

OUR WEEKLY SERIAL STORY INSTALLMENT

CRUCIBLE

By
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CHAPTER VIII—Continued

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The questioning of Sentry on the witness stand by Mr. Falkran continued:

Q. Under what circumstances? A. Miss Randall came in to say that Miss Wines had asked to see Mr. Loran. Mr. Loran was not in. Miss Randall suggested that I see her.

Q. Never mind what Miss Randall said. The District Attorney might object to your telling us that. But as a result of something Miss Randall said to you, and of your reply, what happened? A. Miss Wines came into my office.

Q. She talked with you? A. Yes.

Q. Did she ask for something? A. She wanted money.

Q. How much? A. A hundred dollars.

Q. Why that exact amount? A. She said—

Q. No, you had better not tell what she said. Do you know of your own knowledge, and not because of anything she said, why Miss Wines wanted the money? A. No.

Q. Was it in consequence of anything you had done? A. No.

Q. Where was Mr. Loran that afternoon? A. He was out of town.

Refused Dead Girl Help.

Q. As a result of what Miss Wines told you, Mr. Sentry, did you give her any money? A. No.

Q. Or advice? A. I went into the reception room to speak to Miss Randall.

Q. Immediately? A. Miss Wines had been with me perhaps five minutes.

Q. She came to you for money and you sent her away? A. Yes.

Q. Why? A. I was afraid of being involved.

Q. Afraid? A. Yes.

Q. You sent her away? A. She was crying. I went into the reception room and spoke to Miss Randall, leaving Miss Wines alone in my office.

Q. Did you ever after she left your employ give her any money? A. No.

Q. Did she offer that day any reason why you personally should give her money? A. Only that she needed it.

Q. No attempt to blackmail you then or later? A. No. She asked, but she did not demand.

Q. By the way, you had a duplicate key to the back door? A. Yes.

Q. Where was it that day? A. In the side drawer of my desk.

Q. When you went into the reception room that day, what did you discuss with Miss Randall? A. I asked her to get rid of Miss Wines.

Q. Did she? A. She went into my office. I went downstairs.

Q. Down the main stairs? A. Down the back stairs.

Q. And on that occasion you did not see Miss Wines again? A. No.

Q. When you came back to your office—if you did? A. I did, half an hour later.

Q. Did you notice anything unusual? A. The side drawer of my desk was open.

Q. The one in which you kept the duplicate key? A. Yes.

Tells of Bridge Game

Q. Had you left it open? A. Perhaps. I do not know.

Q. Did you notice whether or not the key was gone? A. No.

Q. And was this before or after you began to carry a revolver in the car? A. Before.

Q. How long before? A. A week or more.

Q. How long before Miss Wines was killed? A. About three weeks.

Q. Was Mr. Loran in town after that day and before Miss Wines was killed? A. Yes.

Q. Do you know whether Miss Wines saw him? A. I do not.

Q. Now, on a certain Thursday evening, Mr. Sentry, did you play bridge after dinner at your club? A. Yes, every Thursday evening.

Q. I am referring to the evening Miss Wines was killed. A. Yes.

Q. Till what time did you play, on that occasion? A. Till about ten thirty.

Q. You left the club when? A. Eleven o'clock or a little after.

Q. In your car? A. Yes.

Q. With the revolver in the dash locker? A. Yes.

Q. You went where? A. I started home, got almost there, then went back to my office.

Q. Why? A. Mrs. Sentry had arranged that day to have a package delivered at the office from Butler's.

Q. Dealers in kitchenware? A. Yes.

Q. What was in it? A. A drip coffee-pot.

Q. What was to be done with it? A. Mrs. Sentry had asked me to bring it home.

Q. Was it in the car? I forgot it on my desk when I left the office.

Q. And you went back to your office? A. To get it, yes.

Q. You got there—when? A. Some time between eleven thirty and twelve.

Q. Stopped where? A. At the curb by the back door.

Q. Did you lock the car? A. I left the key in the lock.

Q. And went immediately upstairs? A. No. I unlocked the door, and started up, and I thought I heard voices.

Q. Voices? A. A voice.

Q. A woman's or a man's? A. A man's.

Q. And what? A. I listened, but the sound was not repeated. I was nervous, came out and looked for a policeman, saw none, decided it was my imagination.

Admits Killing.

Q. So you did what? A. I took the revolver out of the car and went quietly upstairs.

Q. Suddenly braver, Mr. Sentry? A. Playing a game, like a fool kid. I didn't really think there was anyone there.

Q. Took the revolver and went upstairs? A. Yes.

Q. How far upstairs? A. To the third floor.

Q. Was anyone there? A. Yes.

Q. You saw some person or persons? A. It was dark.

Q. You had no light? A. There is no light on the back stairs.

Q. So you came up in the dark? A. The stairs are familiar. I've been using them for thirty years.

Q. Is there a door at the head of the stairs? A. Yes.

Q. And what did you do? A. Opened the door, stepped through it.

Q. Still in the dark? A. Yes.

Q. And did anything happen? A. Someone jumped against me.

Q. Man or woman? A. A man.

Q. What then? A. The impact knocked me against the wall. It jarred me so that the gun went off.

Q. Had you cocked it? A. Yes.

Q. And it went off. Then what? A. The man who had bumped me ran down the back stairs.

Q. You saw him? A. I heard him.

Q. What did you do? A. I turned on the light.

Q. Where? A. In my office.

Q. You went into the office? A. I stood in the doorway and reached the switch.

Q. Did that light the hall? A. Yes, enough.

Q. Did you see anything? A. I saw a woman lying on the hall floor.

Q. And you did what? A. Turned on the hall light to look at her.

Q. To see who she was? A. To see how badly she was hurt.

Q. Did you see who it was? A. It was Miss Wines.

Tells of Robbery Plan.

