

# The BLACK BOX

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Author of "Mr. Grev of Monte Carlo," "The Vanished Messenger," "The Lighted Way," etc.

Novelized from the motion picture drama of the same name produced by the Universal Film Manufacturing Company. Illustrated with photographs from the motion picture production.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

Craig's surprise was real enough as he opened the back door of the professor's house on the following morning and found Lenora standing on the threshold.

Lenora smiled pleasantly. "I came to this door," she said, "because I wanted a little talk with you." Craig's attitude was perfect. He was mystified but he remained respectful. "Will you come inside?" he invited. She shook her head.

"I am afraid," she confessed, "of what I am going to say being overheard. Come with me down to the garage for a moment."

He opened the doors of the garage, leaving the keys in the lock, and they both passed inside.

"You can say what you please here without the slightest fear of being overheard, miss," Craig remarked.

Lenora nodded, and breathed a prayer to herself. She was nearer the door than Craig by about half a dozen paces. Her hand groped in the little bag she was carrying and gripped something hard. She clenched her teeth for a moment. Then the automatic pistol flashed out through the gloom.

"Craig," she threatened, "if you move I shall shoot you."

It seemed as though the man were a coward. He began to tremble, his lips twitched, his eyes grew larger and wider.

"What is it?" he faltered. "What do you want?"

"Just this," Lenora said firmly. "I suspect you to be guilty of the crime for which Sanford Quest is in prison. I am going to have you questioned. If you are innocent you have nothing to fear. If you are guilty there will be someone here before long who will extract the truth from you."

The man's face was an epitome of terror. Even his knees shook. Lenora felt herself grow calmer with every moment.

"I am going outside to send a message," she told him. "I shall return presently."

"Don't go," he begged suddenly. "Don't leave me! I am innocent. I have done nothing wrong. If you keep me here, you will do more harm than you can dream of."

"It is for other people to decide about your innocence," Lenora said calmly. "I have nothing to do with that. If you are wise you will stop here quietly."

"Have you said anything to Mr. Ashleigh, miss?" the man asked piteously.

"Not a word."

An expression of relief shone for a moment upon his face. Lenora pointed to a stool.

"Sit down there and wait quietly," she ordered.

He obeyed without a word. She left the place, locked the door securely, and made her way round to the other side of the garage—the side hidden from the house. Here, at the far corner, she drew a little pocket wireless from her bag and set it on the window sill. Very slowly she sent her message:

I have Craig here in the professor's garage, locked up. If our plan has succeeded, come at once. I am waiting for you.

There was no reply. She sent the message again and again. Suddenly, during a pause, there was a little flash upon the plate. A message was com-

ing to her. She transcribed it with beating heart.

O. K. Coming.

The guard swung open the wicket in front of Quest's cell.

"Young woman to see you, Quest," he announced. "Ten minutes, and no loud talking, please."

Quest moved to the bars. It was Laura who stood there. She wasted very little time in preliminaries. Having satisfied herself that the guard was out of hearing, she leaned as close as she could to Quest.

"Look here," she said, "Lenora's crazy with the idea that Craig has done these jobs—Craig, the professor's servant, you know. We used the photostatism yesterday afternoon and saw him burn something in the professor's study. Lenora went up straight away and got hold of the ashes."

"Smart girl," Quest murmured, nodding approvingly. "Well!"

"There are distinct fragments," Laura continued, "of embroidered stuff such as the Salvation Army girl might have been wearing. We put them on one side, but they ain't enough evidence. Lenora's idea is that you should get hold of Craig and hypnotize him into a confession."

"That's all right," Quest replied. "But how am I to get hold of him?"

Laura glanced once more carelessly around to where the guard stood.

"Lenora's gone up to the professor's again this afternoon. She is going to try and get hold of Craig and lock him in the garage. If she succeeds, she will send a message by wireless at three o'clock. It is half-past two now."

"Well!" Quest exclaimed. "Well!"

"You can work this guard, if you want to," Lenora went on. "I have seen you tackle worse cases. He seems dead easy. Then let me in the cell."

"Craig locked up in my garage?" he murmured. "Craig guilty of those murders? Why, my dear Mr. Quest, a more harmless, a more inoffensive, peace-loving and devoted servant than John Craig never trod this earth!"

"Maybe," Quest replied, "but where is he?"

The professor could do nothing but look around him a little vaguely.

"I am going back," Quest announced. "My only chance is the wireless. If Lenora is alive or at liberty, she will communicate with me."

"May I come, too?" the professor asked timidly.

"Come by all means," Quest assented. "I will drive you down in your car, if you like."

The professor hurried away to get his coat and hat, and a few minutes later they started off. In Broadway they left the car at a garage and made their way up a back street which enabled them to enter the house at the side entrance. They passed upstairs into the sitting-room. Quest fetched the pocket wireless and laid it down on the table. The professor examined it with interest.

