

# Death's BRIGHT DIAMONDS

MR. P. A. X. SHIFTS HIS WEIGHT

AT that moment Cass Hapes appeared, looking very blood-thirsty. He had a little package in his hand which he laid on the desk. He took the paper off the package and revealed the gun that I had taken away from the intruder in my room at The Ledges two nights ago.

"Ever seen that, Trent?" he asked. "Yes," I said, "and so have you." "You admit ownership?" "No."

Hapes paused for a moment, then went on, deliberately squeezing the last drop of Hapes' satisfaction out of the situation. "You don't deny that you were an illegal possessor of this gun?" "I don't know what you're trying to establish by these questions," I said. "I told you the story about the gun yesterday. What about it?"

"This," said Hapes bluntly, "is the gun that killed Phineas Hudson." I looked at him. Before I got through with this business I was not going to trust anyone. And it was beginning to look as if no one would trust me.

"Where did you find it?" I asked. "On the seat beside the body."

"How convenient. My first impulse, of course, would be to plant the gun where it could easily be found," I said. "Not your first impulse," corrected Marks, "but it might be a carefully considered act to bolster up that thin story of an attack on you at The Ledges. You see, there were no fingerprints."

"There never are," I said, giving Hapes the full benefit of my derisive tone. "What's the motive?" "Five million dollars," said Marks equably.

"You mean—" I stopped. Marks nodded. "Phineas Hudson had the Ostermann diamonds."

"The picture was far from pretty." "Where did you find them?" I asked.

Marks looked at me quizzically. "We rather hoped you had them." He gave me that death's-head smile.

My patience snapped. "What are you?" I snapped, "policemen or sadists? Do you want the truth or just a victim?"

"As a matter of fact," said Marks, "it might be very simple for you to furnish an alibi. Phineas Hudson was killed around 4:30 this morning. Where were you then?"

"I was in bed, asleep," I said. "Anybody see you?" asked Cass. "No, Cass," I said wearily. "Watchers-over-my sleep have recently become very rare."

The inspector looked quizzically from me to Hapes. "I think, Mr. Hapes, that Mr. Trent and I might accomplish something together. Will you leave us alone for awhile?"

Reluctantly Cass left. Marks leaned back in his chair and locked his hands behind his head. "Trent," he said, "you're holding on to me."

So I told him about the message in my mirror frame, the attacks in my room and in the cellar. I dug up every last shred of information that could possibly hook up with Phineas Hudson's murder, and laid it all before the inspector. It wasn't until I had finished that I thought of the little round man in the Boston cab.

"AND another thing," I said. "A Peter A. Xavier registered here last night." Marks nodded. "I know. I saw his name in the register. Mr. Xavier, unfortunately, is not available. He checked out early this morning and left no forwarding address."

The inspector examined his nails reflectively. "He's your P. A. X. on the amulet," he resumed. "A very shrewd and unscrupulous individual. And he has sources of information, too. He appeared at headquarters yesterday, put in a claim for the amulet Calavestri gave you, and demanded that the American gendarmerie recover the remainder of the collection pronto or they would feel the weight of Pietro A. Xavier's influence."

"He produced affidavits from a Carol Brescia, a sort of keeper of the King's seal for the Ostermann's, authenticating Xavier's claim to the stones. The stone you got was earmarked P. A. X. and would be recognized as the key to the collection if presented to the proper person, Xavier said. But he refused to reveal who that person was."

"Did you give him the amulet?" I asked. "The inspector shook his head. "We decided to risk the force of Mr. Xavier's influence. We put a tail on him, but lost him in traffic when he took the cab and headed for here."

"To contact the person who was to have received the gems," I said. Marks looked at me keenly. "Unhappily," he said, "that tells us little because anyone of the seven at The Ledges could be that person."

"Anyone," I agreed lugubriously. "And now the fire," suggested Marks persuasively. "You know as much about that as I."

The inspector looked dubious. "It was set."

"It was a lovely place, but I shall always dislike it," I said. Marks didn't hold me after that—not even for further questioning.

"Maybe I've got enough to hold you on. Maybe I haven't," he said. "I can offer you protective custody."

"What makes you think I'll need it?" I asked. "What makes you think you won't?" he answered.

(To Be Continued)

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(To Be Continued)

## Our Boarding House

## With Major Hoops

## Out Our Way

J. R. Williams



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By MRS. ANNE CABOT  
Done in soft white or pastel wool, it makes one of the prettiest lightweight jackets to wear over dark linen or cotton frocks and is a honey when worn over an evening "date" dress!

## Hospital Note

St. Joseph's hospital: Admitted—Judd Nash, Mrs. Chauncey Walker, Edith Pratt, Barry Anderson, La Grande, medical; John Berry, La Grande, medical; Carl Cook, La Grande, laboratory.

Discharged—Michael Ragsdale, Alonzo Giddings, John Hoehne, Nettie Street, Mrs. Lee Moser and son, La Grande, Mrs. Fred Spence, North Powder.

Grande Roche hospital: Admitted—Charles Dalton, North Powder, Ronald Riggs, Duncan, Emma Robinson and Kathryn Craver, Union, Sherril Sue Ensign, La Grande, medical; Laura Strickland, Halfway, surgery; Aloha Davis, La Grande, accident.

Discharged—Robert Hall, Elgin, Jeanette Hawkes, Imbler, Robert Paynter, Summerville.

## Gown and Jacket



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Here is as charming a set as you'll see for bedtime charm. Lovely in soft pastels or all-over flowered fabrics.

Pattern No. 8791 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 40 and 42. Size 14, gown, 3 3/4 yards of 35 or 39-inch material; jacket, 1 1/2 yards of 39-inch material.

For this pattern, send 20 cents in coins, your name, address, size desired, and the pattern number to Sue Burnett, La Grande Evening Observer, 709 Mission St., San Francisco, Calif.

Ready now—the spring issue of Fashion. Just 15 cents. A complete guide in planning wardrobe needs for all the family.

## Official Records

Water turned on, April 14: Fred Butterfield, 2812 Second street; A. S. Fowler, 2707 Birch street.

Water turned off: Iola Cantrol, 1216 Y avenue.

## Hold Everything



## Freckles and His Friends



## Red Ryder

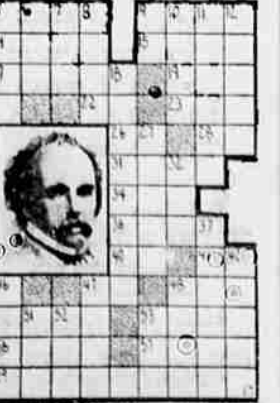
Merrill Blosser



## Man of Letters

HORIZONTAL 54 Line of 1 Pictured early junction man of letters, 56 Wicked Nathaniel, 57 Small depression, 58 Gaelic, 59 Parts, 60 Curl, 61 Ireland, 62 Precipitation, 63 Fork prong, 64 Arabian gulf, 65 Capri, 66 Sante (ab.), 67 Writing tool, 68 Place (ab.), 69 Accomplish, 70 Ever (contr.), 71 Senior (ab.), 72 Father, 73 Of the thing, 74 Nova Scotia (ab.), 75 Bridge, 76 Pause, 77 Ontario (ab.), 78 Silkworm, 79 Desire, 80 Quote, 81 Symbol for radium, 82 Biblical pronoun, 83 Symbol for tellurium, 84 Beam (ab.), 85 Emmet, 86 International language, 87 Bone, 88 Friend (Fr.), 89 Fish, 90 Dilate, 91 Kimono, 92 Sarcophagus.

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



## Wash Tubbs



## Alley Oop

