

Murder at Bridge

By ANNE AUSTIN.

SYNOPSIS

Investigating the murder of Jussita Selim at a bridge party, "Boonie" Dundee orders the replaying of the "dramatic" scene. Judge Marshall and Carolyn Drake play the part of Nita Selim having been "dramatized" by Judge Marshall and John Drake, coming from the bus, came in the dining room with Janet Raymond. Janet and Lydia the maid, of the murder, because Lydia had been in the room with Tracy Miles, had to ring twice for her. Lydia says she was asked for the "dramatic" scene.

Dundee tells the group that since no one heard a shot, a gun with a Maxim silencer was used.

CHAPTER XVI

As Dexter Sprague had glibly and pleasantly explained away every sinister aspect of the note he had written to Nita Selim that day—the note which Flora Miles admitted having stolen and read in her hostess' clothes closet just before the murder was committed—Special Investigator Dundee was recalling with verbatim vividness his argument with Captain Strawn of the homicide squad immediately after his arrival into the house of violent death.

He had said then: "The person who killed Nita Selim was so well known to her, and his—or her—presence in this room so natural that this—or her—movements and was concentrating on the job of powdering her very pretty face."

And he had said further, in face of the disappearance of the gun and an explanation of the fact that all 12 of these people had immediately protested to Strawn that they had heard no shot:

"This was a premeditated murder, of course. The Maxim silencer, unless they are all lying about not hearing a shot—proves that. Silencers are damned hard to get hold of, but people with plenty of money can manage most things."

And as Dexter Sprague had talked on, more and more glibly, Dundee had suddenly found an explanation, which fitted his own argument with such perfection that he wondered, naively, if he were perhaps gifted with clairvoyance.

Of all these 12 people, whom he had questioned so relentlessly, only Dexter Sprague could easily have come into possession of a Maxim silencer. He had dilated proudly upon the fact that he had been an assistant director at the Altamont Studios on Long Island. And the Altamont company had recently finished making a series of "underworld" motion pictures—crook dramas featuring gunmen with "trams" made eerily noiseless by silencers.

A bit of information he had picked up in a motion picture magazine had hurried him to the logical chain of Dundee's reasoning: assistant directors were in charge of "props"; it was their business to see that no article needed for the production of a picture was lost or missing when the director needed it. Dexter Sprague had said that he had "dropped" everything to come when Nita Selim went him of the Chamber of Commerce project to make a "booster" movie of Hamilton.

Perhaps he had dropped everything. But—he had hesitated long enough to pick up a Maxim silencer and a blunderbuss automatic? And was the "row" which Sprague had been so glibly explaining away an ancient one—a row so deadly that when Nita Selim had refused to heed his written warning, her murder became necessary?

It was with all this in mind that Bonnie Dundee flung his challenge: "I must conclude that you are all lying or that Nita Selim was killed with a gun equipped with a Maxim silencer."

And his eyes, terrible with their command that the weakling should break and confess, were upon Dexter Sprague. But Sprague did not break. He stared back blankly.

If his eyes and his attention had included the whole group it is possible that what happened would not have taken Dundee so completely by surprise. He had paid little attention to a sort of concerted gasp, a slight movement among the group farthest from him.

But not even his intense concentra-

tion upon Sprague could prevent him hearing Karen Marshall's childish voice, tremulous with fear:

"No, no, Hugo! Don't—don't!"

He whirled from Sprague in time to see Judge Marshall disengaging his arm from his young wife's clinging fingers, to note, with profound astonishment, that John G. Drake, banker, was stepping hastily aside, so that not even his coat sleeve might be brushed by the advancing figure of the elderly, retired judge. And before Judge Marshall had time to speak, Dundee saw that a blight had touched, at last, the solid friendship of the women; that they did not look at each other with that air of standing together whatever happened, but that their eyes, not meeting, at all became secret, calculating, afraid. . . .

"Sir!" Judge Marshall began pompously, when he had planted himself squarely before the young detective. "It's all never be said of me that I have tried, even in the slightest way, to hamper the course of justice."