Q. And what did you do? A. I started to telephone the police.

Q. And did you? A. No.

Q. Why not? A. I realized that I might be blamed.

Q. In other words, you were afraid? A. Yes.

Q. And you did not telephone? A. No.

Q. When I went into the office, I saw that the safe was open. There is a money drawer in it, and this drawer had been taken out and was on my desk. The money was still in it. About three hundred dollars.

Q. Yes? A. I realized that no one would believe there had been a robber, there unless the money was taken.

Q. Yes? A. I decided to make it look like a robbery.

Q. What did you do? A. Took the money.

Q. You had gloves on? A. Yes, the night was cool.

Q. And then what? A. I turned off the light and went downstairs.

Q. Did you take the package for which you had come back to the office? A. No, I forgot it again.

Q. When you got downstairs, did you notice anything about the car? A. It was gone.

Q. What did you do? A. I supposed it had been stolen. I walked to the corner at random, and then I saw my car.

Q. Where was it? A. It was just around the corner, half a block from where I had left it, parked the wrong way of a one-way street.

Q. What did you do? A. Got in and drove home.

Q. What did you do there? A. Put up the car. Then I threw the pistol in the river back of the garage. I went in the house and down cellar and burned the money in the furnace.

Q. And then? A. I went to bed.

Court adjourned till Monday morning. Mr. Falkran afterward announced that he had finished with direct examination, so that Mr. Sentry's cross-examination will begin at once when he resumes the stand.

That state like a hypnosis, in which Mrs. Sentry had found herself so much of the time since the trial began, persisted during Mr. Sentry's direct testimony.

When at adjournment Mr. Sentry left the stand, her eyes met his and she smiled at him firmly as he was led away. Then she and Phil went out together, slowly, surrendering themselves to be a passive part of the sluggish stream of spectators which banked at the door and trickled through, and dispersed along the marble corridors.

She clung to Phil's arm, and they came down to the limousine, and many eyes pinned them and whippers galloped like hounds, hot on their trail as they drove away.

They rode in silence for a while, till at last Phil mopped his brow and looked at her and asked miserably, "Want to talk, mother?"

"No, not yet, Phil!"

He said with a jealous loyalty: "I don't believe he ever looked at any woman in his life but you. No matter what he says."

But she did not answer him. After a while he asked huskily: "Mother, did you know what he was going to say? I mean, about the night she was killed?"

She remembered with a pitiless clarity that day she first saw Arthur after his arrest. She said: "He told me, yes. Told me he went there and found her dead." And she added, quickly, "He didn't know then that his shot had killed her."

Phil cried, "Why didn't you tell me?"

"It couldn't have done any good, Phil, to tell you."

"But it was an accident!"

"Yes," she added, unable to check the word in time. "If they believe him."

"Why, they've got to, haven't they? It all fits." He pounded his fist on his knee. "It's rotten enough; but at least he's not a murderer."

She said nothing; and he spoke half to himself: "I've never seen him except with you; never—asked him any questions. Did he tell Mr. Flood all this?"

She said wearily: "I think not. I

He said ruefully: "I didn't know what was coming, Ellen. Falkran didn't take me into his confidence."

She made no comment, and he said at last, "It had an effect on the jury."

"Mr. Falkran thought so."

He watched her as though he hoped, by adding some word, she might make it possible for him to say more; but she dreaded any sign of sympathy, gave him no opening, asked instead: "Had you some business? Mr. Falkran is coming presently."

He said reluctantly: "Well, yes. Yes, I'm afraid I have. Mr. Loran called me. He resented Falkran's bringing him into this."

"Oh!" She conceded, "Oh, yes, I suppose he would."

Hare explained, "He wants to dissolve his partnership with Mr. Sentry."

"Does he?"

"He has named a figure," Hare told her, "based on what he believes

course might involve the sale of many assets."

"What do you advise?"

The lawyer made a gesture. "You can hardly run a business yourself." And he said: "Suppose I ask Mr. Loran his offer in writing, to be open as long as possible. You can consult Mr. Sentry will—"

"Perhaps you had better."

"Very well. And after a while—"

"Exactly."

She had a grateful interest. Falkran came. When he and they went into the library, there alone.

The attorney professed that "I have just come from the city," he said. "He made a silent witness this morning. Things so that we could adapt soon as he was done, in order low his evidence to make a mum impression on the jury over Sunday. Mrs. Sentry, lost, this morning, all the had gained. They must begin from the beginning now."