"You are marvelous, my friend," he declared. "With all these resources of science at your command it seems incredible that you should be in the position you are."

Quest nodded coolly. "Just one moment, professor, while I send off a message," he said, opening the little instrument. "Where are you, Lenora?" he signaled. "Send me word and I will fetch you. I am in my own house for the present. Let me know that you are safe."

The professor leaned back, smoking one of Quest's excellent cigars. He was beginning to show signs of the liveliest interest.

"Quest," he said, "I wish I could induce you to dismiss this extraordinary supposition of yours concerning my servant Craig. The man has been with me for the best part of twenty years. He saved my life in South America; we have traveled in all parts of the world. He has proved himself to be exemplary, a faithful and devoted servant."

"Then perhaps you will tell me," Quest suggested, "where he is now, and why he has gone away? That does not look like complete innocence, does it?"

The professor sighed. "I cannot stay here much longer, unless I mean to go back to the Tomb," Quest declared.

"Surely," the professor suggested, "your innocence will very soon be established."

"There is one thing which will happen, without a doubt," Quest replied. "My auto and the chauffeur will be discovered. I have insisted upon inquiries being sent out throughout the state of Connecticut. They tell me, too, that the police are hard on the scent of Red Gallagher and the other man. Unless they get wind of this and sell me purposely, their arrest will be the end of my troubles. To tell you the truth, professor," Quest concluded, "it is not of myself I am thinking at all just now. It is Lenora."

The professor nodded sympathetically.

"The young lady who shut Craig up in the garage, you mean? A plucky young woman she must be."

"She has a great many other good qualities besides courage," Quest declared. "Women have not counted for much with me, professor, up till now, any more than they have done, I should think, with you, but I tell you frankly, if anyone has hurt a hair of that girl's head I will have their lives,

whatever the penalty may be! It is for her sake—to find her—that I broke out of prison and that I am trying to keep free. The wisest thing to do, from my own point of view, would be to give myself up. I can't bring myself to do that without knowing what has become of her."

The professor nodded again. "A charming and well-bred young woman she seems," he admitted. "I fear that I should only be a bungler in your profession, Mr. Quest, but if there is anything I can do depend upon me. Personally, I am convinced that Craig will return to me with some plausible explanation as to what has happened."

Quest, for the third or fourth time moved cautiously toward the window. His expression suddenly changed. He glanced suddenly downward, frowned slightly.

"They're after me!" he exclaimed. "Sit still, professor."

He darted into his room and reappeared almost immediately. The professor gave a gasp of astonishment at his altered appearance. His tweed suit seemed to have been turned inside out. There were no lapels now, and it was buttoned up to his neck. He wore a long white apron; a peaked cap and a chip-piece of astonishing naturalness had transformed him into the semblance of a Dutch grocer's boy.

"I'm off, professor," Quest whispered. "You shall hear from me soon. I have not been here, remember!"

He ran lightly down the steps and into the kitchen, picked up a basket, filled it haphazardly with vegetables and threw a cloth over the top. Then he made his way to the front door, peered out for a moment, swung through it on to the step, and turning round, commenced to belabor it with his fist.

Two plain-clothes men stood at the end of the street. A police automobile drew up outside the gate. Inspector French, attended by a policeman, stepped out. The former looked searchingly at Quest.

"Well, my boy, what are you doing here?" he asked.

"I cannot answer yet," Quest replied, in broken English. "Ten minutes already have I wasted. I have knocked at all the doors."

French smiled. "You run along home," he said, "and tell your master that he had better leave off delivering goods here for the present."

Quest went off, grumbling. French opened the door with a master key and secured it carefully, leaving one of his men to guard it. He searched the rooms on the ground floor and finally ascended to Quest's study. The professor was still enjoying his cigar.

"Say, where's Quest?" the inspector asked promptly.

"Have you let him out already?" the professor replied, in a tone of mild surprise. "I thought he was in the Tomb prison."

The inspector pressed on without answering. Every room in the house was ransacked. Presently he came back to the room where the professor

was still sitting. His usually good-humored face was a little clouded.

"Professor," he began—"What's the matter, Miles?"

A plain-clothes man from the street had come hurrying into the room.

"Say, Mr. French," he reported, "our fellows have got hold of a newswid down in the street, who was coming along 'way round the back and saw two men enter this house by the side entrance, half an hour ago. One he described exactly as the professor here. The other, without a doubt, was Quest."

French turned swiftly toward the professor.

"You hear what this man says?" he exclaimed. Mr. Ashleigh, you're fooling me! You entered this house with Sanford Quest. You will have to tell us where he is hiding."

