

Salada Orange Pekoe is a blend of fresh young leaves



THE KESTREL HOUSE MYSTERY

By T. C. H. JACOBS

Henry Holt and his ward, Muriel Mainwaring are staying at a Dartmouth farmhouse. Holt has an old friend, Prof. Mollieau, living at Kestrel House with his nephew, Hayden Mercer, whom Holt wishes Muriel to marry.

A series of strange disappearances take place, one Page the vicar's daughter being the latest.

Perceval Pycroft arrives at the farmhouse in search of health. He takes a walk on the moor one evening, is knocked on the head and pitched over a cliff. Inspector Barnard questions him in bed, and then leaves after having discovered "something" in Perceval's coat pocket.

CHAPTER V.

A footstep on the landing without rent Pycroft hurriedly back to bed. Mrs. French found him in the act of pouring another drink, and the action brought a look of mingled surprise and displeasure to her cheery, motherly face.

"So early in the morning, Mr. Pycroft!" she exclaimed.

"I've had a terrible fright, Mrs. French, a perfectly ghastly fright."

"Indeed!"

"Do you know that I was in deadly peril of my life last night?"

"You had a nasty fall; lucky it wasn't worse."

Pycroft's mouth drooped with a disappointment almost comical to witness.

"I was nearly murdered, madam," he replied with dignity, a distinct note of reproval in his voice. "And you told me that Dartmouth was a nice, peaceful, quiet place; I think it's a beastly, lawless wilderness. Look at this fearful lump on my crown; it hurts."

Mrs. French's face struggled to preserve its gravity as she inspected the top of his head inclined towards her.

"I'm going to get my man down," went on Pycroft. "I don't feel safe here all alone. I mean, after last night anything might happen, what?"

"Will you be staying in bed to-day?" asked the landlady, presently.

"In bed? No! I was on the point of rising when that police what's-his-name came up and chilled me to the marrow with his grisly warnings. Where's the professor, up yet?"

"If you mean Mr. Holt, he has been up since seven o'clock. He's sitting on the lawn."

Pycroft grinned.

vertical edge. Noting the measurement recorded he bent down the external face and a smile flickered on his lips. Closing the trunk he looked it out and rearranged, with meticulous exactness, a strip of cretonne along the top.

Standing up, he opened the wardrobe, glanced inside, ran his hands swiftly over the clothes, examining the soles of three pairs of boots and replaced them in exactly the same position as he had found them.

The driver and the next claimed his attention. Even the most casual and inexperienced observer must have seen that Mr. Percival Pycroft was something of an expert at the art. His rubber-gloved fingers explored everywhere, but not by the fraction of an inch was anything disarranged. Satisfied at last he was on the point of returning when he suddenly stiffened. In a flash the gloves were off and stuffed in his dressing-gown pocket and with a drunken hiccup he lurched against the table.

In that moment his whole identity changed, replaced again by the blinking, nameless fool. It was not merely a change of facial expression, but something infinitely more subtle and convincing, a change which would have deceived the most expert examiner, as indeed it had deceived the keen and experienced Chief Inspector Barnard that very morning.

At Holt's object, and Mr. Henry Holt stood staring with undignified astonishment as Pycroft turned towards him.

"What does this mean, this intrusion, sir?" he demanded, angrily. Pycroft blinked at him, jerking back his head as if he had been struck, but made no reply. His mouth gaped open foolishly, and once his body sagged so alarmingly that Holt half started to catch him.

"Well, sir, what are you doing in my room?" he demanded with increased force, regarding the other as though he was something utterly distasteful.

Pycroft seemed to regain his power of speech with a rush.

"A student, professor, I was looking for a thud. Beastly little pests, they take advantage of me, the malignity of the inanimate. I sheared and sheared and then I thought my dear old pal the prof is shut to have one, so along I trundled—and I was right, your shee! Ha, ha, ha!"

Pycroft tittered delightedly as he exhibited a stud, but Mr. Holt's face remained as cold as his words.

"Hold on the door and stand aside."

"Having been so successful in your quest, please go."

Pycroft's grin changed first to an expression of blank amazement and then to one of drunken dignity. He lurched away from the support of the dressing table and stood swaying in the middle of the room, frowning at the stout, rosy-cheeked figure who regarded him with such frigid contempt.

"A measly, horrible, little penny stud..." he began, but Holt cut him short with an impatient gesture.

