

Murder at Bridge

By ANNE AUSTIN.

SYNOPSIS

Janita Selim is shot through the heart during a bridge-luncheon party. Bonnie Dundee, special investigator, contests the theory that she was shot by a gunman. Nita went into her room while dummy at about 5.27, after asking Tracy Miles, who had just arrived, to make cocktails.

CHAPTER VII.

"Shame on you, Bonnie Dundee!" cried Penny Crain, her small fists clenched belligerently. "Death hand! I died! You talk like a New York tabloid! And if you don't understand that all of us have stood pretty near as much as we can without having to play the hand at bridge—the very hand we played while Nita was being murdered, then you haven't the decency and human feelings I've credited you with—and told my friends here that you have!"

A murmur of indignant approval accompanied her tirade and buzzed in a moment after she had finished, but it ceased abruptly as Dundee spoke:

"Who's conducting this investigation, Penny Crain, you or I? You will kindly let me do it in my own fashion, and try to be content when I tell you that, in my humble opinion, what I propose is absolutely necessary to the solution of this case!"

"Buckering—Dundee grinned to himself—exactly as he had known each other always, had quarreled and made up with fierce intensity for years.

"Really, Mr. Dundee," Judge Hugo Marshall began pompously, embracing his young wife protectively, "I must say that I agree with Miss Crain. This is an outrage, sir—an outrage to all of us, and particularly to this frail little wife of mine, already half-hysterical over the ordeal she has endured."

"Take your places!" Dundee ordered curtly. After all, there was a limit to the careful courtesy one must show to Hamilton's inmost circle of society.

Penny led the way to the bridge tables, the very waves of her brown bodice seeming to bristle with futile anger. But she obeyed, Dundee exulted. The way to tame this blessed little shrew had been solved by old Bill Shakespeare centuries ago.

As the women took their places at the two tables, arguing a bit among themselves, with semi-hysterical edges to their voices, Dundee watched the men, but all of them, with the exception of Dexter Sprague, that typical son of Broadway, so out of place in this company, had managed at least a fine surface control, their lips tight, their eyes hard, narrowed and watchful. Sprague slumped into a vacated chair and closed his eyes, revealing finely-wrinkled, yellowish lids.

"Where shall we begin?" Polly Beale demanded brusquely. "Remember, this table had finished playing when Karen began to deal what you call the 'death hand,' she rained him scornfully. "And Flora wasn't here at all—she had been dummy for our last hand—"

"And had gone out to telephone," Dundee interrupted. "Mrs. Miles, will you please leave the room, and return exactly when you did return—"

Dundee was sure that Mrs. Miles' sallow face took on a grayish tinge, she staggered to her feet and wound an uncertain way toward the hall. Tracy Miles sprang to his wife's assistance, but Sergeant Turner took it upon himself to lay a detaining hand on the too-anxious husband's arm. With no more than the uplift of an eyebrow, Dundee made Captain Strawn understand that Flora Miles' movements were to be kept under strict observation, and the chief of the homicide squad as unobtrusively conveyed the order to a plain-clothesman loitering interestedly in the wide doorway.

"Now," he was answering Polly Beale's question, "I should like the remaining three of you to behave exactly as you did when your last hand

was finished. Did you keep individual score, as is customary in contract?—or were you playing auction?"

"Contract," Polly Beale answered curtly. "And when we're playing auction ourselves like this, one at each table is usually elected to keep score. Janet was scorekeeper for us this afternoon, but we all waited after our last hand was played, for Janet to give us the result for our tally cards."

Dundee drew near the table, picked up the three tally cards—ornamental little affairs, and rather expensive—glanced over the points recorded, then asked abruptly:

"Where is Mrs. Miles' tally? I don't see it here."

"There was no answer to be had, so let the matter drop temporarily, though his shorthand notebook received another deeply underlined series of verticals."

"Go on, please, at both tables," Dundee commanded. "Your table—"

"I needed toward Penny, who was already over her flare of temper, "will please select the cards each held at the conclusion of Mrs. Marshall's deal."

"Och, I'd never remember all my cards in the world," Carolyn Drake wailed. "I know I had five clubs—ace, king, queen—"

"You had the jack, not the queen, for I held it myself," Penny contradicted her crisply.

"Until this matter of who held which card after Mrs. Marshall's deal is settled, I shall have to ask you all to remain as you are now," Dundee said to the players seated at the other table.