The professor knocked the ash from his cigar and replaced it in his mouth. His clasped hands rested in front of him. There was a twinkle of something like mirth in his eyes as he glanced up at the inspector.

"Mr. French," he said, "Mr. Sanford Quest is my friend. I am here in charge of his house. Believing as I do that his arrest was an egregious blunder, I shall say or do nothing likely to afford you any information."

French turned impatiently away. Suddenly a light broke in upon him; he rushed toward the door.

"That's a Dutchie!" he exclaimed. The professor smiled benignly. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

## STRAW VOTE ADOPTED TO LEARN SENTIMENT

### COUNTY BOARD SEEKS ATTITUDE OF DISTRICT SCHOOL DIRECTORS ON SUPERVISORS.

In an effort to learn the attitude of Clackamas county school directors on the question of retaining supervisors during the school year 1915-16, a straw vote will be taken as soon as possible under the direction of the county educational board which met Saturday afternoon with County Superintendent Calavan.

The legislature passed a law which provides that upon a petition from a majority of the district school boards, the county educational board must dismiss the supervisors. As the supervisors accept the position for a year, it was not thought possible to obtain competent men to sign a contract when they ran the risk of being removed at any time. In view of this fact, the educational board was confronted with the problem of obtaining an expression of opinion from the district boards before summer when contracts for the coming school year will be signed.

In case the district boards vote to retain the supervisors, the educational board will sign contracts for the year 1915-16, while if the boards are found to be opposed to the employment of the men, no effort will be made to secure supervisors. The straw vote has no legal power and is used merely to obtain an expression of opinion.

As far as can be learned here, Clackamas county will be the first county in the state to employ this method.

## CIRCUIT COURT KILLS THE WILHOIT CUT-OFF

### APPEAL OF DAVID FOX IS SUCCESSFUL IN THE HIGHER TRIBUNAL.

On appeal to the circuit court from the county court, the Wilhoit road cut-off was killed Friday. The appeal was taken by David P. Fox, a farmer living in the Wilhoit district.

Several weeks ago the county court voted to make a cut-off in the Wilhoit road which would go up Rock creek. The proposed road was known as the J. F. Adams road and its route was surveyed. Fox, representing the re-monstrators, appealed to the circuit court, alleging that notices had not been properly posted and that the route had not been properly described, according to the state law. The re-monstrators were represented by Dimick & Dimick and George C. Brownell, while District Attorney Hedges and Cross & Burke appeared for the county.

A delegation consisting of George Wolfe, C. A. Perrell, Paul Dunn, J. W. Procter and Caspar Junker, from the Sandy and Boring districts, were in the county seat Friday and asked the county court for a rock crushing plant in that part of the county for use on the Bluff road.

Several from Molalla and Liberal were also in town, asking that river gravel from the New Era plant be applied to the roads in the Molalla country and particularly the road leading west from Molalla to the Silverton road.

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## LOCAL BOY IS MAINSTAY ON THE U. OF O. TEAM AT COLUMBIA MEET

One of the principal performers on the University of Oregon team at the Columbia meet in Portland tomorrow afternoon will be Kent Wilson, the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Wilson and a former member of the Oregon City high school.

Wilson is entered in three of the principal events of the day: the relay, the 440 and the 880. Owing to the weakened condition of the University of Oregon team, much is expected of Wilson, even though he was sick in bed a week ago.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson received a letter from their son yesterday which assured them that he was feeling fine and would be in good shape for tomorrow's meet. A mild attack of ton-

sillitis laid up the local boy for a week and seriously interfered with his training. He has been out only a few times.

Wilson spent several years at the local school and then went to Portland, graduating from the Washington high school in that city. There he won many laurels in the high school track team in the middle distance events. He appeared at the Columbia meet during his last year at the high school and was one of the high point winners for his team.

Kent Wilson's father is sheriff but his high official capacity will not prevent him from seeing his son tomorrow, he declared last night. Of course, Mrs. Wilson will accompany him.



"If You Move I Shall Shoot You!" take my clothes and leave me here." Quest followed the scheme in his mind quickly.

"It is all right," he decided, "but I am not at all sure that they can really hold me on the evidence they have got. If they can't, I shall be doing myself more harm than good in this way."

"It's no use unless you can get hold of Craig quickly," Laura said. "He is getting the scares, as it is."

"I'll do it," Quest decided. "Call the guard, Laura."

She obeyed. The man came good-naturedly toward them.

Quest looked at him steadfastly through the bars.

"I want you to come inside for a moment," Quest repeated softly. "Unlock the door, please, take the key off your bunch and come inside."

The man hesitated, but all the time his fingers were fumbling with the keys. Quest's lips continued to move. The warden opened the door and entered. A few minutes later Quest passed the key through the window to Laura, who was standing on guard.