"I am sure of that, Judge Marshall," Dundee replied courteously, but his pulses were hammering. What did this long-winded, pompous old fool have to tell him? . . . "You have some information you believe may be valuable, Judge?"

"I do not believe it will be at all valuable, sir. On the contrary," the old man retorted indignantly. "But to suppress the fact at this juncture might lead to grave misunderstanding later, when it inevitably came to light. So, sir, it is my duty to inform you that I myself own a Colt's .32, as well as a Maxim silencer."

"Wh-!" Dundee exclaimed in credulously. He was conscious that behind him, Captain Strawn was getting to his feet.

"There is no need to get out your handcuffs, Captain Strawn!" Judge Marshall warned him majestically. "I assure you that I have not violated the Sullivan law. Every judge active and retired, is entitled to a permit to carry a weapon, and I long ago availed myself of the privilege. Nor am I about to make a confession of murder!"

"There ain't no permit, so far as I know, Judge," Strawn growled, "for any man, whoever he may be, to tote a gun with a silencer on it."

Karen Marshall was crying now, with the abandoned grief of a petted child.

"Granted, Captain!" Judge Marshall snapped. "But it happens that I do not 'tote' my gun with the silencer on it. If it interests you, I may as well explain that I came by the silencer several years ago, when I was on trial for murder here, and acquitted by a feeble-minded jury, made me a present of the very silencer he had used to kill his victim—an ironic gesture, a gesture of supreme insolence, but an entirely safe gesture, since he well knew that a man once acquitted of a crime cannot be tried again for that crime."

"So you kept the silencer as a curiosity, Judge Marshall?" Dundee interrupted the pompous flow of rhetoric.

"For years—yes," the ex-judge answered, then his face went yellow and very old. "As I told you just now, I will withhold no fact that may be of any pertinence whatever. . . . About two months ago—in March, I believe—our little group here took up target shooting as a fad. Several of us became quite expert with revolver and rifle. Mr. Drake—and he nodded to that banker, who instantly averted his eyes—"conceived the idea of practicing the draw-from-the-hip sort of revolver shooting—the kind one sees in Wild West movies, you know."

"I think you might add, Hugo," Drake cut in angrily, "that I had in mind the hope of being able to protect the bank in case of a hold-up."

"And the silencer, Judge Marshall?" Captain Strawn prodded. Judge Marshall flushed, and fingered the end of a waxed mustache. "The silencer, sir, was my wife's idea. You see, sir, we are fortunate enough to be the parents of an infant son. He was just a month old when I painted a

bull's eye upon the brick wall of our back garden and invited our friends to pursue their fad as our guests. The shooting awakened the baby so frequently that Karen—Mrs. Marshall—dug up the silencer, which I had shown her as a memento of my career on the bench. Thereafter we confined our practice almost exclusively to drawing from the hip and shooting without sighting. It is impossible to sight with a gun equipped with a silencer, you know, since the silencer covers the sighter on the barrel."

"It sure does," Strawn drawled. "So every last one of you folks had a good deal of this sort of practice, I take it?"

Judge Marshall glanced about the room, as if he could not recall the face of everyone present.

"Yes, all of us—except Mr. Sprague and—Penny, my dear, did you join us at all?"

The girl who had once been in an ev- sport and party that this crowd of Hamilton's socially-abled indulged in, but who was now earning her living as secretary to District Attorney Sanderson, flushed a painful red.

"No, Hugo. I—I have to stay with mother on Sunday mornings, you know."

"Your target practice was a Sunday morning diversion, then, Judge Marshall?" Dundee asked.

"Yes. We usually have an hour of the sport—between 11 and noon, on Sundays. We've been playing a sort of tournament—quite sharply competitive—"

"When did you and your friends practice last?" Dundee asked.

"Last Sunday. Tomorrow was to mark the end of the 'tournament,' the judge answered.

"And when did you last see your gun with its silencer?" Dundee persisted.

