

SERIAL STORY

PICTURES BY A. WEIL

The BRASS BOWL

By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

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SYNOPSIS.

"Mad" Dan Maitland, on reaching his New York bachelor club, met an attractive young woman at the door. Janitor O'Hagan assured him no one had been within that day. Dan discovered a woman's finger prints in dust on his desk, along with a letter from his attorney. Maitland dined with Bannerman, his attorney. Dan set out for Greenfield, to get his family jewels. During his walk to the country seat, he met the young woman in gray, whom he had seen leaving his bachelors' club. Her auto had broken down. He fixed it. By a ruse she "lost" him. Maitland, on reaching home, surprised lady in gray, cracking the safe containing his gems. She, apparently, took him for a well-known crook, Daniel Anistey. Half-hypnotized, Maitland opened his safe, took therefrom the jewels, and gave them to her, first forming a partnership in crime. The real Dan Anistey, sought by police of the world, appeared on the same mission. Maitland overcame him. He met the girl outside the house and they sped on to New York in her auto. He had the jewels and she promised to meet him that day. Maitland received a "Mr. Snaith."

CHAPTER V.—Continued.

Maitland accepted the card and elevated his brows. "Oh!" he said, putting it down, his manner becoming perceptibly less cordial. "I say, O'Hagan."

"Yessor?"

"I shall be busy for—Will half an hour satisfy you, Mr. Snaith?"

"You are most kind," the stranger bowed.

"In half an hour, O'Hagan, you may return."

"Very good, sor." And the hall door closed.

"So," said Maitland, turning to face the man squarely, "you are from police headquarters?"

"As you see," Mr. Snaith motioned delicately toward his business card—as he called it.

"Well?"—after a moment's pause.

"I am a detective, you understand."

"Perfectly," Maitland assented, unmoved.

His caller seemed partly amused, partly—but very slightly—embarrassed. "I have been assigned to cover the affair of last night," he continued blandly. "I presume you have no objection to giving me what information you may possess."

"Credentials?"

The man's amusement was made visible in a fugitive smile, half-hidden by his small and neatly trimmed mustache. Mutely eloquent, he turned back the lapel of his coat, exposing a small shield; at which Maitland glanced casually.

"Very well," he consented, bored but resigned. "Fire ahead; but make it as brief as you can; I've an engagement in"—glancing at the clock—"an hour, and must dress."

"I'll detain you no longer than is essential. . . . Of course you understand how keen we are after this man Anistey."

"What puzzles me," Maitland interrupted, "is how you got wind of the affair so soon."

"Then you have not heard?" Mr. Snaith exhibited polite surprise.

"I am just out of bed."

"Anistey escaped shortly after you left Maitland Manor."

"Ah!"

Mr. Snaith knitted his brows, evidently at a loss whether to ascribe Maitland's exclamation as due to surprise, regret, or relief. Which pleased Maitland, who had been at pains to make his tone noncommittal. In point of fact he was neither surprised nor regretful.

"Thunder!" he continued, slowly. "I forgot to 'phone Higgins."

"That is why I called. Your butler did not know where you could be found. You had left in great haste, promising to send constables; you failed to do so; Higgins got no word. In the course of an hour or so his charge began to choke—or pretended to. Higgins became alarmed and removed the gag. Anistey lay quiet until his face resumed its normal color and then began to abuse Higgins for a thick-headed idiot."

Mr. Snaith interrupted himself to chuckle lightly.

"You noticed a resemblance?" he resumed.

Maitland, too, was smiling. "Something of the sort."

"It is really remarkable, if you will

permit me to say so." Snaith was studying his host's face intently. "Higgins, poor fellow, had his faith shaken to the foundations. This Anistey must be a clever actor as well as a master burglar. Having cursed Higgins root and branch, he got his second wind and explained that he was—Mr. Maitland! Conceive Higgins' position. What could he do?"

"What he did, I gather."

"Precisely."

"And Anistey?"

"Once loosed, he knocked Higgins over with the butt of a revolver, jumped out of the window and vanished. By the time the butler got his senses back, Anistey, presumably, was miles away. . . . Mr. Maitland!" said Snaith, sharply.

"Yes?" responded Maitland, elevating his brows, refusing to be startled. "Why," crisply, "didn't you send the constables from Greenfield, according to your promise?"

Maitland laughed uneasily and looked down, visibly embarrassed, acting with consummate address, playing the game for all he was worth; and enjoying it hugely.

"Why . . . I . . . Really, Mr. Snaith, I must confess—"

"A confession would aid us materially," dryly. "The case is perplexing. You round up a burglar sought by the police of two continents, and listlessly permit his escape. Why?"