At last it was threshed out, largely between Penny Crain and Karen Marshall, the latter proving to have a better memory than Dundee had expected. At last even Carolyn Drake's querulous fussiness was satisfied, or rampled down.

Both Judge Marshall and John Drake started forward to inspect the cards, which none of the players was trying to conceal, but Dundee waved them back.

"Please—I want you men, all of you, to take your places outside, and return to this room in the order of your arrival this afternoon. Try to imagine that it is now—if I can trust Mr. Miles' apparently excellent memory—exactly 5.25—"

"Pretty hard to do, considering it's now a quarter past seven and there's still no dinner in sight," Tracy Miles grumbled, then brightened: "I can come right back in then—at 5.27, can't I?"

That point settled, and the men sent away, to be watched by several pairs of apparently indolent police eyes, Dundee turned to the bridge table, Nita's leaving of which had provided her murderer with opportunity.

"The cards are 'dealt,'" Penny reminded him.

"Now I want you other three to scatter exactly as you did before," Dundee commanded, hurry and excitement in his voice.

Lois Dunlap rose, laid down her tally card and strolled over to the remaining table. After a moment's hesitation, Polly Beale strode manfully out of the room, straight into the hall. Dundee, watching as the bridge players certainly had not been earlier that afternoon, was amazed to see Clive Hammond beckoning to her from the open door of the solarium.

So Clive Hammond had arrived ahead of Tracey Miles! Had somehow entered the solarium unnoticed, and had managed to beckon his fiancée to join him there! Prearranged? And why had Clive Hammond failed to enter and greet his hostess first? Moreover, how had he entered the solarium?

But things were happening in the living room. Janet Raymond, flushing in that her sunburned face outdid her red hair for vividness, was slowly leaving the room also. Through a window opening upon the wide front porch, Dundee saw the girl take her position against a pillar, then—a thing she had not done very probably—press her handkerchief to her trembling lips.

But the bidding was going on, Kar-

en Marshall piping up in her treble voice:

"Two spades." Dundee took his place behind her chair, then silently beckoned to Penny to shift from her own chair opposite Carolyn Drake to the chair Nita Selim had left to go to her death. She nodded understandingly.

"Challenge!" quavered Carolyn Drake, next on the left to the dealer, and managed to raise her eyebrows meaningfully to Penny, her partner, who had not yet changed places.

Penny, throwing herself into the spirit of the thing, scowled warningly at exchanging illicit signals for Penny Crain. But the instant she slipped into Nita Selim's chair her whole face and body took on a different manner, underwent almost a physical change. She was Nita Selim now! She tucked her head, considered her cards, laughed a little breathless note, then cried triumphantly:

"And I say—five spades! What do you think of that, partner?"

Then the girl, who was giving an amazing imitation of Nita Selim, changed as suddenly into her own character as she changed chair.

"Nita, I don't think it's quite bridge to be so jubilant about the strength of your hand," she said in her firm, husky voice. "I pass."

Karen Marshall pretended to study her hand for a moment, then, under "five" spell, announced in as firm a treble:

"Six spades!" Carolyn Drake flushed and looked uneasily toward Penny, a bit of sly which Dundee could see had not figured in the original game. Then she bridled and shifted her plump body in her chair, as she must have done before.

"Double!" Then, still acting the role she had played in earnest that afternoon, she explained importantly: "I always double a little slam on principle!"

Penny, in the role of Nita, redoubled with an exultant laugh, then as herself, passed also, with a murderous glance at Carolyn Drake.

"Let's see your hand, partner," Karen quavered, addressing a woman who had been dead nearly two hours. (To be continued.)

British Scientist Designs "Almost" Silent Motor

London.—An engine that will make motor cars almost noiseless has been designed by Professor A. M. Low, noise-hating young British scientist, who has for many years specialized in the design of internal combustion engines.

Professor Low's latest design provides for the nearest thing to a completely noiseless car engine yet created. It will have only two gears and one of those is for emergencies only, the car supposedly running on one gear in normal circumstances. Objectionable sound is eliminated on the continuous noise theory.

The idea occurred to Professor Low while studying the causes of mine explosions. He noted that there were usually several separate explosions in a mining accident, not a single loud detonation, as often believed. After considerable experimenting, he succeeded in tracing the manner in which sound travelled through mine tunnels during an explosion.