"Last Sunday, of course. . . Why, good Lord!" Marshall ejaculated. "It was Nita herself who put the gun away!"

(To be continued.)

Simple Day

In this wind's following there is an unknown richness
A breathing mysterious bloom,
Nor gorse nor may nor hyacinth nor herb;
No man could name that perfume.

The white flowers living in this field
Stare at the sky; in the field beyond
There are yellow flowers that nod
wisely to the turf,
And that is all.

But yes, there are clouds in the sky,
soft rocks,
The sunlight pounds them like an axe,
The wind through its comb of blue
Diodes, diminishes and harries them,
And innocence, perceiving this, rejoices.

For though the wind has no color,
The sky no smell,
The earth no speech,
They survive and accomplish justice.

—From "The Collected Poems of A. E. Coppard."

"In Fields Where I Was Known"

Far in a western brookland
That bred me long ago
The poplars stand and tremble
By pools I used to know.

There, in the windless night-time,
The wanderer, marvelling why,
Halts on the bridge to hearken
How soft the poplars sigh.

He hears; long since forgotten
In fields where I was known,
Here I lie down in London
And turn to rest alone.

There, by the starlit fences,
The wanderer halts and hears
My soul that lingers sighing
About the glimmering weirs.

—A. E. Houseman, in "A Shropshire Lad."

Fresh Fields

I gaze and gaze when I behold
The meadows springing green and gold.
I gaze until my mind is naught
But wonderful and wordless thought!
Till, suddenly, surpassing wit,
Spontaneous meadows spring in it:
And I am but a grass between
Unwalked-in meadows, gold and green.

—Oliver Goody, in "Wild Apples."

SNUBBED

In a certain London club is an insufferably plutocratic person whose parade of wealth does nothing to enhance his popularity.

Famous Fencers



Erna Bogen (left), Hungary, and Helene Mayer, Germany, two of the world's outstanding women fencers, get together at Los Angeles before the Olympic games.

Violeting

We have the good fortune to live in an unenclosed parish, and may thank the wise obstinacy of two or three sturdy farmers, and the lucky unpopularity of a ranting madcap lord of the manor, for preserving the delicious green patches, the islets of wilderness amidst cultivation, which form, perhaps, the peculiar beauty of English scenery.

The common that I am passing now—the sea, as it is called—is one of the loveliest of these favored spots. It is a little sheltered scene, retiring, as it were, from the village; sunk amidst higher lands, hills would be almost too grand a word; edged on one side by one gay high-road, and intersected by another; and surrounded by a most picturesque confusion of meadows, cottages, farms, and orchards; with a great pond in one corner, unusually bright and clear, giving a delightful cheerfulness and daylight to the picture. The swallows haunt that pond; so do the children. There is a merry group round it now; I have seldom seen it without one.

Now a few yards farther, and I reach the bank. Ah! I smell them already—their exquisite perfume steams and lingers in this moist, heavy air. Through this little gate, and along the green south bank of this green wheat-field, and they burst upon me, the lovely violets, in tenfold loveliness. The ground is covered with them, white and purple enamelling the short dewy grass, looking but the more vividly colored under the dull, leaden sky. There they lie by hundreds, by thousands. In former years I have been used to watch them from the tiny green bud, till one or two stole into bloom. They never came on me before in such a sudden and luxuriant glory of simple beauty—and I do really owe one pure and genuine pleasure to feverish London! How beautifully they are placed too, on this sloping bank, with the palm branches waving over them, full of early bees, and mixing their honeyed scent with the more delicate violet odour! How transparent and smooth and lusty are the branches, full of sap and life! And there, just by the old mossy roof, is a superlative tuft of primroses, with a yellow butterfly hovering over them, like a flower floating on the air.

From "Our Village," by Miss Mitford.

There is a proud modesty in merit—
Dryden.

Blackberries

Make the best you can of the worst you get.

A woman's maiden aim is to change her maiden name.

A man's house is his castle—unless it is in his wife's name.

Better a word in season than an hour's lecture out of season.