"Leave my room at once. If you return again I shall complain with a view to having you sent about your business. You are drunk, and practically... er... incapable," he added, as the intruder tottered towards the door.

"Prof, that's a libel... libellous shatement," stammered Pycroft, stopping to point accusingly with a finger which trembled visibly. "Any magish... magish... any beak would tell you that."

Holt banged the door after him, and ten minutes later heard him splashing in the bath, bawling at the top of his voice, a choice selection from his vocal repertoire.

"Drunk rot!" he muttered. "What the blazes Muriel can see in him I can't imagine. Women are amazing creatures!"

By which remarks it may be inferred that the subject of Percival Pycroft had come up for discussion between them and a difference of opinion recorded.

CHAPTER VI.

Muriel Mainwaring breathed a sigh of relief when lunch was over and she was able to escape to the peace of the moorland. She wanted to be alone, to sort out in her mind certain matters which were troubling her. Mr. Holt's thinly veiled hostility to Pycroft for some unaccountable reason annoyed her. She told herself that Pycroft was a drunkard, a weak stupid man for all the promise of his massive frame, and yet she keenly resented her guardian's attitude towards him.

Perhaps Mr. Holt had been a little clumsy, tactless, in his endeavor to contrast Pycroft with Hayden Mercer. That was another matter which secretly worried her, more than she cared to admit. Mercer was persistent in his attentions and Holt had made it plain that a marriage between his ward and the nephew of his best friend was his dearest wish.

As she walked slowly along the moorland track she tried to analyze her feelings towards Mercer. She wondered why she did not really care for him. He was the type of man, she thought, that would make most girls envious of her good fortune. She would give him full credit for his intelligence, his immeasurable vitality and his charm of manner; three attributes which Pycroft appeared to lack entirely. He was wealthy, she was poor, dependent on the generosity of a guardian who had been a name only to her until a few weeks ago. Marriage with Hayden Mercer would place her in a very different position; yet the very thought of marriage sent a tiny shiver through her as she involuntarily shrugged her shoulders. It was unreasonable of her guardian to expect her to marry anyone for a year or two at least. She felt that the expressed wish might soon become the command, and that she dreaded.

With a gesture of impatience she tried to thrust the problem aside. Raising her head she filled her lungs luxuriously with the invigorating air. The cool breeze blowing gently over the moor was both sedative and stimulant, and she smiled as she paused to admire the beauty of the wild land with its rugged tors and sweeping

Child's Stupidity May Be Sign of Serious Brain Disease

A child who refuses to answer questions but merely sits still like the proverbial "bump on a log," may not be really stupid or intractable, it is urged by the distinguished French expert on mental disease, Dr. Gilbert Robin, but may be suffering from the first stages of serious mental disease. This peculiar mental inhibition under questioning, as though the child were literally stunned, is a warning symptom, Dr. Robin believes, of the brain disease called epilepsy. The look in such a child's eye after an ordinary question has been asked, like a question in school, is described as vague and wandering. There is no interest, irritation, or any other sign that the question has been heard. The child's mind seems to be a complete blank. After a few seconds or minutes this curious state passes off. Sometimes the child then answers the question which apparently had stunned him. Sometimes the whole matter seems to be forgotten, as though the child had been unconscious. In more severe cases similar attacks of unresponsiveness may occur without any question being asked and these are often reported by teachers as inexcusable inattentiveness or absence.

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French Couturier Says Fashion Always Illogical

Paris—Fashion is always illogical, never sensible, says Poirat, the couturier, in his autobiography just published here under the title of "My first Fifty Years."

"You often hear nowadays that fashions are more practical and women's dress is inspired by the necessities of modern life," he writes. "But you hear that in every period. People always seem to be firmly convinced that the existing styles are the only reasonable and most esthetic form of dress. And they are always wrong, because fashion is endlessly illogical. The only thing permanent in it is the unforeseen."

Poirat counts many anecdotes of his life as a fashion dictator. He claims the credit for having banished the corset.

"But while I freed the bust, I shackled the legs," he writes, "and you should have heard the wallings and the gaspings of teeth. Still, after a time everybody was wearing the tight skirt."

Pastoral

I watched the pond without lifting my eyes:
Shadow leaves on shadow skies;
Scaves of color twining through haze
And a bright bird flying with wings ablaze;
A bird flying over, the day in flight,
And I watched him pass without lifting my eyes
It was enough—the shadow of delight,
The shadow of a bird over shadow skies.

