

Exposing "Model Mamma" as Queen of the Underworld

Weird Dual Personality of London's New "Mrs. Warren," as Revealed in Scotland Yard's Recent Expose

Miss Vashli Roop, the Young Habitué of the De Luxe Merrick "Dug-Out," Whose Admirer, Gregory Dean, Exposed the "Model Mamma" Theory.



"The clock strikes ten. 'Bed, children!' orders Mrs. Merrick in her quiet, but commanding, voice. Instant obedience is her reward."



Gregory Dean, Who Tipped Off Scotland Yard To "Mother Merrick."

NO more breath-taking mystery of dual personality has ever been solved than that of Mrs. Kate Merrick, which has finally ceased to baffle London and, by its solution, has set the entire city gasping.

By day, "Mother Merrick," the devoted conventional parent of eight children; by night, "The Jungle Girl of the Tenderloin."

By day, a woman who wouldn't let her sons have latchkeys; who kissed them and put them to bed, and who frowned censoriously upon anything approaching hilarity; by night, the originator of the subterranean "halls of revelry," where gilded debauches held sway.

By day, Mrs. Grundy; by night, something closely approaching Bernard Shaw's wicked-nice heroine of "Mrs. Warren's Profession."

Such is the tragic and almost incredible tale of Kate Merrick, who now, stripped of her jewels and reputation, is both a subject for the police and the psychoanalysts. And the latter are persistently raising the cry:

"Has 'Kate the Cursed' a third and even more dangerous personality?"

As for the last question, no definite reply is forthcoming—yet. But science hopes that, with the aid of its latest methods, it will be able to fathom even that deep and dark secret.

The "running continuity" of Mrs. Merrick's life is rich in racy and readable episodes, which far surpass the most bizarre dreams of motion picture scenarioists. Yet, outside her night-club environment, Mrs. Merrick was a gentle, retiring woman, whom one would never pick for a connoisseur in wild revelries and crimson sins.

A certain London suburb noted for its middle-class respectability knew Mrs. Kate Evelyn Merrick only as Mrs. K. Merrick, occupant of a cozy little cottage of the bungalow type, which has recently become popular in England, along with other American innovations.

Mrs. K. Merrick and her family were model neighbors. She always said the local tradesmen promptly. She attended the local church. The curate called upon her. He frequently declared to his parishioners that he enjoyed nothing as much as tea in Mrs. Merrick's serene, sunshiny sitting-room. Her children were so sweet, too!

The girls—the eldest in the first bud of womanhood—were lovely to look upon, always neat, always courteous to older people, popular with their schoolmates. The Misses Merrick attended Girton. This is one of the most exclusive "finishing schools" for young women in England. When they reached the age for beaux, the Merrick home attracted the most eligible young men of the community.

Mrs. Merrick's sons likewise were Grade-A youths. Slicked hair, scrubbed faces and a general air of Anglo-Saxon respectability marked their suburban appearances. Constantly an almost fool, shyly shepherded about by their mother, they never displayed a single flaw to neighbors, who watched their conduct open-mouthed and aghast at their own kiddies' comparative wildness.

There was nothing spurious about the Merrick children's gentility. They were, and are, excellent examples of maternal care, devotion and intelligence. But that they never suspected that the affectionate woman who put them to bed with a pat and waked them with a hug was emotionally fraudulent seems amazing.

Do not doubt it, however. They accepted her on the terms which she imposed simply and solely because she was a great actress. It would take more than kiddies to fathom the dark and shuddering secrets of her heart.

Even to-day, not all of those secrets have been divulged, and it is a moot point whether they ever will be. For "Mother Merrick," one of the most cryptic characters in history, merely smiles when questioned, and returns to the Bible which she is reading.

Here is a typical scene in the household of Mrs. K. Merrick, as described by a servant in the establishment. The clock strikes ten. "Bed, children!" orders Mrs. Merrick in her quiet, but commanding, voice. Instant obedience is her reward.

The boys and girls troop forward, kiss her on the brow and march off to their rooms. "Mother Merrick," wearing a plain dressing-gown and boudoir cap, goes

the rounds, locking windows and adjusting covers over the sleepy little forms. The cap is an essential part of her unassuming costume, for is it not necessary "to keep off the draughts?"

