

# Who is Number One? A Mystery Serial

BY ANNA KATHARINE GREEN.



Just Then a Scream Rang out From the Second Floor.



"Aimee," She Said, "You Saw the Truth, and I Wouldn't Listen to You."

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Episode No. 15—"The Round-Up."

In a room on the second floor of Graham Hale's home a man lay ill—desperately ill. Only one of those who waited anxiously for the verdict of Dr. O'Connor, Graham Hale's physician, had ever seen the patient before. And that one was Graham Hale himself. Yet had he been of their own kin, and that the closest, they could not have been more deeply concerned; could not have breathed more heartfelt prayers for his recovery. He was the Rev. John Kent, formerly pastor of a small New York church—for many years a missionary in China. He was more famous now, when he hung between life and death, than he had ever before in all his 58 odd years of obscure, useful life.

His name was featured in every newspaper in the city. His picture had become familiar to millions of readers. The police of the whole country were searching for Thornton Rayne, wanted for the attempted murder of Mr. Kent and the actual slaying of Patrolman Harston, who, with Tommy Hale, Graham Hale's son, and Aimee Villon, his ward, had frustrated just in time Rayne's devilishly skillful plot to murder the minister and so arrange the evidence that the world would always have believed that Mr. Kent had killed himself.

Trapped by Rayne in some fashion that could not be understood until and unless Mr. Kent himself recovered enough to reveal it, the minister had been choked into unconsciousness, stuffed into a trunk and carried to a lonely house. There Rayne had fastened a noose about his neck, a noose fastened from a stout bracket, he had placed him on a stool and drawn the stool away by means of a string passing under a door, which, by a similar device, he had lotted from the outside. Surprised before he could get away he had been cut across the roof by a backboard, while Tommy and Aimee had cut down his victim just in time to give the doctor a chance to save his life.

And now the whole world was beginning to read the tale of Graham Hale's persecution by the Twisted Thread—a band of criminals which had defied and eluded the police of Europe and America for years. The part that Thornton Rayne, rich, respected, trusted by Hale himself as his oldest and closest friend, had played in the work of the Twisted Thread was revealed. Only the truth concerning Camille Arnot, the woman Rayne had used as the figure head for the Twisted Thread, was unknown. She, Hale's wife of a few months before, had been deceived by Rayne into the belief that Hale had betrayed her by a mock marriage. Through years she had nursed her vengeance, urging on always by Rayne. She had brought forth his daughter, Aimee—Hale's child, of whose very existence he was ignorant—she had been the instrument of his vengeance.

Tommy drove through the night with an utter disregard for speed limits. But one small thing after another went wrong. Their car, a 1917 model, was nearly empty, and had to stop to have it filled. And a few miles along the road he had a blowout, and was forced to stop. He was alone. An open drawbridge delayed them 15 minutes more, so that when they reached the house where Dr. Carson was visiting they were fully half an hour later than Tommy had expected to be.

"Dr. Carson," said the man who answered the door, "Why, yes—he's staying here! But he started for New York 15 minutes ago—he was called, very urgently, to Mr. Graham Hale's house. You must have passed him on the road."

"He was to wait for me—I'm Mr. Hale," said Tommy. "Why, yes—he's staying here! But he started for New York 15 minutes ago—he was called, very urgently, to Mr. Graham Hale's house. You must have passed him on the road."

"Who is that, get him?" cried Tommy. He glanced at his father. "We won't spare either expense or trouble—take care to trust with the case as I see it."

Dr. Carson was not at home. But, with considerable difficulty, O'Connor found him, finally. He was visiting a friend some 15 or 20 miles out in the country.

"I'll go to get him," said Tommy at once. "I'll give me the address, doctor. I'll get started at once."

"The case is beyond me," he said, frankly. "I think I know what's wrong. There's a pressure on the brain. If it's not relieved practically at once death is almost certain. And—where's just one man in New York I'd care to trust with the case as I see it?"

