THE KENNEL MURDER CASE

By

S. S. Van Dine

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WNU Service

(Continued from last week)

"So far, so good," said Markham. "But what of Brisbane?"

"Brisbane? Ah, yes. He was an unexpected element. But Wrede knew nothing about it. . . . As I see it, Markham, Brisbane had planned to get rid of Archer that same night. His trip to Chicago was merely a blind. With his knowledge of criminology and his shrewd technical brain, he had worked out a perfectly logical means of doing away with his brother and having the crime appear a suicide. Naturally he chose Wednesday night when he knew Archer would be alone in the house. He established his alibi by having Gamble make reservations on the 5:15 train to Chicago. His plan was to go back to the house and take a later train. It was an excellent idea, and it was almost detection proof. And he did come back to the house, Markham, with the definite intention of killing Archer. . . ."

"Still, I don't see—"

"Oh, it's all quite simple," Vance went on. "But before Brisbane returned that night, strange and uncanny things happened. The plot became cluttered with complications, and Brisbane, instead of creating a perfect crime, walked into a plot more diabolical than the one he himself and conceived. . . ."

Vance moved in his chair.

"This is what had happened in the meantime: Archer, recovering from the blow of the poker, and not realizing that he had also been stabbed, went upstairs to his bedroom. The shades were up, and Wrede, from his own apartment, could see him across the vacant lot. . . . No one will ever know what thoughts went on in Coe's mind at this time. But obviously he was incensed at Wrede, and he probably sat down to write him a letter forbidding him ever to put foot in the house again. He began to feel tired—perhaps the blood had commenced to choke his lungs. The pen fell from his fingers. He made an effort to prepare himself for bed. He took off his coat and waistcoat and hung them carefully in the closet. Then he put on his dressing gown, buttoned it, and tied the belt about him. He walked to the windows and pulled down the shades. That act took practically all of his remaining vitality. He started to get his bedroom slippers, but the black mist of death was drifting in upon him. He thought it fatigue—the result, perhaps, of the blow Wrede had struck him over the head. He sat down in his easy chair. But he never got up, Markham. He never changed his shoes. As he sat there the final inevitable fog stifled him!"

"Good G—d, Vance! I see the horror of it," breathed Markham.

"All these steps in that sinister situation," Vance continued, "are clearly indicated. . . . But think what must have gone on in Wrede's mind when he looked out of his window and saw the man he had murdered moving about the room upstairs, arranging the papers on his desk, changing his clothes, going about his affairs as if nothing whatever had happened!"

Vance inhaled several times on his cigarette and broke the ashes into a small tray beside him.

"My word, Markham! Can you imagine Wrede's emotions? He killed a man; and yet he could look across a vacant lot and see this dead man acting as if nothing had happened. Wrede had to start all over again. It was a delicate and terrible situation. He knew that he had thrust a deadly dagger into Archer Coe's body. But Archer was still alive—and retribution must inevitably follow. And don't forget that the lights did not go out in Archer Coe's room. Wrede, no doubt, frantically asked himself athousand times what was going on behind those drawn shades. He not only feared the incalculable mystery of the situation, but, I am inclined to think, he was perturbed most by his speculation concerning the things he could not see. . . . I wouldn't care to put in the two hours that Wrede spent between eight o'clock and ten that night. He realized that some decision must be made—that some action must be taken. But he had nothing whatever to go on: his imagination was his only guide. . . ."

"And he came back!" said Markham huskily.

"Yes," nodded Vance, "he came back. He had to come back! But in that interim of his indecision something unforeseen and horrible had taken place. Brisbane had returned to the house—he had returned stealthily, letting himself in with his own key. He had returned to kill his brother! He looked into the library: the lights were on, but Archer was not there. He went to the drawer of the table and took oot the revolver. Then he went upstairs. Perhaps he saw the light through Archer's bedroom door. He opened the door. . . ."

Vance paused.

"Y' know, Markham, I am inclined to think that Brisbane was prepared for any emergency. He had worked out a scheme for killing Archer, placing him in his bedroom with the revolver in his hand, and then bolting the door from the hall, so as to make it appear as suicide. And when he saw Archer sitting in his easy chair, apparently asleep, he no doubt felt that the fates were with him, that his road had been made easy. I can see him tiptoeing across the room to the easy chair where the other sat. I can see him place the revolver against Archer's right temple and pull the trigger,—the impact of the bullet drove Archer's head to the left. Then I can see Brisbane place the revolver in Archer's hand and return to the door, where he carefully put in operation the mechanism he had worked out for bolting the door from the hall. . . . My word, Markham, what a situation! — Brisbane shooting a dead man, and then elaborately setting the stage to prove that it was suicide!"

"Good G—d!" breathed Markham.