In reality, it conceals an elaborate coiffure, marceled to the last degree and costing a pretty penny in a West End hair-dressing establishment. The gown, also, has its uses. Beneath its dull folds, satin and silk could be uncovered with a twitch of the fingers, while it likewise shrouds rubies and pearls which scarcely suggest the housewife.

The clock strikes eleven. All the children are wrapped in deep slumber—literally "dead to the world." But not so their devoted parent. Slipping into an anteroom, she doffs her simple raiment with a lightning-like gesture, and with the

stealthy tread of a panther glides down the stairs and into the garden, a changed and even transfigured woman.

The night-club, ever which "Mother Merrick" queened it ascended to astounding heights of popularity. So much money came pouring in that it overflowed her coffers, and subsequently set her active brain into accelerated motion. Why, she pondered, would it not be possible—and lucrative—to establish an underground de luxe dugout, immune from police orders to close early and where "anything went?"

She decided that the scheme would work if run by a woman so brilliant as herself—and it did. Therein lay her undoing, for if "Mother Merrick" had been content with her first coin-grabbing device she might never have fallen into the toils of the law.

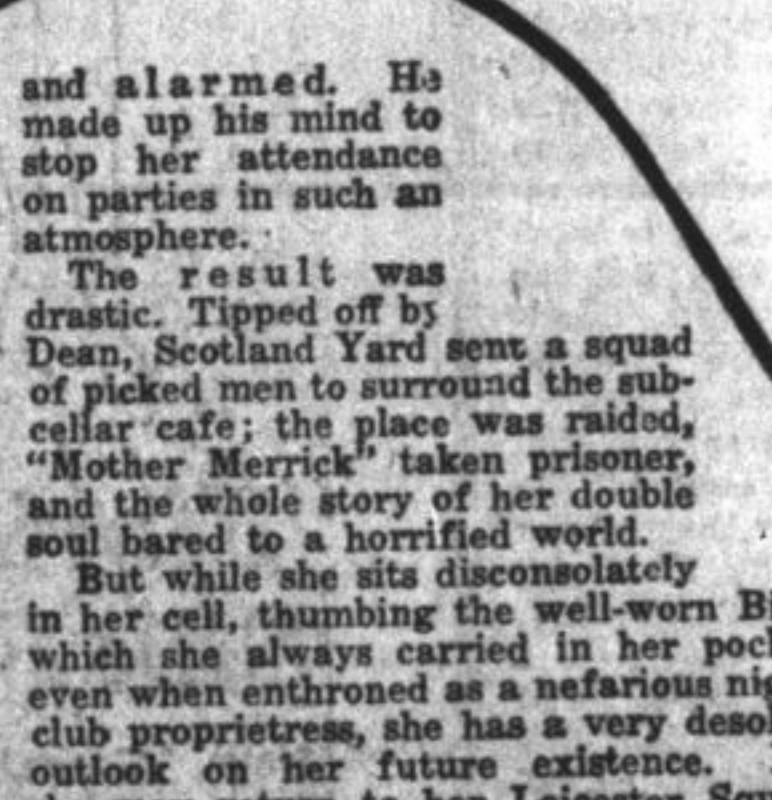
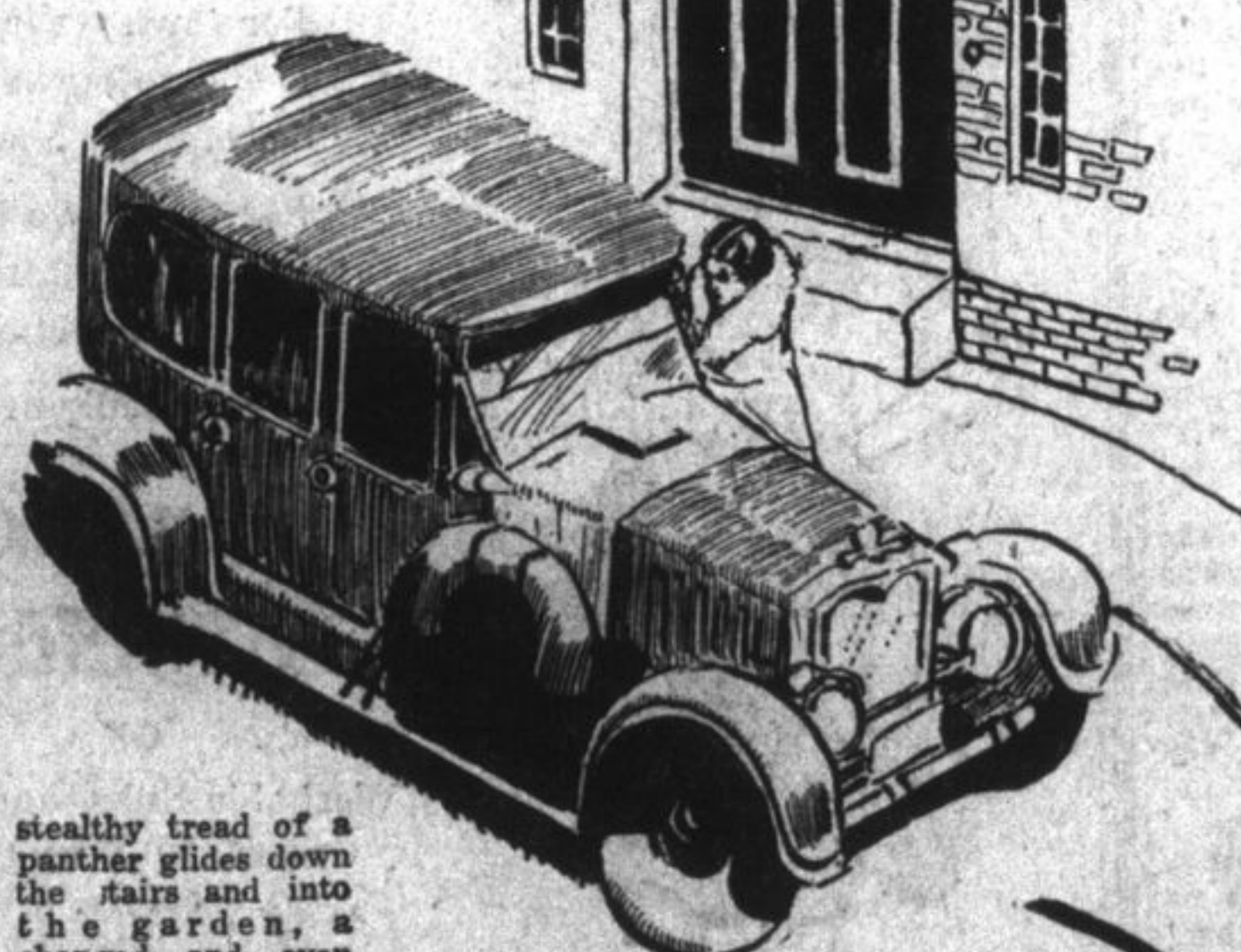
The chain of subterranean roistering places which she founded leaped into enormous vogue with the base, the vicious and the dissipated. To one, in especial, of these haunts a peculiarly sinister reputation became attached, since it made a practice of indulging the wine-soaked pranks of young girls—girls as juvenile as one of "Mother Merrick's" own daughters.

One of the habitués of the "dive" was a bohemian youngster named Vashli Roop. Of good family, pretty and magnetic, she had a streak of the perverse in her nature which made the "hole in the wall" seem just the spot for after-hours' jollity.

Miss Roop had a persistent admirer, Gregory Dean, a man of somewhat unsavory reputation, but with one outstanding virtue—loyalty.

Learning that Vashli was frequenting "Mother Merrick's wine-emporium," he was enraged

Mrs. Kate Evelyn Merrick, Whose Strange Dual Individuality Is Being Studied by Alienists—Taken at the Time of Her Arrest.



Interior of a Typical London Night-Club, Such as Led to the Double-Souled Mrs. Merrick's Undoing.



"By night, 'The Jungle Girl of the Tenderloin.'"

