



WHAT HAPPENED AT MONTALBAN

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

**WHAT HAPPENED AT MONTALBAN** Story  
**MOLLY BALSON:** A young London nurse, specializing in the care of children.  
**SIR JOHN MONTALBAN:** Head of the Montalban family nearly ninety years of age.  
**ROBERT MONTALBAN:** His son, who has been master of the family seat for twenty years. He has three sons: Robert, Junior, crippled in a road smash (unmarried); Ralph (married); Charles, 21 (unmarried).  
**BARBARA MONTALBAN:** Wife of Ralph.  
**MALLIA DAUNT:** Met her death at Montalban in mysterious circumstances.  
**LAWRENCE SEVERN:** Secretary-companion to the veteran Sir John.

**CHAPTER XII**  
**SIR JOHN PROTESTS**  
 In the train from Ashford to Ashurst Green Severn and Molly sat facing each other, the only remaining occupants of the carriage as the journey neared its end.

"Your position and mine," said Severn, smiling, "are rather delicately different. I am the person involved in this mystery. I have a right to be concerned for my safety. Where do you come in?"  
 Molly looked away from him, looked out of the window at the cool evening sky overcast with clouds, and the little plantation trees flanking the embankment. They were nearing the station of Ashurst Green, which was the nearest to Montalban.  
 "I don't know. Perhaps you don't choose to let me in at all."  
 She heard him laughing to himself, very softly.  
 "My dear girl! If you will court anxieties on behalf of other people, I don't know how I'm to keep you out."  
 "You're amusing yourself at my expense, I think," said Molly.  
 "No, I assure you. I'm curious about motives, that's all."  
 "And I about murders." The end of the platform slid into view, expanding rapidly alongside the train. "Here we are." And I rather think someone's come to meet us, too."  
 Severn leaned forward to look. There was one of the Montalban cars drawn up outside the painted railings, with a girl lounging at the wheel.  
 "Elise. I suppose she was at a loss for something to do."  
 They stepped out of the train, and she saw them, and made a small, fierce gesture of her hand. All her movements were sudden and most of them ungainly, but in repose her sullen face could be handsome.  
 "Your train's ages late," she said. "If I'd known I was going to have all this while to wait—"  
 "How's Barbara?" asked Molly, as the car slid slowly away from the railings. It was the pleasure of Mrs. Ralph that she should be known to her nurse by her christian name.  
 "Oh, Barbara's all right. As martyred as ever, but she seems able to enjoy it again these days. What will she do when she hasn't any reasonable excuse for keeping you any longer, Nurse? She depends on you for sympathy, you know."  
 Molly smiled, but said nothing. It was folly to argue with Elise in this mood; and impossible, of course, to agree with her.  
 Elise began to laugh suddenly and softly, catching her lower lip between her teeth. "It's all right. Not hysterical—I was just thinking how sweet Mallia was to her when she came here the first time. The poor simpleton thought

sure enough she'd found an ally at last against the heartless Montalbans. Think of it! That poor innocent pouring her injuries into Mallia's ear—and Mallia turning her head about to show Ralph how lovely her profile was. It's crazy, isn't it?"  
 Molly was glad that the journey to Montalban was a short one. Her mind was already full of Mallia, without this wanton recall of her name.  
 The car entered the drive, and threading the trees, came between the empty gate-posts where the inner garden gate had been. Elise swung it round into the approach to the bridge, and pulled up.

"You're both off duty for the rest of the evening, I know. But I think it would be advisable if you went up to the belvedere, for grandfather, Mr. Severn. He went up there alone after dinner."  
 Severn looked at Molly. "Tired? Or would care for the walk?"  
 "Thanks, yes, I'd love it."  
 "Then we'll both go and escort him home." He opened the door, and helped her out. "Thanks for fetching us. That's one walk I certainly wouldn't have relished at this hour."  
 Severn and Molly walked up to the belvedere through the lengthening, cool summit of the ascending path they blue shadows of the trees. Near the head the old man's voice raised in autocratic anger. They halted and looked at each other.

