subteb is one of the most popular ideas of the mode for classroom.

It is sketched in wool jersey in brown and beige. The brown is used for the jacket with tailored notched collar of the beige shade, which is repeated in cuffs of pocket laps.

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Madam Curie Visits America

Presented With Another Gram of Valuable Radium

America is again host to the greatest woman scientist the world has ever known. Mme. Marie Curie, co-discoverer of radium, has come to accept a second gift of a gram of the precious substance from her friends and admirers in this country, says Science Service's Daily Science News Bulletin (Washington). We read:

"When the first gram was presented to her in 1921, she turned it over to the Curie Institute of the University of Paris. The second gram will be given to the Warsaw Cancer Hospital, which, since 1921, has rented a gram. Madame Curie herself paying the rental with the income of a money gift she received with the first gram of radium. Warsaw is Madame Curie's native city, although she has worked and lived most of her life in Paris. Madame Curie and her husband, Pierre Curie, discovered this rare and valuable element, but they scorned to made any personal profit from their discovery. They gave it to the public, together with the methods they evolved for producing radium. These same methods are in use to-day in the radium industry. For years these great and generous scientists struggled with a meager income, and without even an adequate laboratory. Pierre Curie, struck by a truck, died in 1906, without ever having a proper laboratory in which to use his great talents. Madame Curie finally acquired the laboratory, planned too late for her husband to enjoy, in the Curie Institute. However, the small supply of radium in her laboratory was needed by the Government during the war, and after the Armistice she found herself without any of the precious substance. Then her admirers and friends in America came to the rescue with the gram of radium and the money, which was meant to make living conditions easier for this great woman who had been in most straitened circumstances. Characteristically, she used it to rent radium for the Warsaw Cancer Hospital."

The gram of radium she is to receive on the trip represents an outlay of over $60,000.

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