

THE KENNEL MURDER CASE

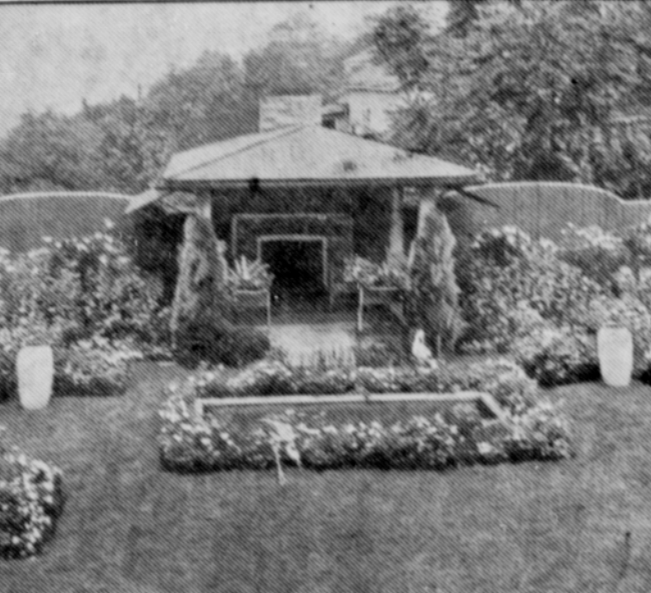
By S. S. Van Dine

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THE STORY

CHAPTER I—Philo Vance, expert in solving crime mysteries, is called in to investigate the supposed suicide of Archer Coe, wealthy collector of Chinese ceramics. District Attorney Markham has learned the circumstances over the telephone from Gable, Coe's butler, getting no response when he had knocked on his employer's door through the keyhole and had seen Coe seated, a revolver in his right hand, a bullet hole in his temple. The door was bolted from the inside. Markham and Vance go to Coe's house in New York's 7th. They find Vance, a friend of Coe's, there; also a Signor Grassi, a guest, Sergeant Heath and Detective Hennessey, both in the street, revealing the death chamber. Coe is clothed in a dressing gown, but wears street shoes. Heath says it is a plain case of suicide. Vance says it is murder. CHAPTER II—Doremus, a general, says Coe deserved death—that he collected ceramics through unfair means and incurred the enmity of Chinese, also that as her guardian he controlled her fortune and was parsimonious. (Continued from last week) A minute later Dr. Emanuel Doremus was ushered into the room. He was a wiry, nervous man, cynical, hard-bitten, and with a jaunty manner. He resembled a stock salesman far more than he did a doctor. He greeted Vance with a wave of the hand, and glanced about the room. Then he lectured back and forth on his toes, and pinned a baleful eye on Heath. "More shenanigan," he complained. "I was in the midst of hot cakes and sausages when I got your message. You always pick on me at meal time, Sergeant. Well, what have you got for me now?" Heath grinned and jerked his thumb toward Coe's body. He was used to the medical examiner's grousing. Doremus turned his head and let his indifferent eyes rest on the dead man for several moments. "The door was bolted on the inside, doctor," Markham volunteered. "We had to break it in." Doremus drew a deep sigh and turned back to Heath with a grunt of disgust. "Well, what about it?" he asked impatiently. "Could you have finished my breakfast? All you dredged was an order to remove the body." He reached in his pocket and drew out a small pad of printed blanks. "I'd have sent an assistant," his voice had become peevish. "Mr. Markham told me to call you personally, doc." Heath explained. "It ain't my funeral." Doremus, holding his fountain pen poised, cocked an eye at Markham. "Straight case of suicide," he announced breezily. "Nothing to worry about. I'll give you the approximate time of death if you want it. And the routine autopsy." "I say doctor," Vance asked languidly; "would it be unprofessional if you looked at my forehead?" Doremus spun round. "I'm going to look at the body," he snapped. "I'm going to dissect it. I'm going to give it a post-mortem. What more do you want?" "Just why, doctor," pursued Vance, "do you jump at the conclusion that I'm a murderer?" Doremus sighed impatiently. "The gun's in his hand; the bullet wound is in the right place; and I know a dead man when I see one. Furthermore, the door—" "Was bolted on the inside, Vance finished. Oh quite. But what about the body?" "Well, what about it?" Doremus began fill in the order. "There's the body—look at it yourself." "I have looked at it, don't you know?" "You see, doc," Heath explained with a grin of satisfaction. "Mr. Vance and I made a mistake also. You'd say suicide; and he said you'd say murder." "I'm a doctor, not a detective," Doremus returned acidly. "The guy's dead, with a bullet hole in his right temple. He's holding a gun in his right hand. It's the kind of wound that could have been self-inflicted. His position is natural—and the door was locked on the inside. The rest of it is up to you fellows in the homicide bureau. If the autopsy'll show it, you'll get all the data tomorrow. Then you can draw your own conclusions." Vance had sat down in a chair near the west wall and was smoking placidly. "Would you mind, doctor, taking a close look at that bullet hole before you return to your hot cakes and sausages? Any of a night also scrutinize the dead man's mouth." Doremus stared at Vance a moment; then he approached Archer Coe's body and bent over it. He inspected the wound carefully, and

Her Garden Wins U. S. Contest



Despite the fact that her yard, situated on a bluff, was a target for fierce winds which uprooted her plants and shrubs, Mrs. Frederick H. Meyer, right, of Grand Rapids, Mich., succeeded in creating a beautiful garden which won first place, unanimously, in the 1934 National Yard and Garden Contest. A glass-enclosed garden room, a stone terrace bordered by a solid wall of tall evergreens, and a low-growing, picturesque cherry tree, featured the Meyer entry. A section of the garden is pictured above.