Prize Winners

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan — W. E. Sellers of Strasbourg, Sask., who has been showing his bronze turkeys at the fall and winter poultry shows again this year, has had another successful season. At the major shows held at Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Yorkton and Moose Jaw his wins with turkeys include 7 firsts, 7 seconds, 2 thirds, 4 fourths, 5 fifths, 2 silver cups 4 specials and 3 championships.

How Did She Know?

She was telling her husband the troubles of the day.

"You know, Bert," she said, "Mrs. West has a very nasty habit."

"What's that, dear?" he asked patiently.

"She turns round and looks back every time we pass her in the street," his wife replied.

"Really? And how do you know, dear?" he responded softly.

Newfoundland Shows Gain in Population

St. John's, Nfld.—According to the annual report of the registrar of births, marriages and deaths, the estimated population of Newfoundland and Labrador is 276,888 as against 263,033 in 1921.

Births during the year showed a decrease of 91 as compared with 1929, deaths a decrease of 194 and marriages a decrease of 19. The death rate was 13.9 and the infantile death rate 134.77. Deaths from general tuberculosis numbered 573 against 614 in 1929, and from cancer, 232 against 221 in the previous year. The latter shows a steady increase in the last ten years. The greatest cause of death last year was tuberculosis, the pulmonary form accounting for 463 lives and other types of the disease, 105.

Tweed Beads

Beads of tweed are still being worn, and the latest idea is to have a string of beads made to match a handbag. One model of this type consists of a choker necklace of large, round beads, covered with lawn and green speckled tweed, and strings alternately with flat, round gold beads. The tweed bag to match is pouch-shaped and has a gold mount.

A record in lamb production is claimed for William Blance, a farmer in the Spring Coulee, district, 30 miles southwest of Lethbridge. Among his flock of Rambouillet sheep, four ewes each gave birth to triplets and one to quadruplets with only one death among the "babies."

"The sensible man can vastly increase his own pleasure by the habit of enjoying other people's success."—Bruce Barton.

A bad neighbor is as great a misfortune as a good one is a blessing.—Hesiod.

A blessed companion is a book—a book that fits chosen is a life-long friend.—Douglas Jerrold.

Knowledge of divine things for the most part, as Heraclitus says, is lost to us by incredulity.—Pinitarch.

The ADVENTURES of CAPTAIN JIMMY and his Dog SCOTTIE

Had come before: Captain Jimmy and his dog Scottie, the Chinese General to get a Chinese soldierly catches him by the foot.

There we stood before General Lu, wondering what was going to happen next. Scottie, bristling with anger and ready to fight at the drop of a hat. The interpreter stared white, or rather, scared lemon yellow—and myself anxious and worried for fear that General Lu would refuse to give us our pass to the Chinese front.

Fortunately General Lu was too great a man to bother much about dignity. Without even a word of comment on Scottie's absurd attack, he sat down and wrote quickly on a sheet of paper, to which he affixed a bright green seal. Five minutes later we left the palace with a pass that gave us freedom to

Early next morning we took off in our plane for Liubo—a little town where the fighting was in full progress. Soon the country below showed the ravages of war. Buildings were wrecked by shell-fire, bridges were down at the rivers, and the ground was so rough that we almost crashed at our first landing.

Leaving our plane well back from the battle front, we took a road leading up to the lines. The air was damp and foggy, and the rumble of the guns seemed muffled under the heavy grey sky. Bullet-scarred walls stood bleak and white, and now and then a tree, with the wood torn into ribbons, showed the spite of high explosives.

Suddenly we noticed a group of soldiers, off duty, grouped around some object tied to a tree. Coming closer we heard a loud and complicated din—moaning, groaning and gibbering enough to make your hair stand on end. To our horror, we found that the soldiers had caught a few of the enemy, and tied them up to a large branch by their wrists, so that their feet were several inches off the ground. Of course, it must have been fearfully uncomfortable, but the soldiers only laughed and jeered.

"Come on Scottie," I said, "Let's bust up this party."

Punching and poking my way through the ring I stood beside the prisoners. The soldiers, of course, did not take this treatment too kindly, and began to whisper among themselves and finger their rifles. Then I took out General Lu's pass. Luckily no one could read it—but I pointed to the bright green official seal and made gestures and faces that must have convinced those Chinese soldiers that dire calamity would befall any man who interfered.