"Yes?"

"You may take my word. I assured her, watching her, something new under her calm. 'You see, they expect to make a complete denial. Sentry told the jury what happened, and the truth the pattern of the evidence the presented in every detail case, so far as first degree is concerned, is destroyed.'"

She did not speak. After a while he went on: "Of course, I associate your feelings this. I know quite well that Mr. did not appear in an side light."

Still she said nothing, spoke almost hurriedly, "face cross-examination on the That will be distressing. The will emphasize the unpleasant aspects of his testimony. It must be there."

After a silent moment, the head bowed, he took this as and rose to go; but he made more demand. "You will be Sentry tomorrow, no doubt suggested."

Panic did for a moment her eyes. "Must I?"

He said gently, "If I were the Attorney, when you took the my first question on cross-examination would be: 'Mrs. Sentry, you visited your husband in the since you heard his direct testimony?'"

She stared at him, still attentionless. Then she cried desperately: "Yes, yes, I will go! I will!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

think Mr. Falkran and Mr. Hare both advised him to answer no questions, say nothing at all, after he was arrested."

When at last they came home, Linda was there with Barbara. Barbara as they came in looked at her mother and then at Phil, searchingly; and Mrs. Sentry said quickly: "He was fine, Barbara!"

Linda cried, "There, Barb! I told you he would be." She explained, in a tender tone, "She's been worrying so!"

Mrs. Sentry thought how little Barbara seemed, and how young, and so terribly hurt. This, too, Arthur had done; yet—suddenly today she could not hate him. She said again to Barbara: "Yes, he was fine! I was never so proud of him."

She saw Phil watch her wonderingly; and she said calmly: "Lunch must be ready. Linda, will you stay?"

While they were at table—Barbara had a way in her room—Mr. Falkran telephoned, spoke with Mrs. Sentry.

"He's going to see Mr. Sentry first," she reported, "then come out to consult with me. He feels that Mr. Sentry made an excellent witness, that the jury was impressed."

"Of course," Linda agreed.

After lunch, Mrs. Sentry suggested: "Linda, take Phil away for the afternoon; will you? Take him for a long drive." She smiled. "He needs fresh air, fresh ideas; needs you."

And she added suddenly, apologetically: "Don't if you'd rather not! You've been such a rock of strength, I don't want to impose on you."

"Of course I will," Linda declared; and when they were gone, Mrs. Sentry was deeply relieved to be left thus for a while alone.

Presently the doorbell rang. Dean Hare. Mrs. Sentry greeted him composedly, said, "Well, Dean?"

"How are you?" he asked in a low tone.

"All right."

"You were wonderful!"

"Why not?"

the business—real estate, accounts receivable, contracts, cash, good will—is worth. He offers to buy Mr. Sentry's interest, or to sell his own, on the basis of that figure. The decision is up to you."

"Suppose I wish neither to buy or sell?"

"He will take court action to force a dissolution."

"Can he do that? Force it?"

"Certainly." He added: "That of

Grow Tomatoes Without Seeds by Use of Chemicals; Fruits Have Solid Me

Tomatoes without seeds are being grown in the department of horticulture at the University of Missouri by use of chemicals. Normally tomatoes require pollination and fertilization to set fruit, but that also means that seeds will be formed. So the workers at Columbia pinch out the parts of the flower that produce the pollen, thus stopping fertilization, and then seek a growth-promoting substance, or hormone, to cause the fruit to set.

The result is that tomatoes develop normally, but instead of containing seeds and pulp, the tomatoes are solid meat. The fruit is of normal size, but weighs more because it is solid, says the Kansas City Star.

The hormone used is indoleacetic acid dissolved in lanum paste at the rate of one-part acid to 500 parts paste. About three applications, put on a week or ten days apart, are required.

The cost of the materials is negligible, the greatest expense being the labor involved in emasculating the flowers and applying the hormone. In an attempt to cut down the labor involved, one group of tomatoes was sprayed with a solution of the hormone mixed with water. Fair results were obtained, but not as good as where the hormone

was applied by hand. The evidence is believed to be conclusive that the water evaporates quickly, leaving the hormone crystals which are not absorbed by the plant. Further experiments are being conducted to find a material such as an oil, that does not evaporate quickly and which will carry the hormone in an absorbable form for a greater length of time.

Further experiments may show that it is possible to increase the yield of seedless tomatoes and reduce, since the fruit may be produced to set during summer months when hot, dry weather usually renders pollen ineffective.

Historical Inconsistency

History is anything but inconsistent. The Pilgrim fathers, for instance, originally sailed for Hudson and found themselves at the end of their voyage on the Massachusetts coast. Their destination was the Hudson, then Dutch, because they had come from Holland seeking religious freedom. Hence they had sailed from Holland, life was so good in the little band of Pilgrims, and absorption imminent with the Dutch, intermarrying with the Dutch, determined to keep themselves separate by journeying to the World.



"I Was Afraid of Being Involved."