When members of a family quarrel a lot of horrid truths leak out.

A wise man knows that his wife knows that he doesn't know so much.

The average man opens an account with you when he does you a favor.

We read of the seven ages of man, but one age is ample for the average woman.

It ought to be some consolation to a widow to know that history often repeats itself.

The Dining Table of Early America

The simplicity of hand production is shown most clearly, perhaps, in early dishes and serving utensils. The pottery of the red man seems to have been a step beyond the white man, but his burl bowl, scooped out of a knotty growth on some old tree, was something that the white brother could accomplish. This burl bowl was set in the center of the board, within reach of all, and would serve as big a stew as the housewife was able to cook in her great iron, or brass kettle.

Forks had not come into general use, even in the Old World, when our first settlers arrived, nor for some years after; and it was only necessary to hollow out a few spoons from some soft wood, or to fasten clam shells to convenient sticks (if one had imported no family silver) before the family could be busy at their task of eating.

Some of the containers for food and drink which seem crudest to us were used, not only at the very first, but well along in those years when we have supposed that living conditions were well taken care of. Gourds—bottle, dippers and even "basons"—were in use for many generations, and in some localities until the middle of the nineteenth century. Horns were also used for cups and water bottles, long after the first days of dirt water.

It was not the trees, as usual, however, that the pioneer turned to for the real outfitting of the family board. The dining table of early America was in reality nothing more than a board. A table the proper size would have been entirely too large for a one-roomed house, and a broad, thick board was therefore substituted, which could be fitted on top of trestles, when meal time came around, and moved out of the way when the meal was finished. Some tables were made with hollows scooped in the board, a foot and a half apart, all around the edge, where the individual trencher would ordinarily have stood.—From "Candle Days," by Marion Nicholl Rawson.

Colds Declared Scourge of U.S.

Of all Minor Afflictions it Alone Resists Stubbornly, Says Health Report

Washington.—The common cold—one of the few ailments that refuses to entirely surrender to the onward march of medical science—is emerging as the scourge of America.

The public health service presents information showing the cold to be the greatest single factor in economic loss because of illness. Most other diseases are yielding, and as science gradually vanquishes them every American reaps the benefit in a death rate that has been steadily dropping for nine years. Today it stands at a new low 10.9 for every 1,000 population.

The common cold resists stubbornly and exacts a great part of the \$500,000,000 that is lost annually in this country because of illness that could be prevented.

"We are finding," public health service officials said, "that most communicable diseases are showing decreases. For instance, diphtheria, scarlet fever, small pox and measles are showing a lower trend than they have in years. This has been particularly notable in the last three or four years, and theories have been advanced that the depression might have had something to do with it."

The best estimates available at the public health service are that every American can expect to have one cold a year. Uncertainties are conceded to be rather uncertain because the cold is the most elusive of ailments. In the language of science it is ultramicroscopic.

That means its germ is one of the rare ones that cannot be encompassed by the all-seeing eye of the microscope.

The Household Word For Tea



Fall Appetites.

With the cool evenings and bracing breezes of autumn, our appetites no longer demand the crisp salads of summer days, but revel in thoughts of roast beef, stews and dumplings of roast beef, stews and satisfying can be envisioned than baked ham. The following offers a nice variation of this ever popular dish:

Baked Breaded Ham, Shoulder or Leg.

Cover a whole ham or shoulder with cold water, bring slowly to the boiling point, then simmer until nearly tender. Carefully remove the skin from meat, brush all over with beaten egg, then cover with bread crumbs mixed with brown sugar, paprika and a little mustard. Place in the oven and pour one cupful of fruit juice or cider in the baking pan. Bake about half an hour, basting now and then with the juice. Garnish with broiled peaches or apples and make gravy from the liquid in the pan.

Veal Potpie With Dumplings.

