

HUNTED

By Leslie McFarlane

(Continued from Last Week)

WHAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED

Dick Daly, a likeable young reporter despite the fact that he's a scion of the idle rich, whose father has chucked him into newspaper work to make a man of him, is given a very unusual assignment by John K. Logan, editor and publisher of *The Courier*. The paper, in order to strengthen the position of its own candidate for mayor, and to show up the general inefficiency of the present mayor and the police department—who are in league with the underworld—challenges the officials to catch the reporter within five days, while he moves freely about the city, and thereby to demonstrate that their force is alert and capable.

Chief of Police Webb and Chief of Detectives Hollins accept the challenge under the direction of Dignan, one of the smartest and most crooked political bosses the city has ever seen. Dignan also enlists the aid of Racey, a gangster, and his pals in the chase.

Just after midnight Monday morning Daly leaves the basement of *The Courier*. Then starts a series of amusing adventures and narrow escapes, the accounts of which, given by Daly to Clergue, managing editor, are followed with glee by an eager public.

Peter Kirk, an ex-convict whom Daly meets in the park and who warns him to be on the lookout for gangsters, offers him refuge whenever he may need it. Kirk is in town for the purpose of ruining Hollins and another man, who have double-crossed him.

Daly is almost caught through the treachery of the telephone girl at the newspaper office. He escapes by jumping into a car driven by Dorothy Corless, a beautiful girl, who recognizes him from his picture in the paper and who offers to aid him should he need help. She drops him, at his request, at Kirk's apartment, giving him her card with her address on it.

Kirk tells Daly that Hollins' real name is Hulse, and that he's wanted up in Canada for embezzlement. Also that he has written proof that his other enemy is a murderer. The phone rings and a woman's voice asks Kirk if he's alone. Not wishing to implicate Daly he answers that he is.

GO ON WITH THE STORY

There was a sharp knock at the apartment door.

Alarmed, they glanced at each other. Kirk raised his finger to his lips in token of silence.

The knock was repeated.

Kirk gestured toward the bedroom. Swiftly and silently, Daly went over to it and closed the door quietly behind him.

He heard Kirk open the outer door. There was a low-voiced conversation, but Daly could not distinguish any of the words.

Kirk had stepped out into the hall, evidently desirous of keeping his caller out of the apartment. Daly sat down on the bed. He heard Kirk's voice raised sharply.

Three staccato explosions burst out in a hollow clamor, separate and distinct, yet combining in one reverberating crash. Abruptly the three shots roared in the echoing confines of the hallway, and then there followed a thudding of feet and a strangled cry.

Daly wrenched open the door, leaped across the living room, and rushed out into the hall. He almost collided with Kirk, who was standing there with the wavering uncertainty of a drunken man, and who suddenly stepped forward, tottered, and fell limply against him.

"Daly! Daly!" he groaned.

Upstairs a door banged. Footsteps thudded in the corridor overhead.

"Inside," gasped Kirk. He was trying vainly to drag himself to the door, but his muscles would not respond. He clung to Daly, inert and helpless.

A door opened across the hall. Daly had a glimpse of the astonished face of a man in a dressing gown, and then he dragged Kirk into the apartment.

The man stepped out into the hall.

"The door, Daly! The door!" Kirk was trying to draw something from his coat pocket. Daly swung him around, lost his hold, and Kirk staggered against the wall, then slumped to the floor in a crumpled heap.

"What's the matter?" shouted the man in the hall, his face frightened.

Daly kicked at the door. It slammed shut. The lock snapped.

He bent over Kirk. The man's face was gray. Sweat beaded on his forehead. He gestured limply.

"Beat it, kid," he whispered. "He got me. I'm—done—for— There was a ghastly crimson smear across the front of his shirt. "Don't let 'em find you—beat it!"

Frantically Daly knelt beside Kirk and tore open his shirt. The sight sickened him.

A rapid pounding sounded at the door.

"Hey! What's wrong in there? Open up!"

Daly could hear a gabble of voices in the hall. The pounding continued. Running feet on the stairs.

Kirk's mouth opened and closed convulsively.

"It was— His voice failed him. "It was—" he whispered again, and then his mouth moved soundlessly. He fell back with a sigh.

He was dead.

The door was trembling under repeated impacts. There was a rising tumult in the hall. Daly looked around uncertainly. Instinct told him to stay; reason told him to leave. Kirk was dead—beyond all human aid. The police would come. And his time was not yet out.

His duty was to *The Courier*. With a last glance at the still, stern face of Kirk, who had been overtaken by treachery before his vengeance had been completed, Daly sped across the room, flung open the window and stepped out onto the fire-escape.

Daly gained the courtyard in safety, crossed into the dark alley, and stumbled toward the lighted street beyond. This was to the rear of the apartment building, and he emerged cautiously onto the pavement, but the block was deserted. Pulling his hat low over his eyes, he walked hastily away. His thoughts were in a turmoil.

Anxious to get out of the neighborhood as quickly as possible, Daly hailed a cruising taxi at the next corner. He noticed that the driver looked at him seriously as he entered the cab, but the man said nothing, and Daly gave the address of his lodging house.

As the taxi sped through the city streets, a hundred confused thoughts fitted through Daly's mind. The events of the last few minutes had left him shaken. Kirk's mysterious and violent death seemed like a nightmare. He could scarcely realize that it had been an actual happening. The contrast between the pallid, thin-lipped man amiably chatting in an easy chair, and the ghastly, crumpled corpse on the floor, was too great.