"Then he conceived the idea of building an engine, the explosions of which were to be 'controlled' as nature controls the explosions in a mine, and in the same manner as they are controlled in a Diesel engine. But whereas Diesel engines are too heavy for use in the average automobile, Professor Low's engine can be built for even the smallest cars at no greater cost than the every-day engine is built for. The new Low engine also is approximately the same size as the ordinary automobile engine.

They Named It a "Vacant Lot"

Whatever else they said, for who the city charts, white-veined on crackling blue. Named it a "vacant lot"—that was not true.

Such grasses, trees, or touch cooling-fingered grass. Breathe in the pulsing fragrance of it all. From tiptoeing spring on through the flaming fall: Feel wings stir arching branches overhead, And still deny the place was tenanted!

Hearse-voiced the builders car, with jangling chains. Trees crashed to earth, dark sweating men tug drains. Stripped sod, gouged pits, poured clattering streams of bricks, Set up in naked rows their ugly sticks. Made boxes to imprison beds and chairs. And photographs and arguments and cares: Now, whether they admit the truth or not, On those blue charts it is a vacant lot.

—Molly Anderson Haley, in "The Window Cleaner and Other Poems."

Chinese Printers Get Award. Shanghai.—The equivalent of about \$150,000 in Canadian money is being distributed by the Commercial Press to its employees as "compensation and pensions" under an award of the Bureau of Social Affairs. The printing plant of the Commercial Press, China's foremost publishing house, was destroyed when the Japanese bombed Shanghai. As the losses totaled about \$11,000,000 in old, resumption was impracticable.

One-third of the world's population suffers from malaria, which causes 2,000,000 deaths every year. London's bill for police protection during the last financial year was £8,654,373. Police lanterns alone cost £6,550.

Marching Song

"I've taken the billing and sworn and signed And I've learned to shoot— But I'm sorry for all must leave behind."

Said the young recruit. "When the transport's in and the stores are in and the troops fall in You'll perhaps be saner, For there's women and glory and gold to win."

Said the old campaigner. "But what shall I do when we've lost the fight And I've dropped my loot And I creep into camp, with a wound at night?"

Said the young recruit. "When your money is spent and your courage is spent and your strength is spent You are still the palmer If you learn what a little can bring content."

Said the old campaigner. "But suppose I lose trust in my fellow men And myself to loot, Is there anything left for a soldier then?"

Said the young recruit. "When your faith is gone and your friends are gone and your honor is gone— And I can't speak plainer— You can do like the rest of us; carry on."

Said the old campaigner. —Colin Ellis in The London Mercury.

Psychologist Studies Animal Brain Operation

Evidence that constant repetition of even an intelligent act may put an individual into a rut and lead him to continue performing the same act long after it ceases to be intelligent and is actually foolish has just been reported by the department of psychology of the University of California.

Working on the experimentally established principle that the reactions of the animal brain, though much less complex, are comparable to similar reactions in the human brain, I. Kitchinsky and C. H. Honzik, graduate students in psychology, have demonstrated the tendency of intelligent acts to become "fixed" by experiments on rats.

The university students selected three groups of rats which displayed sufficient intelligence to choose the shortest of two maze paths in reaching their daily ration of food. One group of rats was sent through this maze for four days, another for eight days and the third for twelve days.

At the end of these periods the short and long paths were reversed so that a rat entering what had formerly been the short path would find it to be the longer of the two. The results showed that the rats who were accustomed to the maze for only four days were better able to change their habits when the long and short paths were interchanged.

Those rats accustomed to the maze for eight days found it almost twice as difficult to change from one path to the other when the paths were reversed; and the twelve-day rats found it almost four times as difficult.

In other words, the rats, once having made an intelligent decision and having learned to act accordingly, found it increasingly difficult to change their actions when conditions changed in geometric proportion to the time spent in accustoming themselves to the old conditions.

Escaped Minks Return to Eat

A fur farm on which there are about 200 thriving minks is owned and operated at Spruce, Wash., by Charles Lewis, says Cecil Feilenthaler in The Sunday Oregonian. One day not long ago the minks found a hole in the wire netting and they marched out in single file to freedom. Lewis gave them up as being permanently lost. But come feeding time that day, every one of the animals marched back single file into the pen. Lewis repaired the netting and all is well at the fur farm.

