

'Murder at Eagle's Nest'

By WINIFRED VAN DUZER

CHAPTER XLVII.

"How would I know?" Bob replied irritably. "A woman. In a white dress. That's how I saw her—the white dress—for she was half way across the grounds and it was dark. Seemed to be sneaking along. I stood there and I saw her sneak up to the back of the summer house as if she was watching someone. There's vines or something, and they almost hid her. But she came out and went around to the other side; I saw her white dress on the other side of the house. Then she yelled something. It sounded like, 'That's enough, and I heard a shot.'"

"Sure it was a shot?"

"Ought to be; I've heard plenty of shooting."

"What did she do then?"

"I don't know. I didn't see her again. I ran across the lawn and she was gone. I looked inside and saw the woman on the floor."

"There was a long pause broken only by Millicent's sobbing, while the sick eyes stared at them all."

"I was going to call someone."

Bob Trent went on at length. "Don't know why I didn't. Guess I must have been out of my head. What I did was come up here and grab a sheet out of the bundle of laundry on the porch. I took it back and covered her up. Then I got the car turned around and came home. That's all."

The too bright eyes closed; he seemed to lapse into stupor.

After a time the others went to the little room and Millicent went out an apology for purloining the cigarette lighter.

"You see, I was afraid to have Bob tell. I didn't mean to harm Ted Trent—I truly didn't! Only I thought it would give them something to think about till they'd found the right one. Oh, what will become of us?"

Walter tried to reassure her but his voice sounded flat. And all at once Bob knew that Walter did not quite believe Bob Trent's story and that Reynolds did not believe it at all. She knew it was this— an underlying suspicion of Bob Trent in Walter's mind—which accounted for his lack of definite action, his following false clues. He had been trying to shield the sick man, this broken hero they all loved, hoping something would turn up to substantiate his faith, wavered always between that faith and duty.

She loved Walter for it. It came to her that this moment of sudden knowledge had brought her a first realization of what love actually was.

In the shadows of the porch she saw Fred Burke, and knew all too well what his presence meant.

Imogene was waiting at the station house. A white and shaking Imogene, though her lips were pulled into a faint, malicious smile.

Bob did not know why she had followed the officers back since it was plain Walter did not wish her to, but now she was glad she had come. She was hoping against hope that something would happen before tomorrow morning; something which would save Bob from the arrest that Walter would be able no longer to delay.

She saw Walter give the girl a nod and watched Imogene attempt one of her flirtatious glances at him and Reynolds.

"I suppose you've remembered something else?" Walter asked dryly.

"Anybody can forget things."

"If they try hard enough, but memory gets people into trouble young lady?"

"But you wouldn't let me get into trouble, would you, Mr. Vance? Not when you hear what

said, stepping out of his butler character. "That's all, though—just a fool, not a murderer. When I think of her lying out there—dead—God."

"The story goes back a long time—ten years. She wasn't a Baroness then; she was a dancer, like myself. We danced together in 'Hells of Broadway' and I fell for her as everybody else was doing, only harder. Something about her to drive one mad. We went to Paris. We danced there and in London—all around. She ditched me when she began to get famous. I—well, you couldn't blame her. I wasn't anybody much and there was no limit to where she could go. Ambitious she was. You see?"

"I didn't fall out of love with her, though. I came back here and did a little something on my own. But I kept remembering. Wanting to see her again. That's hard to understand, I guess."

Walter said, harshly, "Go on."

"I read in the paper she was coming to America—coming to visit Mrs. Hardy. So I got a job as butler since I figured I couldn't get in any other way. Didn't expect to see her, you know. I just thought . . . Say, it's funny

how things work out; the illusions you carry around."

"Illusions?"

"The man looked up in surprise and shook his head. "Why, yes. When I did see her I knew I'd been kidding myself all these years. I wasn't in love with her at all and hadn't been for a long while. Don't understand that even yet. When I saw her that night she looked like just another woman to me."

"You told her this?"

"Well, she wanted to stir up the old thing, I suppose. Asked me to meet her in the garden. That—was what the note was about. I didn't want to go, but I did. We walked down to the summer house and sat there a few minutes. She was angry and disappointed. I left her out there. He shook himself as one might upon awakening from a bad dream. "I said I'd been a fool."

"You understand?" Walter asked him, "where you're standing now?"

"Oh, I'll get try to get away, if that's what you mean. I'm willing to take whatever's coming to me, I suppose. The price of folly."

Bob felt sorry for him as he went away slowly, his head down. Had he told the truth? She would

have said yes. And yet . . . It was then that Chief Fury paid an unheard of midnight visit to the station house.

(To Be Concluded)

LUCAS RITES HELD

Funeral services were held today at the Roseburg Undertaking company chapel for the late Oliver C. Lucas. They were conducted at 10 a. m. by Rev. J. Frank Cunningham. Interment took place in the Willis cemetery at Brockway.

NOTICE

Soldiers and sailors of the Mexican war, the War of the Rebellion, the Indian wars, the widow remaining unmarried of such soldier or sailor, or the widow remaining unmarried of any Spanish-American war soldier, now is the time for you to claim your exemption on the assessment of your property. The claim must be in on or before April 1st.

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SPECIAL SCHOOL MEETING

Notice is hereby given to the legal voters of Union High School District No. 9, of Douglas County, State of Oregon, that a special school meeting of said district will be held at Yoncalla on the third day of April, 1931, at 2:30 in the afternoon, for the following object: To vote on the subject of providing transportation for high school students in High School District No. 9.

This meeting to be held in the assembly hall of the school building.

H. KINMAN, Clerk.

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