"Who on earth can be teasing Sir John?" wondered Molly.  
 "I can guess," said Severn. "Sergeant Walden!"  
 And Sergeant Walden it was, still solid and unruffled, backed sturdily against one of the stone urns with his hands in his pockets and his bowler hat over his eyes, trying to calm an exceedingly angry old man who leaned forward and thumped the flagstones with a walking-stick for emphasis.  
 "Don't stand there mooring at me like a cow," shouted Sir John. "I won't have it! I won't have you poking your nose into my finances. What I do with my confounded money is my own affair, and I don't allow anyone to dictate to me—no, nor to influence me, either. What do you think I'm in my second childhood yet? Influence me, indeed!"  
 He turned aside in an impatient jerk and saw Severn approaching at a good pace up the last curve of the path, with Molly at his heels.  
 "Ha, here's the man himself. This is lucky. Now, sir, if you've any more questions to ask me I'd be obliged if you'd put 'em in his presence."  
 Sergeant Walden, a shade pinker than usual, looked at Molly and Severn over the old man's shoulder, and the ghost of a smile visited his face.  
 Severn asked coolly: "Whatever have you been doing, sir? Resisting the police in the execution of their duty, at least?"  
 "This fellow," said Sir John, pointing a trembling hand, "this fellow has the effrontery to waylay me up here and start asking me questions about my money—my banking account—"  
 Walden looked at Severn and shook his head. "Only indirectly, Mr. Severn. More about you, really."  
 "Oh," said Severn, "I see. That's the way the wind blows, is it?" He slipped his hand under Sir John's arm, and turned him firmly towards the bower. "Let's be comfortable. Sit down here, sir, and we'll see what it's all about. I wouldn't worry about him. He has to ask questions. It's the reason for his existence."  
 "But, Lawrence, don't I tell you, my good fool, that this fellow—"  
 "He wants to know all about me," said Severn. "And if we don't tell him

what he wants to know, he'll only take steps to get it elsewhere. So, with your permission, sir, we'll let Sergeant Walden have his say."  
 Walden came a little nearer to the bower. Molly sat down on the other side of Sir John; she was silent, and no one heeded her.  
 "That's all right, Mr. Severn, sir. I think I've got just about all I can expect. I don't think it will be necessary to worry him again."  
 "I hope not—for your sake."  
 "I'm sorry, too, sir, to have had to go behind you, like this. But I think you understand that, too."  
 "Naturally, you had to be sure that I wasn't still—influencing him."  
 Sir John showed signs of returning to the conflict. He gave an impatient snort. "Influencing—what on earth is all this talk of influencing? Am I to be talked round, and talked over—?"  
 "The idea wasn't mine," said Severn drily. "No one who has lived in close contact with you for four years can possibly imagine you're at all susceptible to influence."  
 "Confound you, Lawrence! You're talking Greek yourself now. I don't understand what's going on. When a fellow comes badgering me about my personal staff—asking if they're perfectly trustworthy—Hang it, does the idiot imagine I'd keep you a day if you weren't?"  
 "I'm sure you wouldn't, Sir John," said Walden heartily. "But I'm a policeman. I don't have to take anything on trust. If it's any consolation to you, I don't mind telling you you've done Mr. Severn a good service."  
 "I'm extremely glad to hear it," said Severn, with a smile. "Well, do you want me? Or have you finished with us for to-night?"  
 "These things take time, sir. I'll say good-night." He raised his hat to Molly and set off down the hill away from them at his broad, rolling stride.  
 "I assure you, young woman, that fellow's mad. Bah! Raving mad! Does he think I pushed the girl out of the window?"  
 "As a matter of fact, sir," said Severn calmly, "until he talked to you I have a shrewd suspicion he thought I'd done that."  
 "You?" Sir John spluttered scorn. "Letting your imagination run away with you, Lawrence. Ridiculous notion. There's no sense in it!"  
 "There would have been, if it had happened as he fancied. I think the good man had an idea I was going fifty-fifty with Miss Daunt in whatever we could get from you—and that she tried to do me down. By the way, you don't mind Miss Balcon hearing all this? You mentioned it first, you know."  
 "Don't mind who hears it! I told that fellow—in plain terms, I flatter myself, that you did all you could to prevent me from trying to pay the creature off. Told him you were deuced insolent and offensive about it—and so you were, mark you."  
 "I haven't forgotten, sir. You were considerably annoyed about it at the time?" Severn's month twitched, but remained serious. "The reason Walden approached you when he knew I was away was that he wanted to find out if I'd encouraged you to shell out; and you seem to have convinced him pretty thoroughly that I didn't."  
 "A half-witted child could have seen it without asking such fool questions," said the old man testily.  
 "Walden's just a policeman. It isn't his job to believe a thing; he's got to prove it. I'm glad you remembered how peculiarly rude I was, sir."  
 He looked at Molly; his smile was reassuring. Her eyes questioned him half-hopefully, half-afraid to hope too much. Certainly the revelation, obtained in Severn's absence, that he had violently opposed his employer's intention to pay off Mallia seemed to wreck the case against him.  
 "It was true, though," said Sir John suddenly, in a subdued and thoughtful voice.  
 "What was true?"  
 "That I was an old fool. No one but a fool would have tried to make a bargain with that woman. It would have been better to let her stand for a while—give her rope enough—and she'd have handed herself with Charles sooner or later. Boy isn't blind, or soft, either. He'd have seen through her." He added rather sadly: "Robert thinks so, too."  
 "That Charles would have dropped her in time?"  
 "No. That I was a fool to give her money."  
 Severn and Molly looked at each other quickly, with eyes suddenly bright and eager.  
 "Does he know about it?" asked Severn. "How did he find out? Not from me!"  
 "Told him myself. He's a better head for business than I have, my son Robert. I told him after she came back again. Don't know why. There wasn't much point in letting him know then. It was too late to do anything about it. Except what they claim someone did do—that very night, too, by Jove." He thumped the flag again with his stick, and his eyes flashed. "It was a better idea—if it happened. It's still my belief the creature fell from the window. Best day's work she ever did, too."  
 "What did Robert say?" asked Severn, staring down into his cupped hands.  
 "Not a word! Annoyed, though, I could tell that by his face. Started, too! Stared at me, and opened and shut his mouth, and plunged off and left me. Of course, I suppose he was