Report Relics of Ice Age

Budapest.—Unemployed men of the machine age have unearthed near Erlau what are believed to be valuable relics of the ice age.

Some months ago the men asked to be allowed to dig on the site of what is reputed to be an ancient settlement and were financed by the Governor of the district to the extent of \$50. They have just penetrated to a cave which, in addition to bones and mammoth's teeth, contains human bones which are believed to be those of the ice age man. A special commission of archaeologists has gone to investigate the discoveries.

Poet—"I lived three weeks on that post of mine." Painter—"Then the editor took it."

Poet—"Oh no, but he threw me down six flights of stairs and I was in the hospital three weeks."

There is one man who knows more about beer than any other in England; he has been a beer-taster for thirty years. Outside business hours he is a teetotaler.

Beware of Pickpockets

By William Freeman

Jimmy Conway had read the notice as he paid his shilling at the gate, and wondered idly why anyone expert enough to justify it should trouble to come to a hot and crowded fete in the country, when there were still so many people worth robbing in London. Or was it that pickpockets on a holiday still practised their profession, like the legendary busman?

There was plenty to see. Lady Purley had a reputation for doing things thoroughly. He had his fortune told by two different soothsayers who agreed only in charging him half a crown; knocked several coconuts off their perches, tried his luck, his skill, and his strength in various other directions, and was trying to decide whether to join the queue waiting to get into the refreshment tent, or take the simpler course of going home—when he saw the girl.

She was wearing a dress with sprigs of lilac on it—Jimmy liked lilac—and she looked cool and young and worried. No, not exactly worried, he told himself; rather as if she was looking for someone or something and didn't want to be noticed. Furtive—that was the word.

He joined the refreshment queue. The girl joined it too. She was, in fact, immediately behind him. But Jimmy instinctively knew that faint scent of lilac belonged to the lilac dress. He was on the verge of turning, when something light and dexterous brushed against the side of his grey flannel coat.

A hand. It crept towards the pocket. Jimmy stiffened. He felt suddenly cold and sick.

The hand slipped into the pocket, groped for and secured what was there, and with even greater caution began to slide out again.

Jimmy waited until it was almost free, and then, swiftly and silently, pounced. There was a stifled cry, a desperate and ineffectual effort to escape. Still gripping the hand he turned.

"Hallo!" he said, with enough gentleness to allay any suspicions among the nearer members of the queue. Who would have expected to meet you here! There's quite a lot. I've been wanting to say to you, too. Shall we go across to the boundary, where it isn't so crowded?"

The girl gasped assent. Her face had gone white.

Together and in silence they went to the fence which divided the fete grounds from an adjoining field. There was no one within a dozen yards of them there.

"No," said Jimmy, suddenly, "don't think of it!"

"Think of what?" demanded the girl, defiantly.

"Bolting. Because you'd inevitably be caught. And then you'd look so dashed ignominious. How old are you?"

"Eighteen."

"Gosh! Come from London. I suppose?"

"Yes." She was flinging the words at him in angry jerks. "How many more questions are you going to ask?"

"As many as I choose. You'd rather answer them now than in the police court, I imagine?"

She did not condescend to answer. The colour had flooded back into her cheeks. She radiated rage, contempt, frustration. She stirred up an antagonism that blotted out all Jimmy's original pity. He had been desperately sorry for her. He had meant to let her off with nothing more severe than a caution. Now—

"Look here," he said, "it's no use your trying to ride the high horse. You were caught red-handed clearing out my pocket. The fact that all you grabbed was a bunch of keys is beside the point."

"It is!" she snapped.

"Great Scott!" muttered Jimmy. A new light broke on the situation. For those keys included one that opened his safe in his flat and the safe contained a small but distinctly valuable collection of gold coins, a recent legacy from an uncle. Jimmy himself had almost forgotten its existence.

"In that case, the police—"

"Don't!" Her voice shook with fear. That was the worst of girls—so variable that a chap never knew how to deal with them; always either bullying or cajoling.

"Why shouldn't I?" he demanded. "Because—" She paused, tapping the turf with the toe of her small white shoe. "Oh, well, I suppose I'd better confess." Lightly as a bird she perched herself on a rail of the fence. "I expect you've guessed that I'm one of a gang?"