rigor mortis had set in. "Though Vance's eyes were moving idly about the room, he was listening closely to his conversation. "There is," he remarked in a low voice, "another possibility. Far-fetched, I'll admit, but tenable. . . . Men have been known to do queer things after death. There are recorded instances of suicides who have shot themselves and then thrown the weapon forty feet away. Dr. Hans Gross in his 'Handbuch fur Untersuchungsrichter' . . . " "But that hardly applies here," Vance interrupted. "Vance drew deeply on his cigarette. "Quite so. Just a fleeting thought." Markham turned Vance a moment; then turned back to Doremus. "Did Coe die of that blow on the head?" "The medical examiner teetered on his toes, and pursed his lips. "There's something funny here. There's been an internal hemorrhage—that might be expected from a severe blow on the head. Blood in the mouth and all that. . . . But, Mr. Markham, Doremus spoke so impressively—that blow on the forehead wasn't powerful enough to kill a man. A slight fracture, but nothing serious—just enough to stun him. . . . No, he died of concussion of a fractured skull." "And he didn't die of the revolver shot," added Vance. "Moss' fascination? Still, the Johnny's dead, don't you know?" Doremus swung about to Heath. "Come on, Sergeant." He and Heath lifted Coe's body and carried it to the bed. Together they removed the clothing from the dead man, hung them over a chair by the bed and Doremus began his examination. The body was lying on its back and Doremus pressed his hand over the right before rigor mortis set in, what? "Well, I'll tell you, He—pointing to the revolver, taking great care not to make any finger prints on it. "Just a moment, doctor," Vance spoke promptly. "Take a look at the hand on the desk. Is it clutching the revolver, taking great care not to make any finger prints on it?" Heath came forward and gingerly inspected the weapon. Then he dropped it in a large pocket handkerchief, and placed it on the blotter. "And, doctor," pursued Vance, "was Coe's finger pressed directly against the trigger?" "Yes," was Doremus' curt answer. "Then we may assume that the revolver was placed in Coe's hand before rigor mortis set in, what?" "Well, I'll tell you, He—pointing to the revolver, taking great care not to make any finger prints on it. "In that case how could it have been fired?" "It couldn't. But how do you know it was fired? There's no way of telling until the post mortem whether the bullet in his head came from the gun he was holding." "Do the marks of the revolver and the wound correspond?" "Yes, I'd say so. The gun's a .38, and the wound looks the same size." "And," put in Heath, "one chamber of the gun's been fired." Markham nodded, and looked at the medical examiner. "If it should prove to be true, doctor, that the revolver in Coe's hand fired the shot in his head, then we could assume, could we not, as Mr. Vance suggested, that the revolver had been placed in the dead man's hand before rigor mortis set in?" "Sure you could," Doremus' tone was greatly modified. "Nobody could have forced the gun into his hand and made it appear natural after

the closet, and then put the dressing gown on the stabbed man." "Why the murderer," Vance parried. "The indications are that someone else came here after Coe was dead and set a bullet through his head. Couldn't this other hypothetical person have made the change in the corpse's habiliments?" "Does that theory help us any?" Markham asked gruffly. "Not a bit," Vance cheerfully admitted, "even if it were true—which, of course, we don't know. And I'll admit it sounds incredible. I merely made the suggestion by way of indicating that, at this stage of the game, we should not jump at conclusions. And the more we discuss the conclusion, the more cautious we should be. This is not, my dear Markham, an obvious case." Doremus was becoming bored. He

gave a cavernous yawn, stretched himself and reached for his hat which he had placed on the floor beside the bed. "Well, that lets me out," he quipped at Heath. "I suppose you want a quick autopsy." "I'll say so," the sergeant's head was enveloped in a cloud of cigar smoke. "When can we get it?" "Tonight—if you must have it," Doremus drew a sheet over the prone figure on the bed, and made out an order for the removal of the body. He shook his hands cordially with every one and waddled briskly toward the door. (Continued Next Week)

Semi-Annual Report of Receipts and Disbursements by County Clerk

Table with columns for Receipts and Disbursements. Includes sections for Tax Collection and Penalties, County Health Inspector, Receipts by County Clerk, Warrant Disbursements-General Fund, and Cash Balance on Hand December 31, 1934.

Table showing Outstanding Warrants for December 31, 1934. Columns include General Fund, Road Funds, and various other funds with their respective amounts.

State of Oregon, County of Washington, ss. I, Edw. C. Luce, County Clerk of Washington County, Oregon, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct statement of the receipts, disbursements and balances by funds of Washington County, Oregon, for the period commencing July 1, 1934, and ending December 31, 1934, as appears upon the records of my office and in my custody as such clerk. In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the County Court of Washington County, Oregon, this 22nd day of January, 1935. EDW. C. LUCE, County Clerk of Washington County, Oregon.

Semi-Annual Report, Treasurer Washington County, Oregon

Table with columns for Receipts and Disbursements. Includes sections for Sheriff's Tax, Assessor's Tax, Receipts Misc., Assignments, Transfers, Balance June 30, Total Receipts and Vouchers, Interest on Warrants, Bonds and Interest, Assignments, Transfers, Total Disbursements, and Cash on hand Jan. 2.



BLUE MONDAY

"Blue Monday" originated with a 16th century European custom of decorating the churches in blue on the Monday before Lent. Then, for years "Blue Monday" referred to washday. That was when washday meant carrying in water from pump or rain barrel, waiting for it to heat, filling and emptying awkward tubs—drudgery. Both "Blue Mondays" are now things of the past. The church custom is no longer followed and the convenient service your water company offers has banished washday blues.

OREGON-WASHINGTON WATER SERVICE COMPANY. RICHARD E. WILEY, Manager. Hillsboro, Oregon.

Hodgen-Brewster

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