

# Murder at Bridge

By ANNE AUSTIN.

## SYNOPSIS

"Bonnie" Dundee, in New York investigating the murders of Juanita Selim and Dexter Sprague, learns from Sergeant Hart, stage star, that Nita married in 1918, was soon deserted, but not divorced. In 1922, a picture of Nita appeared with the story about the suicide of Anita Lee, which was printed in Hamilton. Nita comes to Hamilton after showing strange excitement over pictures of Hamilton people and deposits \$10,000 in cash. Dundee wonders if this was "black alimony" on a husband who had married after he thought she was dead.

## CHAPTER XLVI

Dundee laughed, the par. which had saved his life echoing his mirth. He was so excited that he was laughing, as his eyes hit upon the following lines of fine print halfway down the third column of page 410 of "Who's Who in America":

**BURNS, William John, detective;**  
b. Baltimore, Oct. 19, 1861—  
"A tenant and a joke which turned sour, my dear Watson!" he exulted to the parrot. "A joke I was not intended to live to laugh over!"

He closed the book and replaced it in the bookcase, careless of fingerprints, for he was sure the murderer had been too clever to leave any behind him.

Interestingly Dundee surveyed the scene of his attempted murder. If he had unsuspectingly gone up to the high shelf to reach for the book he would have stood so close to the register that there would have been powder burns on his shirt front—just as there had been on Dexter Sprague's. And he would have been shot so near an open window—no chance for fingerprints there, either, since he had not closed the window as he departed for New York, not wishing to return to a stuffy apartment—that the police would have been justified in thinking he had been shot from outside. It was an old-fashioned house in those days then in the manner of his heated windows there was an iron grating—the topmost landing of a fire escape. Dundee could imagine Capt. Strawn's positiveness in placing the murderer there—crouching in wait for his victim.

Unoubtedly Strawn would have dismissed the note as the work of a crank, not hitting upon the fact that it had been written in that very room, of Dundee's own typewriter and stationery. . . . ingenious indeed! And so amazingly simple—

Suddenly the young detective scratched for his hat. If the murderer were so ingenious in this case, might he not have been equally clever in planning and executing the murder of Nita Leigh Selim?

Twenty minutes later he parked his car in the rutty road before the Selim house and knocked his horn loudly to attract the attention of the plainclothesman Capt. Strawn had detailed to guard the premises. There was no answer. A violent ringing of the doorbell also brought no response. The guard had been withdrawn, probably to join the small army of plainclothesmen and patrolmen who had been for the New York gunman—the key-ghost of Captain Strawn's exploded theory.

chance to remove any betraying traces of his crime. Besides, his first excited hunch after his own attempted murder-kill very well be a wild guess, and one. In his case the impossibility of the murder being delayed or arranged so that the detective might be slain when the whole "crowd" was assembled was obvious. The murderer had read in a late Saturday afternoon extra—a copy of which was now in Dundee's pocket—District Attorney Sanderson's boast to the press that his office had been working on an entirely different theory than that which connected the two murders with "Swallow-tail Sammy," that Special Investigator Dundee, expected back in Hamilton early Sunday morning, had been investigating Nita Leigh's past life in New York.

And he had hinted sensational revelations connected with the 12-year-old; a blue velvet dress which Nita had chosen to be her shroud. And in his desire to reassure the public through the press, Sanderson had vaguely promised even more specific revelations than Dundee had actually brought home with him.

The exasperated young detective could picture the murderer reading those sensational hints and promises, could imagine his panic, the need for immediate action, so that Dundee should not live to tell the tale of his New York discoveries to the district attorney or anyone else.

But whether he was right or wrong, Dundee determined to give his hunch a chance. He went into the bedroom in which Nita Leigh Selim had been murdered—shot through the back as she sat at the dressing table. If her murder had been accomplished by mechanical means, how had it been done? From the dressing table Dundee walked to the window, upon whose frame there was still the tiny pencil mark which Dr. Price had drawn, to indicate the end of the path along which the bullet had traveled, provided it had traveled so far. Nothing here to aid in a mechanical murder.

Nothing here? . . . Not now, because he had taken the lamp to the court-house for keeping.

He saw it clearly in imagination—that bronze floor lamp which Lydia Carr had given to Nita, its big round bulb studded with great jewels of colored glass. And in recalling every detail of the lamp he saw what he had dismissed as of no importance at the time and in the excitement of finding that the lamp's bulb had been shattered by the "bang or bump" which Flora Miles had described. One of the big glass jewels had been missing, leaving an unsightly hole.

No wonder there had been a "bang or bump" hard enough to dent the frame of the window! For the gun, wedged into the big bowl and slightly protruding from the jewel-hole, had "kicked," just as it had kicked an hour before, when it had kicked itself from the hole in the hot-air register and clattered down the big pipe to the heat-reservoir of the furnace.