The telephone call had been a trap. He saw that now. The woman who had asked if he were alone had known very well to whom she was talking. She had found out what she wanted to know, and the wrong-number explanation had been but a pretext. Daly was convinced that whoever had murdered Kirk had first tried to obtain assurance that he was alone, tried to obtain entry to the apartment, but had been forced to accomplish the object of his visit in the hall. Kirk, fearing that Daly would be discovered, had kept his caller outside the door. Then the treacherous shots.

A woman's voice! Could it have been the woman Kirk had mentioned—the woman who had been stolen from him?

When the taxi finally drew up before the door of the lodging house, Daly was no nearer a solution of the mystery than he had been at the beginning. At least, he had escaped from the scene. He could not quell a feeling of guilt over his flight. It had seemed like deserting Kirk in death. But what else could he have done? The dead man was beyond hope. Daly would simply have walked into the hands of the police, and *The Courier* would have had to admit defeat.

Under the arc-light, he reached into his pocket for money, and paid the driver. He noticed again that curious expression, but he turned away and went into the house. In his own room he turned on the light. He caught a glimpse of himself in the mirror, and then, with a distinct shock, he saw why the driver had scrutinized him so oddly.

His shirt front, where Kirk had pressed against him, was smeared with blood!

He remembered that moment when he had held the dying man in his arms, when Kirk had been urging him back into the apartment, summoning the last vestige of ebbing strength. Daly examined his coat and saw that it too was blood-stained.

This was bad.

The taxi driver would be sure to remember him. Conceivably, he might acquaint the police with what he knew, once he learned of the murder. The trail might lead directly to the boarding house. There was no time to be lost.

Daly had another suit and an extra shirt in his valise, and he quickly changed into the clean garments. Then he sat down on the bed.

It was dangerous to stay here; he was convinced of that. The taxi driver might say nothing, but then again he might. Daly could not afford to take the chance. He had been recognized by the man in the hallway. Kirk had called out his name. The police would know that he had

been in the apartment, and if the taxi driver were confronted with his photograph he would complete the identification.

But where could he go? He would find a place. The main thing was to get out of here at once.

He turned out the light and left the room. At the street door he looked out, but there was no one in sight, so he stepped out and walked quickly away into the darkness.

Five blocks away he found a cheap hotel, and there, under the dull eyes of a sleepy night clerk, he registered as "William Brown, —City," and was assigned to a dreary room, in which he spent the night. By morning he had arrived at a decision as to his next move.

He remembered what Dorothy Corless had told him about the chauffeur who had departed. She had promised refuge. He searched in his pockets for her card, but, to his dismay, he could not find it. Then he remembered that he had changed his clothes. It was doubtless in the pocket of the other suit. However, the telephone directory offered an easy solution to the difficulty, and although there were several Corless families listed, he recognized the address she had given him and called the number. A male voice answered.

"May I speak to Miss Corless, please?"

"Just a minute."

In a short time he heard her voice. "Yes?"

"This is Dick Daly speaking. Do you remember?"

A delighted giggle.

"Why, surely. Are you still at large?"

"I am, but they have been making it hot for me. I was wondering if you still need a chauffeur?"

"Why, certainly. Do you want the job?"

"I've had to leave the place where I've been staying."

"This is exciting. I'll be awfully glad to help. Daddy is in Pittsburg this week, and Mother hasn't been well, so I'll engage you myself. Where are you?"

He gave the name of the hotel. "I'll call for you," she offered. "You can start in on your duties by driving me back home."

He sat down to wait, and in about a quarter of an hour she entered the lobby. She was even prettier than he remembered her.

"The car is at the door, and I brought the chauffeur's cap and coat with me, so it will all look very correct and official," she told him. "Come on."

She had not driven the yellow roadster this time, but an imposing sedan stood by the curb. Taking the wheel, Daly substituted the uniform cap for his own battered hat, and slipped into the coat. The transformation was remarkable.

"Perfect!" she applauded, clapping her hands. "You'll get by any traffic cop in the city."

Before they drove away, Daly bought a paper from a newsboy, and put it on the seat beside him. He had risen late that morning and had almost forgotten newspapers in the perplexities of his dilemma.

With the correct rigidity of tradition, he guided the car through the city streets, gazing neither to right nor left, and Dorothy sat in the rear with all the easy nonchalance of a great lady out for her morning drive.

"I told Mother I had hired a new chauffeur," she told him. "Of course I didn't tell her who you were, but there'll be no trouble about it. You can quit the job when your time is up, and I'll see that you don't have too much driving to do. For the most part you can stay around the garage and pretend you're fixing the cars. A policeman would think twice before he would come nosing around our place to look for you."

When Daly drove up the driveway of the Corless home he agreed with her. The house, located on a fashionable residential street, was the acme of respectability and good taste. The Corlesses were evidently people of wealth and influence. He felt as though he were entering a safe and secluded bay after a perilous voyage in stormy waters.

(To be continued)

Canadian Pacific Railway

A General Change of Time will take effect in Canadian Pacific Railway passenger trains effective April 27th. For full particulars apply to Canadian Pacific Railway Agents or to C.H. White District Passenger Agent, North Bay.

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Advertised Goods Are Lower

ADVERTISING turns over stocks rapidly, and therefore multiplies profits. This means that prices in a shop which advertises can be short rather than long

Of this you may be sure: Prices in a shop which advertises are not MORE than in a shop which does not advertise. The chances are that they are oftentimes lower.

This, also, is generally true: You will find better goods, better values and better service in those shops which turn over their stocks rapidly. This means, as a general thing, shops which advertise.

A Note to Merchants

Advertising costs you nothing—it is paid for by the profits on increased sales

Advertising is easy—it is simply saying in writing what you say to the customers in your shop. Turn over stocks quickly, if you would make more money.

Read the Ads., Then Shop