angry because I hadn't consulted him. Robert wouldn't have approved of offering her money. He'd never have been so weak himself, I quite see that."  
 "No," said Severn, in the same flat tone, "I suppose not."  
 He looked up, slowly, and the flash of understanding passed between them. One more link in the chain. Robert had found out that his father, as well as he himself, had given her money.  
 "It's getting cool here," said Severn. "Shall we go back to the house?"  
 Sir John rose, obedient to the suggestion. He looked round the small, quiet, grey-flagged space of the belvedere, and his eyes were warlike. "But mind, if ever that person comes pestering me with silly questions again I'll—I'll turn him off my land. Policeman or no policeman!"  
 "I don't think he will," said Severn, patiently, as he gave the old man his arm.

CHAPTER XIII  
 HEAT WAVE

In the dusk by the lake, only last night, with their toes in the water and the arching willows covering them from sight, they had agreed, with so few words, to put all their hard-won knowledge aside, never to refer to it, never to use it, unless Severn was threatened with arrest.  
 It was he who had been so insistent upon forgetfulness. She remembered with a tremor the tightening of his arm about her as he looked through the swaying willow-wands at the face of Montalban fair and tranquil across which moved him so deeply. It was a strange sort of instinctive understanding, and much of it was pity.  
 "We're looking," he said, "at the ruin of a leviathan. All this—the house, the grounds, the people—is only half-alive. And the half's dying fast. I don't say it's wrong that it should die. It had beauty, it had much good, but it had more evil. It's a dark age of history, better wiped out and forgotten." She had known that when he meant it, every word. He was not in the habit of revealing his thoughts or his feelings, and the outburst—for Severn that sudden quiet, measured statement was an outburst—set this night apart for ever in her mind.

"In two generations more," said Severn deliberately, "this will be broken up. All this will go. The park will be cut up piecemeal, and the Keep will be just a Norman ruin for visitors to stare at—probably with notice-boards tacked up on the walls."  
 "And you'll be glad," said Molly.  
 "No, I shall be sorry, because I've known it; but the world won't have lost anything."  
 Blue and green shadows coloured the near waters of the lake. Where they stood there was no light that was not green with leaves.  
 "And that's why we can't do anything to hasten the end, said Severn. "Everything we know, or believe we know, about the murder of Mallia has got to be shelved until I'm forced to use it in self-defence. And I hope that means shelved for good. I think it will be for good. Until then, let's forget it. Put it out of our minds."  
 To this she had agreed. The danger, after all, was his, and he had made it plain that he would use all his defences if the need should arrive. They had solemnly put the results of their investigations behind them, away out of sight, and avowedly out of mind, though that was not so easy.  
 Yet here, on the very morning after that grave agreement had been made, Molly was awaking to a glorious morning, and to a letter from Nurse Hartley. (To be Continued)