"But during this tragic farce," Vance went on, "Wrede had arrived at a decision. He had decided to come back to Archer Coe and finish, for all time, the crime which apparently he had only started. He bethought himself of the Ting yao vase he had broken, and perhaps fearing its absence would be noted, he picked out a superficially similar vase from his own small collection and carried it back to the Coe house. The hour, I should say, was around ten o'clock. . . . Wrede opened the gate of the rear yard, and left it ajar; and it was then that the Scottie followed him on his dark errand. He went in the rear door of the Coe house, leaving it open—and the Scottie followed. Everything was black and still. He went through the dining room into the library, and placed his own inferior vase on the teakwood base where the Ting yao vase had stood. He took the dagger from the vase in which he had hidden it, and moved toward the hall. . . ."

Vance raised himself a little in his chair.

"And when he reached the door, Markham, he saw a figure coming down the stairs from the second floor. There was a light in the library, but it was not sufficient to make possible an absolute recognition of the figure on the stairs. To Wrede that figure was Archer. (Archer and Brisbane, you'll recall, were of the same height and general build, and they did not look dissimilar). Wrede stood behind the portieres at the library door, the dagger grasped in his hand, and waited till his opportunity came. The shadowy figure came down the stairs and walked toward the closet door at the end of the hall,—Brisbane was no doubt going back for the overcoat and hat which he had left there on coming in. But Wrede, with his inflamed imagination, assumed that Archer was preparing to leave the house to tell some one of the attack—to report him to the police, perhaps. He couldn't be sure: he only knew that it spelled danger for himself. And he was more thoroughly determined than ever to put an end to Archer.

"Brisbane, as I now see it, had just placed the strings, which he had used for bolting Archer's door, in the pocket of his top-coat, when Wrede came silently upon him from behind and thrust the dagger into his back. He collapsed immediately, and Wrede pushed the body, which he thought was Archer's, entirely into the closet and closed the door. He went back to the libray; and it was at this time that he probably stumbled over the Scottie, which had followed him in. He decided that it was safest to get rid of her immediately. She may even have barked, or made some sound when he stumbled over her; and he was in no frame of mind at that moment to meet new emergencies logically. He dropped the dagger back into the vase and picked up the poker. Then he struck the Scottie over the head.—it was the simplest and most direct way of dealing with an unexpected circumstance when there was no time for thought. The presence of the dog was unexpected, incalculable. . . .

"There can be little doubt that the man was in a panic—and with sufficient reason. He did not even switch off the lights in the library. The whole thing was amazin'. He went home through the rear door, thinking that he had left Archer's dead body in the coat closet. Then, when Gamble summoned him the following morning, he found that Archer was still in his bedroom, behind a bolted door! The man must have felt that the whole world had gone insane. I imagine he rushed to the hall closet, when Gamble wasn't looking, to check his sanity, so to speak; and then he saw the dead body of Brisbane. Some of the truth, at least, must have dawned upon him. He had killed his friend—his ally—by accident! What mental torture he must have suffered! And there was also in his mind the terrible problem of Archer's death. . . . I wonder the man stood up so well when we arrived. The cold desperation of the final necessity, I suppose. . . ."

Markham moved about the room restlessly.

"I see it all," he muttered, as if to himself. He stopped and swung round. "But what of Wrede's attempted murder of Grassi?"

"That was logical and in keeping with his character," said Vance. "Miss Lake explained it—intense jealousy of his lucky rival. Wrede thought he had successfully pulled the wool over our eyes, and the fact gave him confidence. He knew exactly where the dagger was; he knew the domestic arrangements of the Coe house; he had a key to the rear door; and he doubtless knew of the broken lock on Grassi's door. He had probably brooded over his loss of a wealthy bride until he could no longer resist the urge to follow up his—as he thought—successful murder of Archer by the murder of Grassi. He would thus have won a complete victory over the forces that had temporarily defeated him. His frustrated ego again. And had it not been for Liang's perspicacity—which Wrede underestimated—and the shift of Grassi's arm, he would have succeeded."

"But what," asked Markham, "first gave you the idea that Wrede had committed the murders?"

"The Scottie, Markham," answered Vance. "After having found she belonged to Higginbottom, I ascertained that he had given her to his inamorata who lived in the Belle Maison. And once I had followed the Scottie's trail and knew that she belonged next door, I made a bit of an investigation. I learned from a perfectly honest Irish maid that both Higginbottom and his lady fair—a Miss Delafield—had been having a farewell dinner at the time Coe was murdered. Y' see, I had thought perhaps that some blond lady with a Duplaix lipstick had admitted the Scottie into the Coe house earlier in the evening. But although Miss Delafield used Duplaix lipstick and had undoubtedly called on Archer Coe before half-past seven, it was not she who had let the Scottie in; for the little dog was in the Delafield apartment after nine o'clock that night, and had disappeared some time between then and half-past ten, at which hour the maid instituted a search for her. Moreover, I learned that the Scottie could have entered the Coe house only if some one had unlocked the gate between the Belle Maison and the vacant lot next to the Coe residence. And I further learned that there was no way for the Scottie to escape from the Belle Maison, except into the rear yard. Only some one who had unlocked the gate and opened the rear door of the Coe residence would have given her the opportunity of entering the house. And Wrede was the only person who could have done this."