That the big lamp had not stood in front of the window frame did not dampen Dundee's excitement in the least. The murderer had found no difficulty in shifting it nearer to the place it had always occupied before.

But—how had the gun been fired from the lamp? Electrically, into Dundee's mind. He saw himself stooping on Monday afternoon, to see if the plug of the lamp's cord had been pulled from the socket, saw it again as it was then—nearly out, so that no current could pass from the base-board outlet under the bookcase into the lamp. How far from the truth his conclusion that Monday had been!



Football or footlights, Carl Hagerman stars. Hagerman, captain of the Harvard grid squad, is one of six students of the "Floradora Sextette" in "Penthouse Preferred."

nected with two small, flat metal plates, one upon the other, so that when stepped upon a bell would ring in Lydia's basement room.

But there was something odd about the wire. Although it was obviously new, a section of it near the two metal plates was wrapped with black adhesive tape. Another memory knocked for attention upon Dundee's mind. The long cord of the bronze lamp had been mended with exactly the same sort of tape—about a foot from where it ended in the contact plug.

Within another two minutes Dundee was exploring the dark, earthy portion of the basement which lay directly to the east of Lydia Carr's basement room. And he found what he was looking for—adhesive tape wrapped about the wire which had been dropped through the floor of Nita's room before it had been carried, by means of a bored hole, into Lydia's room.

He was too late—thanks to Captain Strawn. The bell which Sprague had rigged up was in working order again. But as he was passing out of the basement he glanced at the ceiling of the large room devoted to urinals, hot water heater and laundry tubs. And in the ceiling he saw a hole. . . .

The murderer had left a trace he could not obliterate.

At three o'clock that Sunday afternoon Dundee permitted himself the luxury of a call upon Penny Crain.

He found the girl and her mother playing anagrams. "Why did you drag poor Ralph away from his dinner here today?" Penny demanded, scrambling the little wooden blocks until they made a weird pattern of letters.

"Because I wanted to find out exactly how Nita Selim was killed—and I did," Dundee answered. "I wish I knew as well as I ordered her!"

Mute before Penny's excited questions, the detective idly selected letters from the mass of face-up blocks on the table, and spelled out, in a low row, the names of all the guests at Nita's fatal bridge party. Suddenly, and with a cry that startled Penny, Dundee made a new name with the little wooden letters. . . .

Now he knew the answers to both "How?" and "Who?"

(To be continued.)

## April Showers

London's (England) streets are served by 8,044 taxicabs.

The strength of Great Britain's Regular Army is 5,000 below establishment; it was 8,000 below a year ago.

There are 20,000 Salvation Army lands in Great Britain, and nearly 15,000 in other parts of the world.

Out of every 1,000 men who offer themselves for enlistment in the British Army, 370 are rejected on medical grounds.

Every year British milk suppliers need 65,000,000 new milk bottles to replace losses due to breakage and theft.

Men form 65 per cent. of the customers who buy chocolate assortments in the United Kingdom, hard centres being the most popular with them.

## DOCTORS KNOW TOO MUCH.

Doctors, says one expert, know too much to make really good parents, their knowledge making them very nervous.

Conjuring is one of the hobbies of the Prince of Wales, and he is particularly good at sleight-of-hand and card tricks.

Expert girl manicurists, of whom there is said to be a shortage in London, receive in wages and tips about \$5 a week in a busy season in a good neighborhood.

Limerick slum-dwellers are to be found in accommodation in King John's Castle, which was built in the thirteenth century; it is being adapted for its new use.

## FREE UMBRELLAS FOR FILM FANS.

Film fans who attend one cinema in Madrid are to be lent umbrellas free of charge if it comes on to rain. Attendees are also waiting to take patrons' cars to a special garage.

French hostesses in doubt as to how to run a dinner-party where important guests are to be present have only to apply to the French Foreign Office to get all the information they need.

"To me the word 'nationalism' conveys a certain feeling of national selfishness, mass brutality, and desire to force one's group individually upon others."—Lord Melchett.

Britain's smallest flight-sergeant in R.A.F. is surely Michael McCartney, aged 41, who stopped growing when he was nine years old and had attained the height of 4 ft. 9 1/2 in. His uniform has to be made specially for him.

Wireless music has amused patients undergoing operations in Bradford Royal Infirmary. They are treated with a serum which lets them remain conscious, but insensible to pain. While the operation proceeded, they wore earphones.

London letters posted in the wrong box—i.e., country letters in the "London and abroad" box or receipts or vice versa—are seriously delayed, as the contents of the two boxes may be taken to different sorting offices a mile apart.