Lowest Price in 15 Years

"SALADA" TEA

"Fresh from the Gardens"

graphical Society, I'd do my best to—

"You don't even know my name," she interrupted.

"It needn't take long to put that right. What is it?"

"Emily Griggs."

"And where did you steal that hand-bag you're carrying?"

"I didn't steal it," she flared. "How dare you?"

"Sorry," said Jimmy, gravely, "but if you didn't, I'm afraid there's nothing for it now but the local police station. The initial on that bag is 'N,' which doesn't stand for either Emily or Griggs. Consequently, if you aren't lying about the bag—"

She had flung her slim body to the farther side of the fence and was running like a hare. Jimmy instinctively leapt over after her, followed for a few yards, and then, with a shrug of his shoulders, turned back. As he was re-climbing the fence he saw that she had stopped and was huddled on the turf. Hesitatingly he went up.

"Well?" he demanded.

"I've twisted my ankle. The turf was slippery—and lumpy. She spoke in jerks. "Do you mind helping me? I want to find out if I'm able to stand."

Her help had been clumsy.

"It's no use," she said. "You'll have to take me to the station on a burdle."

"Don't talk like a little idiot," said Jimmy. "If we can get as far as the fence—hallo! Who's this merchant?"

A tall young man in grey flannels was striding towards them.

"He's Teddy," said the girl. "A confederate?"

"No—he means, yes. May I sit down again?"

She sat down. "Teddy" approached. He was about Jimmy's height and build, but not more than twenty.

"What's the big idea?" he began. "It's all right," said the girl. "I've twisted my ankle."

"If you'd like to sit down side by side and discuss professional matters—"

—hinted Jimmy, and began to move away.

"Don't go," said the girl, impatiently. "Teddy, what have you done with those keys?"

The flannelled youth, grinning, produced a bunch.

"These," said the girl to Jimmy, "were what I was trying to steal. Seeing you from behind, I thought you were Teddy, who's my brother. That's true, anyway, isn't it, Teddy?"

Journey's End

No matter how long it takes me to find The finch-haunted wood, the woods I knew, Until they again greet my heart and mind No port is a refuge, no journey is through.

Whether a year or a dozen from now, Whether my eyes are in peace or in pain, I'll handle the haft of the friendly plow That waits for the song of my hands again.

I'll drink of the winds I couldn't forget, Rekindle the hearth to a sunset light, Stand where the dew on the clover is wet, As gay in my heart as the day is bright;

Firm-rooted at last—as a man should be— Ten jumps from a stream and next door to a tree!

—Bert Cooledge in the N. Y. Times.

Fear So long as a man fears, it matters little what he fears; whether it be death, or poverty, or his next door neighbor, it is all one so long as the fear is vital. So long as a man is a slave, it is of comparatively little importance whether his master be a sugar planter, or a creed, or public opinion; there are only the two classes, the slave and the free. — C. B. Wheeler.

ANGER Just to be good, to keep life pure from degrading elements, to make it constantly helpful in little ways to those who are touched by it, to keep one's spirit always sweet and avoid all manner of petty anger and irritability—that is an ideal as noble as it is difficult. — Edward Howard Griggs.

Geography books and atlases will need altering now the Zuyder Zee has been cut off from the North Sea. The Dutch Government have officially rechristened it the Ysel Lake.

Originated for the finest tables KRAFT CHEESE

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Only best oil gives proper lubrication, says expert

If housewives only realized they were buying lubrication instead of "just oil," few of them would use anything but the best. Here is one place you can't "cut corners," for anything less than the best lubrication endangers the life of sewing machines, vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers, electric fans, washers and other household equipment.

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Don't be satisfied with anything but the best. Ask for the old reliable 3-In-One Oil and get the most efficient service from your mechanical devices. At good stores everywhere. For your protection, look for the trade mark "3-In-One" printed in Red on every package.

Important Questions It is never too soon nor never too late to press home on ourselves questions like the following: What spirit dwells in my heart? What good have I been doing? What works of love have I done? What deeds of charity have I performed? What fruits of the spirit, what evidence of love, have I shown? We must answer these questions some day. Why not press them now on our hearts and reflect upon them?

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Pure!
No substitute can be good enough



Christie's Arrowroots
Your Mother's Mother gave her children "Christie's" Arrowroots, Canada's original Arrowroot Biscuits, baked in Canada by Christie's since 1853. There is nothing better for your children.