* * * *

The following year Hilda Lake and Grassi were married, and the alliance seems to have been highly successful. Vance became the owner of Miss MacTavish. He had become attached to her during the days he had nursed her back to health, and the romance (if one may call it that) between Higginbottom and Doris Delafield ran on the rocks shortly after the lady's return from Europe. After her break with the major she showed little interest in the dog; and Higginbottom, in appreciation of some nebulous favor which he considered Vance had done him, made him a present of the bitch. Vance placed her in his kennels, but she did not seem to be happy there; and he finally took her into his apartment. He still has her, and she has been "pensioned" for life. Sometimes I think that Vance would rather part with one of his treasured Cezannes than with little Miss MacTavish.

THE END

Townsend Club Organized at Cornelius with 57 Members

Mrs. Pugh President; Couple Move to Forest Grove; Miss Miles Bride; Birthday Celebrated

(By Miss Dorothy Cooke)

CORNELIUS—A Townsend meeting was held August 7 at the Methodist church. Sam Carnes of McMinnville explained the plan and Arthur Moore, district organizer from Monmouth, presided in the organization of the club.

Mrs. Laura Pugh was elected president; Ernest Creekpaum, vice-president; Mrs. Mattie Smith, secretary, and Mrs. Lotta Fox, treasurer. Fifty-seven members were received into the club. Sam J. Harms, president of the McMinnville club, helped in the organization and Mrs. Laura Pugh introduced the speakers. Ray Shaw led the group singing, accompanied at the piano by Mrs. Louise Cochrane. Maxine McPherson and Leota White were ushers.

Miss Miles Bride

Word has been received by Cornelius friends of the recent marriage of Miss Percie Miles of Molalla. Rev. and Mrs. H. H. Miles and family are former residents of Cornelius, where Rev. Miles was pastor of the M. E. church.

Move to Grove

Mr. and Mrs. Atha Russell and daughter Linda Kay have moved to Forest Grove.

Mrs. Lester Mooberry returned home Sunday from the Jones hospital, where she recently underwent an operation.

Miss Marie Melanson returned Saturday from the summer session at Oregon State college, where she took a primary course. She began Monday teaching in the nursery school at David Hill school in Hillsboro.

J. C. Jacobs Jr. of Perry, Okla., visited Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cochran Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ashley Jackson and son, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Cartwright and two sons, Mr. and Mrs. Ole Olson and children, Misses Martha Spiesschaert and Frances Pugh and Paul Senko and Earl Phelps enjoyed a wiener roast Thursday evening at Balm Grove.

Rev. John Ebert of Forest Grove supplied the M. E. church pulpit Sunday, due to the death of Charles Reed, son of Rev. and Mrs. Charles Reed.

Beverly Trites Honored

Mrs. Ray Trites was hostess at a party Wednesday afternoon at her home, honoring the birthday of her daughter Beverly. The afternoon was spent in playing games, after which refreshments were served on a dainty table with green and yellow color scheme. Present were Margaret Jane Dooher, Joyce, Paula and Georgiana Jones; Lucille, Priscilla and Mary Rae Mann, Sally and Connie Lou Huson, Maxine McPherson, Esther Hienie, Jack and Jerry Cartwright, Tony Dooher and the honor guest.

Manns Buy Home

Mr. and Mrs. William Mann and family have purchased the house owned by Mrs. Emma Schmale.

Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Gnos and children and Frank Boge enjoyed a fishing trip to Carlton lake Sunday.

Mrs. Frank Waibel and children, Mrs. Margaret Gnos and Miss Frances, Miss Mildred Haase and Mrs. Mattie Smith were dinner party guests Wednesday of Mrs. Walter Austin of Yamhill. Mr. and Mrs. Austin plan to move soon to Iowa Hill, where a new house is being constructed.

There will be no meeting of the Women's Home Missionary society of the M. E. church during August.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mann and Barbara Jane of Portland visited Mrs. Martha Mann Wednesday evening.

Mrs. Frank Koch entertained with a birthday party at her home last week. About 30 guests were present.

Beverly Trites recently returned from a visit with friends in Portland.

Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Crosby and family of California have been guests of Mr. and Mrs. George Crosby.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Ingler have moved to McMinnville.

Mrs. C. Briggs of Portland greeted old friends in Cornelius Thursday.

Mrs. M. Herman and children are enjoying a trip to the beaches.