Without a word, and with marvelous rapidity, the change was effected. Laura produced from her handbag a wig, which she plinned inside her hat and passed over to Quest. Then she swung herself on to the bed and drew the blanket up to her chin.

"How long will it stay like that?" she whispered, pointing to the warden, who was sitting on the floor with his arms folded and his eyes closed.

"Half an hour or so," Quest answered. "Don't bother about him. I shall drop the key back through the window."

Quest reached Georgia square at five minutes to three. A glance up and down assured him that the house was unwatched. He let himself in with his own key, threw Laura's clothes off, and after a few moments' hesitation, selected from the wardrobe a rough tweed suit with a thick lining and lapels. Just as he was tying his tie, the little wireless which he had laid on the table at his side began to record a message. He glanced at the clock. It was exactly three.

Quest's eyes shone for a moment with satisfaction. Then he sent off his answering message, put on a duster and slouch hat, and left the house by the side entrance. In a few moments he was in Broadway, and a quarter of an hour later a taxicab deposited him at the entrance to the

## FANS ARE SATISFIED

### ONLY TEAMS ON HOME GROUNDS TOP BEAVERS.

PORTLAND, Ore., April 13.—With the opening game of the season scheduled here today, fans who have been content with detailed reports of the showing of the team will have an opportunity of seeing for themselves as to the actual strength of the team.

To date the showing has been all that could be desired, as the club returns home with a record of .500 per cent, having won as many games on the road as it lost.

This is a good record for any time of the year, and the Portland team started in poorer condition than any of the other aggregations, with the possible exception of Salt Lake.

The Beavers are in third place at present, San Francisco and Los Angeles leading them in the race. These were the two teams picked by the majority of the experts as those which Portland would have to beat in order to win another pennant, and there is no reason to change this opinion, as yet.

But it must be remembered that every game both of these teams have played to date have been on their home grounds, encouraged by local crowds, something which the Beavers have yet to experience.

## STRAW VOTE DELAYED

### AFTER JUNE ELECTION

The straw vote to learn the opinion of district school boards on the retention of supervisors during the next school year will not be taken until late in June, said County Superintendent Calavan Wednesday.

The county educational board desired to secure an expression of opinion from the district directors and determined that by holding a straw vote, the matter could be settled easiest. As there will probably be many changes made in the personnel of school boards next June at the annual school election, Mr. Calavan determined to wait until the new directors had been installed.

Besting their constitution, sour stomach, lazy liver and sluggish bowels. Stops a sick headache almost at once. Gives a most thorough and satisfactory flushing—no pain, no nausea. Keeps your system cleansed, sweet and wholesome. R. B. Rasmussen, Esq., San Francisco, Calif., writes: "Citrolax is a fine laxative, pleasant to take, and does the work in a very thorough manner." Children love it. Jones Drug Co. (Adv.)

## BEAVERS ARE DEFEATED IN FIRST HOME GAME BY VENICE WITH SCORE 6 TO 3

Despite the coaching of 11,000 rabid Portland fans, the Beavers today lost the opening game on the home grounds with the score of 6 to 3. Venice played with a rush and vim that meant scores. In the first set, two of the Californians went across the plate and the performance was repeated in the ninth frame.

In the second inning Mitchell doubled and beat the ball home scoring for the Tigers. Davis made a count for the Beavers in the same set. Portland scored again on a home run by Rube Evans in the third, but that was the end of Beaver activity.

Mitchell, formerly with the St. Louis Browns, was in the box for the Tigers but was out of the game in the sixth frame with a sprained ankle. Percy then hurled the ball for Venice. Mitchell and Percy each allowed the Beavers four hits.

Krause was knocked out of the box in the first frame, the Tigers securing three hits, two of which scored, and Evans was given the place to save the

team. Despite the efforts of the elements, close to 11,000 fans turned out for the opening game. The grand stand was full, the left field circus seats also, the left field bleachers comfortably crowded and the big center field bleachers nearly filled.

But few preliminaries were indulged in. The game had been delayed a trifle in order that sawdust might be sprinkled about the infield. The big band played "The Star Spangled Banner" with the crowd standing meanwhile, the big flag in right field was hoisted to the top of the staff and the game was off.

Today's lineup: Venice—Carlisle, lf; Kane, cf; Berger, ss; Risberg, rf; Hettling, 3b; Gleichmann, 1b; Purcell, 2b; Mitze, c; Mitchell, p.

Portland—Doane, rf; Speas, cf; Derick, 1b; Stumpf, 2b; Fisher, c; Lerber, lf; Davis, 3b; Murphy, ss; Krause, p.

Umpires—Finney and Williams.

## ACTION OF SINGLE SPOONFUL SURPRISES MANY