## A Stamp Collector's Freak

A collector of stamps rejoiced at his luck the other day when, in a London suburban postoffice, he bought a half-penny stamp and discovered that it was a "freak" with the head of the King printed on both sides.

That an error like this should occur at all is a chance in a million. The printers of this particular sheet were astounded at the accident and, although they print at least 24,000,000 stamps a week, they have never made such a mistake before.

Apparently the reason for the double printing was that a corner of a sheet in passing through the machine turned over, with the result that the blanket took the ink and impression, and when the next sheet was passed through an impression was made on its gummed side. The first faulty sheet was detected and thrown out.

## MATCHED!

By William Freeman

Acquaintances of Jennie Barnard usually regarded her as a girl whose head was screwed on the right way; quick-witted, efficient, and so forth. Actually, outward competence concealed much shyness and an ignorance of the world rather surprising in one who had lived for four years on her own in London.

In the Spring she lost her job. As a typist she had saved a little, and having only herself to keep, did not worry unduly. She did, however, change her lodgings from a too-expensive bed-sitting room to Mrs. Immery's second-floor-back, with use of gas-ring, sink, and bathroom, near Euston.

Mrs. Immery, gaunt, dark-eyed, and deep of voice, was an unusual character. She didn't seem particularly keen on letting, and the details of Jennie's tenancy were settled in a dozen curt sentences.

Jennie was out a good deal. As she did her own catering, her acquaintance with her landlady was merely a nodding one, until the afternoon when Mrs. Immery, crossing the road in a hurry, was caught by the mudguard of a taxi.

Refusing all assistance, she limped into the house, bandaged a sprained ankle, but announced her intention of carrying on with the help of the elderly "help" who came each day.

"But you'll see a doctor?" said Jennie.

"Not me," said Mrs. Immery. "I'll have nothing to say to 'em. But there's several things I'd like to say to you, Miss, if you wasn't so hard-worked."

"I don't work hard, said Jennie, and added, with more honesty than grammar, "I don't work at all, because I haven't any, except to look for it."

"I forgot," said Mrs. Immery. "Factless of me! I suppose you wouldn't consider a temporary job?"

"Of course. What kind of a job is it?"

Mrs. Immery hesitated. "Well, it's confidential. That's the first thing to remember. Gimme that suit-case, under the table."

Jennie picked up the case. Mrs. Immery unfasted it, and from the interior produced a garment of shabby black silk, an aged, rakish-looking bonnet, a black shawl, and mittens to match, a grey wig, tinted glasses, a pair of elastic-sided boots, a small wooden tray, and seven or eight boxes of matches.

"Ever go to Charing Cross Station?" she inquired, meeting Jennie's astonished gaze.

"Sometimes."

"Then you'll have seen an old gal there selling matches. And this outfit is hers."

"You don't mean—" gasped Jennie.

"Yes, I do. Not that match-selling is my real business."

"But—I should have thought the police—"

Mrs. Immery shook her head. "The police, dearie, happens to be particular friends of mine. Why? Because it's at Charing Cross that some of the biggest scoundrels come to start their nefarious doings, and my job is to pass the word along when they come. One of the worst, a big sandy feller called Sam Brett, is expected, from information received, to turn up to-morrow or the day after. The Yard hasn't anything on Sam at present; they're anxious that he shouldn't guess they're interested in him."

Mrs. Immery paused. Jennie could only murmur a faint "Yes?"

"If it hadn't been for this ankle, I'd have been there to watch for him. But if you was anxious to earn five pounds easy—"

"In—those clothes?"

"Of course. Sam Brett's wider awake than a wasel, and any strange face that looked at him twice would start him suspicious. But the old woman who's sat there so long don't count."

"Won't be disguised?"

Mrs. Immery smiled her sour little smile. "There's some things as can't be disguised, like height, and freckles, and a scar on the chin."

She produced a portrait cut from some newspaper. Jennie gazed at it.

"Well?" snapped Mrs. Immery, at last.

"If you think there's no risk of my being recognized, or—"

"Risk! All you've got to do is to go first to the Adelphi Arches—you know them, I s'pose?"

"Yes, of course. But why do I go there?"

"Because there's a recess halfway down on the right-hand side, convenient for putting on these—she indicated the garments. "When you've done that, you go to the station and settle down on a camp stool that's in the corner there, and look out for Sam Brett. And when you've spotted him, change your clothes again, come straight back and let me know. You needn't wait for four in any case, but you'll only get ten bob for your trouble if Sam isn't there. What about it?"

Jennie thought of her dwindling savings.

"I suppose I can do it," she agreed.