Miss Beth Cochrane was a business caller at Corvallis last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schmale and children of Vancouver, Wash., visited Mrs. Emma Schmale Sunday.

Born, to Mr. and Mrs. John Snyder of Hillsboro, last week, a boy. Mrs. Snyder was formerly June Henderson of Cornelius.

Mrs. Dooher to Entertain

Mrs. Frank Dooher will entertain the St. Alexander church Ladies' Altar society at her home Thursday afternoon.

School Starts Soon

Cornelius grade school will open September 2.

Miss Marie DePrez of Portland spent the week-end at the home of her mother, Mrs. George DePrez, and family.

Mrs. Melanson Home

Mrs. Margaret Melanson returned Saturday from a trip to North Dakota and Minnesota.

Mrs. Henry Behrman, Misses Blanche Finegan and Mildred Rock and Frank Oliver returned Saturday from Epworth League institute at Falls City.

Many from Cornelius attended the funeral services of Charles Reed at the Hillsboro M. E. church Monday afternoon.

Kansas City Man Breaks His Wrist

(By Mrs. J. A. McCoy)

KANSAS CITY—While J. P. Vanderzanden was helping J. A. McCoy fill his woodshed Monday, some wood fell out of the truck and caused Vanderzanden to fall and break his wrist.

Mrs. E. B. Webb, Russell Hickey and Jack Hopson visited friends in Portland Saturday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. J. A. McCoy visited at the Lloyd Anderson home at Hillside Tuesday afternoon.

Guy Raymond spent a few days last week visiting relatives and friends in Portland.

Mrs. Earl Waldron and her mother, Mrs. Zweifel visited Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Smith in Portland a few days last week.

Rent Farm

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Waddle of Dilley rented the ranch from Mrs. Waddle's mother, Mrs. Zoe Quick, and are moving this week.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Strohmayer purchased a new Pontiac car last week.

Mrs. French Hostess

Mrs. Deward French entertained the Harmony club at her home Wednesday afternoon.

Misses Gladys and Ethel McCoy returned home Friday from Portland, where they have been visiting their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Davis.

Mr. and Mrs. John Brady of Hillside visited Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Brady and family Tuesday evening.

Celebrates Birthday

Granddad Conklin celebrated his seventy-fourth birthday anniversary Thursday. His son Carl of Portland came out to help him celebrate.

Eli Poe of Forest Grove visited Friday evening at the J. A. McCoy home.

Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Vanderzanden and son Ralph and Mr. and Mrs. J. A. McCoy and daughters Gladys and Ethel left Saturday morning for Bay Ocean, to spend a week's vacation.

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Firemen Burn Grass, Weeds

Beaverton Sprûced Up; Miss Matzke Bride August 3

BEAVERTON—The Beaverton volunteer fire department has been burning the grass and weeds along streets and on vacant lots. The department will receive pay to the amount it would cost the city to have the grass cut and disposed of.

Carr Councilman

Guy Carr has been named as the new member of the city council.

Rev. and Mrs. George Taylor and family accompanied by Samuel Rose of Washington, D. C., left Monday for a two weeks' stay at the beach. Mr. Rose in the grandson of Samuel C. Lancaster.

Dr. and Mrs. C. E. Mason and sons John and David recently returned from a short stay in Vancouver, B. C.

Beaverton Garden club will not hold meetings during August.

Miss Matzke Bride

Miss Alma Matzke, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Matske, was married to Howard Leibrick, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Leibrick, August 3 at the home of Father McAllister at Beaverton. The couple left immediately for a week's stay at Oregon beaches. They will make their home in Portland.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Scott spent the past week in California.

Miss Margaret West recently returned from a three weeks' trip to St. Louis, Mo., where she was a delegate to the national convention of the Walther League of the Lutheran church.

The local Rebekah lodge met August 7, with a good attendance, including several visitors from Tigard. Watermelon was served by Miss Katherine Dessinger, Mrs. Elmer Benson and Mrs. Earl Drorbaugh.

Miss Alma Matzke was honored with a kitchen shower Thursday evening at the home of her sister, Mrs. Bruce Steel. Twenty guests were in attendance.

Local Editor Appointed on National Committee

W. Verne McKinney, editor of the Argus, has been appointed on a special labor committee for the National Editorial association. The committee is to function as an advisory group to the membership on matters relating to employer-employe relationships and which by their nature will inevitably affect the cost of producing and distributing newspapers. The committee was ordered created at the national convention in New Orleans.

Our classified columns may have just what you are looking for—Read them. tf

ASK YOURSELF

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation. In other words if the people who lived before Christ without a Bethlehem manger, a Gethsemane's agony, a calvary: Death, or a resurrection. Morning with all its triumphs had to answer for every disobedience, how shall we escape who have heard angels singing, "There is born this day in the city of David a Saviour."—E. C. Bennett.—Pd. ad.

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