Taking out my knife, I cut the

and scored two knock outs. Then as my eyes became accustomed to the gloom of the house, I looked more carefully, and discovered to my dismay that one man was my interpreter, and the other no less than the Colonel himself. Fortunately the Colonel revived in a few moments, otherwise we would have been in a bad fix, as everyone was running toward the house shouting and yelling. Sitting up, he fairly screamed some orders in Chinese. Instantly the hub-bub ceased.

The Colonel turned to me. Quite evidently he hadn't the slightest idea what happened. Afterwards he told me through the interpreter that he held a whole company of soldiers at bay single handed until overpowered by sheer force of numbers. Probably he dreamed it after I knocked him down, and it seemed best to leave well enough alone. The next problem was how to get the three prisoners away.

"You told the Colonel," said to the interpreter, "That I'm a friend of General Lu and have orders to take them back."

"Colonel Sir," said the interpreter, "He know Clitopher Columbus, too, Ha! Ha!"

Then I brought out my pass. I told him it ordered me to bring back three prisoners. The Colonel glanced at it in embarrassment. He could not read a line of it after dark, we stole quietly out of the house with the prisoners—but as we came near the plane, shadowy, sinister figures were moving about.

(To be continued.)

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So They Say

"I would rather have a broken pitcher than a punctured windbag."—David Lloyd George.

"A long as it's golf, I feel that I know a little something about it."—Bobby Jones.

"The charm of the silent screen is that the figures are not quite real. They are shadowy figures of romance."—Charlie Chaplin.

"Conditions of prosperity are worldwide rather than purely national."—Norman Thomas.

"Every courageous or unselfish emotion builds up the whole world's stock of courage and faith."—Bruce Barton.

"Bernard Shaw's refusal to come to America is a bad thing for America but rather a good thing for Mr. Shaw."—G. K. Chesterton.

"The ideas of international rights and of arbitration have now made their way into all minds."—Aristide Briand.

"It is not a case of overproduction, but one of underconsumption."—Adolph Ochs.

"My ideal is always that it is better to simplify things. Even in politics the simplest means have the best results."—Denise Massonnet.

"Whenever women make up their minds men are helpless."—Rupert Hughes.

"Reason, Justice and Equity never had weight enough on the face of the earth to govern the councils of men."—Thomas A. Edison.

"Economic advancement is not necessarily the foundation of moral and spiritual advancement, but it can be made so."—Herbert Hoover.

"It's a shame that two gentlemen cannot have a private squabble without letting the world in on it."—Sinclair Lewis.

"As matters stand, we have achieved well-nigh a miracle of unrepresentative government."—Nicholas Murray Butler.

"Every nation's religion is as good as any other."—Yahama Gandhi.

"What is everybody's business is nobody's business."—Henry Ford.

"In the size and hospitality of its audience America is a writer's paradise."—John Erskine.

"The temple of theatrical art has been captured by commercialism."—John Haynes Holmes.

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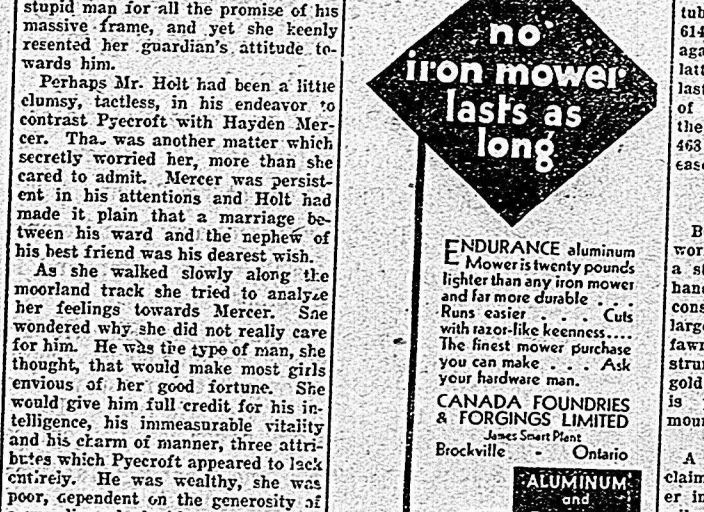
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