Cut one and a half pounds of neck of veal in cubes, cover with water, and add a quarter of a pound of salt pork, also cubed. Simmer for one hour, then add two onions, a quarter of a cupful of diced celery, half a cupful of diced carrots, with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer one hour, then thicken the gravy with one tablespoonful of flour blended to a paste with two tablespoonfuls of water. Add paprika and other seasoning as required, and if the gravy has evaporated much add more boiling water.

For the dumplings sift together one and a half cupfuls of flour, half a teaspoonful of salt, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Add milk to make a stiff batter, about half a cupful. Drop from the end of a spoon into the boiling gravy. Cover closely and cook rapidly for ten to twelve minutes.

For Company.

Add one cupful of small canned peas to the potpie five minutes before serving.

Irish Stew With Vegetables.

One and a half pounds of lean veal cut into neat pieces for serving. Wipe with a damp cloth, then dip each piece in flour and brown in a little fat. Place in a heavy saucepan and add a pint of boiling water, a cupful of carrots cut in dice, and four onions sliced half an inch thick. Add a teaspoonful of salt and pepper to taste. Cover the saucepan and allow the contents barely to simmer two hours, then add a cupful of green peas, and also a teaspoonful of chopped parsley and two cupfuls of potatoes cut in cubes. Cook until the peas and potatoes are finished, thicken the gravy and season as preferred. Dumplings or noodles may be added to this very appetizing stew. For extra spice for jaded palates, small amounts of saffron, sage, thyme and curry powder give an added piquance. Try them.

Deep-Dish Cherry Pie.

Line a deep earthen dish with flaky pastry and in the centre place an inverted custard cup. Fill the dish with pie cherries which have been washed, pitted and well sweetened. Pile the fruit higher in the centre than at the sides of the dish, dot with butter and sprinkle with two tablespoonfuls of sugar. Make a cover of the pastry but do not slit it in the usual fashion, and, pressing

it down firmly at the sides, brush over with beaten egg yolk. Bake in a moderate oven at least one hour. Lift the edge of the inverted cup when serving so that the juice may escape. The pie is good, hot with hard sauce or cold with whipped cream. Some other fruits may be substituted for cherries, but the more acid ones give a tastier, more desirable pie.

Colorful Cooking.

A spoonful of jam, right in the centre of a cup custard, adds color and flavor. Cranberry sauce will give mayonnaise a rosy color that is attractive. A dash of grape juice gives a heightened, sharpened flavor to apple sauce.

Later Supper Snack.

For those who like a midnight spread and are peanut butter addicts, this recipe may be especially appealing: Take 1½ cups peanut butter, ½ cup hot milk, 1 teaspoon salt, 6 inch slices of bread and pepper. Mix peanut butter with hot milk and seasoning, mixing together thoroughly. Dip slices of bread into the peanut butter mixture. Sauté in hot fat. Garnish with pickles and olives.

Onions Stuffed With Beans.

Six large Bermuda onions, 3 tablespoonful butter, 1 medium can beans, ½ cup bread crumbs, ketchup to flavor, 1 teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon paprika. Peel onions carefully, leaving hollow cup with opening at top about the size of a fifty-cent piece. Chop ½ cupful of the onion removed from centres and let simmer in butter ten minutes. Remove from fire and combine with beans, ketchup, seasoning and bread crumbs. Fill onions with this mixture. Place in deep covered baking dish with little water. Bake in moderate oven 1½ hours or until onions are tender.

Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who while he was chit'ly was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison.—Johnson.

A man exercising no forethought will soon experience present sorrow.—Confucius.

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Learn its quick relief for colds; for neuritis, rheumatism, lumbago. Be sure to get Aspirin—and not a substitute. All druggists sell Aspirin tablets. "Aspirin" is a trade-mark registered in Canada.

"Two of my friends are having a social war. One gives a dance and the other comes back at her with a bridge party. So it goes."

"Have you taken sides?"

"I should say not. You get more invitations by remaining neutral."

"Thank you very much" said the clergyman as little Georgie handed up his offering for the festival. "I must call round this afternoon and thank your mother for those eight beautiful apples." "P-please, sir," stammered Georgie, "would you m-mind thanking her for t-twelve."