## A Quality Which Is Incomparable

# "SALADA" GREEN TEA

"Fresh from the Gardens"

It was a sunny morning, and the deserted Arches, when she reached them, seemed chill and tomb-like. It took precisely three minutes for her to transform herself into a passable replica of Mrs. Immery. She went out into daylight again with a heart beating much too fast for comfort. One or two officials outside the station nodded friendly greetings as she opened her stool and sat down.

She sold a few boxes, but Sam Brett did not appear, nor anyone resembling him. At four o'clock, bored and stiff, Jennie thankfully packed up and retreated to her Adelphi dressing-room, slipped off Mrs. Immery's outfit, and took the bus back to Euston.

Mrs. Immery listened to her story impatiently.

"You'll have to try again to-morrow," she said.

Jennie, with a sinking heart, but with visions of what five pounds would mean, agreed.

The next day was dull and rainy. The adventure had lost its sole attraction—novelty—and she was on the verge of making an early lunch when, with an unlit cigarette between his fingers, appeared unmistakably Sam Brett.

There was something suggestive of a Naval man in his walk and in the curt "Thanks very much" with which he took a box of matches and dropped his penny in payment. As their eyes met she wondered why such a man didn't live honestly.

She waited until he was out of sight and then, gathering up camp-stool and suit-case, departed stealthily for the Arches.

Almost at once she realized that she was being followed, and that the follower was Sam. Jennie forgot her five pounds, forgot everything in a sudden blaze of rage and panic. There was a policeman standing outside the entrance to the Arches and she went up to him.

"That man," she began, breathlessly, "is—is following me."

The policeman glanced at Sam, who had stopped and was now loitering with elaborate carelessness on the further kerb.

"I'll have a word with him," said the policeman.

"Thanks," said Jennie, and plunged into the half-lit archway.

She had reached the recess, and was in the act of opening the suitcase, when footsteps echoed on the cobblestones. She recognized her enemy.

"So you dodged the policeman?" she challenged him, furious.

"I didn't try," Sam said, honestly. "He was too active. But we exchanged several sentences."

"The sentence you ought to get," said Jennie, "is penal servitude."

"Don't you believe it. Suppose I told you I saw through that silly rig-out of yours at once and knew you were a fraud? And that I was a detective?"

"I shouldn't believe you. I know better. Where's your licence, or whatever it's called?"

He slipped back into the light, such as it was. Jennie, momentarily released, dashed past him and ran. Considering her encumbrances, she ran amazingly fast. The suit-case flew open—she had forgotten to turn the safety catches—and her own hat and coat and what was left of her stock escaped. Her long skirt got horribly in the way; the bonnet bounced up and down and finally shot to the back of her head.

And even at the price of all these ignominies she didn't escape. Twenty seconds after she had leapt, panting, on the first accessible bus, and struggled into the only seat, her enemy leapt on it.

"No room inside," snapped the conductor.

Sam Brett, with a shrug of his broad shoulders, climbed on top. At the first stopping-place Jennie, still flushed, breathless, and dishevelled, slipped out: it was a futile manoeuvre; before the bus had moved on it decanted Sam, too.

"You didn't play fair," he reproved Jennie, overtaking her. "Incidentally, you're behaving like a little idiot. Here's what you call my licence."

Jennie glanced at it. The name on the card was not Brett, but John Yarrow. She clutched at a "Please Cross Here" sign for support.

"Not going to faint, are you?" asked Mr. Yarrow, anxiously.

"N-not if I can help it," said Jennie. "But I'd like to."

It was nearly three when, after many explanations, she got back to the house in Euston.

John Yarrow still accompanied her.

No one answered his knock, which did not seem to surprise him. Casually he took a bunch of skeleton keys from his pocket, selected one, and opened the door.

The kitchen and the front parlor were unoccupied. So was the first floor. But in Jennie's room, one storey higher, they were just in time to see a clean-shaven man limp desperately across the man, scramble over the window-sill, and make a frantic descent to the back garden.

"It doesn't matter, anyway," said Jennie's companion, grinning. "I've two of my men waiting at the bottom. I phoned them from Charing Cross."

Mrs. Immery (alias Mr. William Bronson, alias Slim Bill, alias various other names, both masculine and feminine) received, as an expert trainer and confidant of thieves, and as one of London's cleverest fences, a sentence of ten years' penal servitude.

The judge complimented Detective-Inspector John Yarrow, lately back from the Continent, and whose movements mattered more to Slim Bill's gang than all the rest of Scotland Yard put together, on his handling of the case. He also complimented Miss Barnard on the clearness of her evidence.

But neither judge nor counsel nor anyone else knew how many other matters had been discussed between Detective-Inspector Yarrow and Miss Barnard before that evidence was given. And if Jennie doesn't leave the church next autumn under an archway of police batons, she ought to.—London Tri-Bliss.

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