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"I swear it was," said Hale. "But wait—that man who is lying in there can prove it."

"And will," said Tommy. "Dr. Carson says there is no danger—that he is sure that some one in the house was a traitor."

"Oh!" cried Aimee, desperately. "I—oh, you're not to know the truth now, Tommy! All the time—ever since I first came into this house—I've deceived you—abused the trust you and your father put in me—I was Number One! I put the sign of the Twisted Thread on your sleeves, nearly every time you found it! I wrote warnings for the Twisted Thread in books—I betrayed your plans! No wonder you were suspicious—no wonder you were sure that some one in the house was a traitor!"

"I'm sorry," said Tommy. "Dr. Carson says there is no danger—that he is sure that some one in the house was a traitor."

"Oh!" cried Aimee, desperately. "I—oh, you're not to know the truth now, Tommy! All the time—ever since I first came into this house—I've deceived you—abused the trust you and your father put in me—I was Number One! I put the sign of the Twisted Thread on your sleeves, nearly every time you found it! I wrote warnings for the Twisted Thread in books—I betrayed your plans! No wonder you were suspicious—no wonder you were sure that some one in the house was a traitor!"

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## WHEN HUN AIRMEN RAID LONDON

LONDON, Jan. 31.—Joseph L. Hackley of Staunton, Ky., who is temporarily in London, has written the following letter to his mother, telling of recent air raids on London:

Dear mamma: After about five weeks' freedom from airplane attacks, they came again this morning during the darkness. The moon was shining, although it had waned to about one-third full. There were about 25 airplanes.

They attempted to get over London from four different directions, but only six succeeded in getting over the city. Two of these machines were brought down by gunfire and the crews captured alive. There were three Germans in each machine. Although they had killed three persons in London by dropping bombs, the captured crews were accorded all the rights of prisoners of war and given a good breakfast of bacon and eggs.

According to the official records, the airplanes attacked the east coast at 1:30 A. M., but were driven off. We received no warning of this in London, but slept through it. Another attack was made at 3 A. M. on the River Thames, about half way between London and the coast.

They were driven off by the guns. While no warning was given in my neighborhood, we could hear it in distant parts of the city and the people running in the streets soon convinced us that something was pending. I dressed, put on my overcoat and went out.

## PRAYERS ARE CONTRASTED

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patients in the infirmary—an old soldier who's right leg is amputated. I am going to take some of the other things to a nursing home for soldiers this afternoon.

"I'll bet you a shilling, nurse, that I can get into my coat without any help."

"I passed the Red Cross ambulance station nearby and just then two large ambulances drove up, as they always do during a raid. However, some policemen came up and said the Germans had been driven off and told all to go home."

"I returned to the hotel at 1:30 A. M. I again went to bed. When I had just about decided to go to sleep again I heard some one use a door knocker across the street, and it made almost as much noise as a small bomb. I then heard a man tell his friend, whom he was awakening by his knocking, that there was another warning."

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Anyone who tries this pleasant tasting home-made cough syrup will quickly understand why it is used in more homes in the United States and Canada than any other cough remedy. The way it mixes with the chest's cough, giving immediate relief, will make you regret that you never tried it before. It is a truly dependable cough remedy that should be kept handy in every home, to use at the first sign of a cough during the night or day time.

Any drugstore can supply you with 2½ ounces of Pinex (60 cents worth). Pour this into a pint bottle and fill the bottle with plain granulated sugar syrup. The total cost is about 65 cents and you have a full pint of the most effective remedy you ever used.

The quick, lasting relief you get from this excellent cough syrup will really surprise you. It promptly heals the inflamed membranes that line the throat and air passages, stops the annoying throat tickle, loosens the phlegm, and soon your cough stops entirely. Splendid for bronchitis, croup, whooping cough and all other coughs.

Pinex is a highly concentrated compound of Norway pine extract, and is famous the world over for its healing effect on the membranes.

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