Funeral Saturday of Late T. Rimmi

Funeral services were held on Saturday afternoon for the late Toivo Rimmi, who was killed accidentally at the McIntyre Mine on Thursday morning, March 5th. The Rev. L. Pikkusaari, of the Finnish Lutheran Church conducted the service at Walker's Funeral Home, and friends and co-workers acted as pallbearers. Interment was made in the Timmins Cemetery.  
 The late Mr. Rimmi, who had been an employee of the McIntyre Mine for several years past, had been a popular resident of Timmins for seven years. Quiet and unassuming, he was popular with all who knew him, and the sad news of his accidental death was a great shock to his friends.  
 As far as has been discovered, it seems that Mr. Rimmi and his partner, severe scald his balance and fell about four feet, headfirst. It is thought that a piece of scale must have dislodged from the roof and then dropped upon him, as he suffered severe injuries and died immediately. His partner, who was scaling on the opposite side, did not see the accident happen.  
 A native of Finland, the deceased had been in Canada for the past twelve years, and in Timmins made his home at 210 Balsam street north. He leaves to mourn his loss his wife, and two daughters, one two years old, and the other aged three months. A sad coincidence was the fact that the accident occurred on the second birthday of his elder daughter, and that the father had her birthday gift money in his pocket. The late Mr. Rimmi was thirty-nine years old.

Nearly 200,000 Messages Sent by Airgraph Service

Almost 200,000 Airgraph messages from all parts of Canada have been flown across the Atlantic to our Armed Forces in the United Kingdom since the inauguration of the Airgraph System a few months ago—according to information released by the Hon. William P. Mulock, K.C., M.P., Postmaster General.  
 Airgraph messages come from all parts of the country indicating that the service is being widely used. Every effort is being made to improve the service, and according to reports it is operating smoothly at the present time, but will continue to improve as more favourable Atlantic weather conditions prevail during coming months. With the increased number of troops overseas, and better weather conditions, this modern facility will be taken advantage of by friends and relatives in Canada to send fast messages to the boys overseas.  
 Delivery of an Airgraph message to the addressee in the United Kingdom is now made on an average from 8 to 10 days from the date of mailing. Unfortunately, due to unfavourable weather conditions and an accident to a plane, the Airgraph Service did not get off to a favourable start—delays were experienced in the delivery of many messages posted at that time. Notwithstanding the delays, it should be recalled, duplicates of the messages were printed and delivered overseas.  
 Every possible precaution is taken to ensure delivery of an Airgraph message to its proper destination—this is being evidenced by the fact that duplicate copies of each message are flown across the Atlantic by alternate routes.  
 Canada has now been linked by Airgraph Service with our forces in the Middle East, and it is now possible to send Airgraph messages from this country to Canadian, British or Allied go troops in that theatre of war. Such messages are sent in original form to London, England, whence they are transferred by British Airgraph to their destination.

Lignite Satisfactory in Tests Made at Cochrane

The following from last week's issue of The Cochrane Northland Post should be of general interest throughout the North:  
 "The test shipment of processed lignite brought here by Mr. G. M. Robson last week was sufficiently large to permit burning tests to be made in quite a number of buildings and houses in town. As in other communities along the T. & N. O. in which tests have been made, the results are reported to have been quite satisfactory.  
 "Among the buildings in which tests were made were the station, the T. & N. O. bunkhouse, Albert Hotel, Northland Hotel, Three Gables and Empire Theatre.  
 "In the theatre the test was made in the new furnace just installed. Manager J. Palangio reports that it gave a good fire, and a ton of the fuel (processed at only 200 lb. pressure instead of the recommended 400 lbs.) gave heating value approximately equivalent to that of \$10 worth of wood at this year's prices.  
 "The fuel was also used in a number of cook stoves and small heating stoves, with excellent results."

TIME-SAVER  
 "And what would you like for your birthday present, Tommy?" asked the fond mother.  
 "Oh, a telephone!" replied the youngster promptly.  
 "Then I can ring up and answer teacher's questions without having to go to school."—Sudbury Star.

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 green with leaves.  
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<p><b>BAKERIES</b>  <b>SAVE MONEY</b>                  Ask for coupons redeemable on Bread and Pastry.                  Try our Famous Do-Nuts and French Pastry                  Bread 8c Loaf  <b>National Bakery</b>                  10 Pine St. S. Phone 1445</p>	<p><b>DAIRY</b>  <b>Northland Producers Dairy</b>                  Pasteurized Milk Cream Buttermilk                  The Farmer Owned Dairy                  14 Birch St. N. Phone 3200</p>	<p><b>HOTELS</b>  <b>Pearl Lake Hotel</b>                  FRANK KLISANICH (prop.)                  Where Good Friends Meet                  PHONE 788                  First Avenue, Schumacher</p>	<p><b>STORAGE</b>  <b>United Movers</b>                  New Heated Warehouse SEPARATE ROOM SYSTEM                  Phones 510 &amp; 1733                  270 Spruce St. S. Timmins</p>
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