"I would rather not be pressed," said Maitland, with evident candor; "but, since you say it is imperative, that you must know—" Snaith inclined his head affirmatively. "Why . . . to tell the truth, I was a bit under the weather last night; out with a party of friends, you know. Dare say we all had a bit more than we could carry. The capture was purely accidental; we had other plans for

"You shall see for yourself," he said, depositing the bag on the desk and fumbling with drawstring. "If you will be kind enough to step over here—"

Mr. Snaith, still unconvinced, hesitated, then assented, halting a brief distance from Maitland and toying abstractedly with his cane while the young man plucked at the drawstring.

"Decided tight knot, this," commented Maitland, annoyed.

"No matter. Don't trouble, please. I'm quite satisfied, believe me."

"Oh, you are!"

Maitland turned; and in the act of turning, the loaded head of the cane landed with crushing force upon his temple.

For an instant he stood swaying, eyes closed, face robbed of every vestige of color, deep lines of agony graven in his forehead and about his mouth; then fell like a lifeless thing, limp and invertebrate.

The so-distant Mr. Snaith caught him and let him gently and without sound to the floor.

"Poor fool!" he commented, kneeling to make a hasty examination. "Hope I haven't done for him. . . . It would be the first time. . . . Bad precedent! . . . So! He's all right—conscious within an hour. . . . Too soon!" he added, standing and looking down. "Well, turn about's fair play."

He swung on his heel and entered the hallway, pausing at the door long enough to shoot the bolt; then passed hastily through the other chambers, searching, to judge by his manner.

In the end a closed door attracted him; he jerked it open, with an exclamation of relief. It gave upon a large bare room, used by Maitland as a trunk closet. Here were stout leather straps and cords in ample measure.

"Mr. Snaith" selected one from them quickly but with care, choosing the strongest.

In two more minutes, Maitland, trussed, gagged, still unconscious, and breathing heavily, occupied a divan in his smoking-room, while his assailant, in the bedroom, ears keen to catch the least sound from without, was rapidly and cheerfully arraying himself in the Maitland gray-striped flannels and accessories—even to the gray socks which had been specified.

"The less chances one takes, the better," soliloquized "Mr. Snaith."

He stood erect, in another man's shoes, squaring back his shoulders, discarding the disguising stoop, and confronted his image in a pier-glass.

"Good enough Maitland," he commented, with a little satisfied nod to his counterfeit presentment. "But we'll make it better still."

A single quick jerk denuded his upper lip; he stowed the mustache carefully away in his breast pocket. The moistened corner of a towel made quick work of the crow's feet about his eyes, and, simultaneously, robbed him of a dozen apparent years. A pair of yellow chammois gloves, placed conveniently on a dressing table, covered hands that no art could make resemble Maitland's. And it was Daniel Maitland who studied himself in the pier-glass.

Contented, the criminal returned to the smoking-room. A single glance assured him that his victim was still dead to the world. He sat down at the desk, drew off the gloves, and opened the bag; a peep within which was enough. With a deep and slow intake of breath he knotted the drawstring and dropped the bag into his pocket. A jeweled cigarette case of unique design shared the same fate.

Quick eyes roaming the desk observed the telegram form upon which Maitland had written Cressy's name and address. Momentarily perplexed,

"But his departure was somewhat hurried. I can conceive that he might abandon his kit—"

"But it was not his."

"Not Anistey's?"

"Anistey does not depend on such antiquated methods, Mr. Maitland; save that in extreme instances, with a particularly stubborn safe, he employs a high explosive that, so far as we can find out, is practically noiseless. Its nature is a mystery. . . . But such old-fashioned strong-boxes as yours at Greenfield he opens by ear, so to speak—listens to the combination. He was once an expert, reputedly employed by a prominent firm of safe manufacturers, in whose service he gained the skill that has made him—what he is."

"But,"—Maitland cast about at random, feeling himself cornered—"may be not have had accomplices?"

"He's no such fool. Unless he has gone mad, he worked alone. I presume you discovered no accomplice?"

"If the devil, no!"

Snaith smiled mysteriously, then fell thoughtful, pondering.

"You are an enigma," he said, at length. "I can not understand why you refuse us all information, when I consider that the jewels were yours—"

"Are mine," Maitland corrected.

"No longer."

"I beg your pardon; I have them."

Snaith shook his head, smiling incredulously. Maitland flushed with annoyance and resentment, then on impulse rose and strode into the adjoining bedroom, returning with a small canvas bag.

"You shall see for yourself," he said, depositing the bag on the desk and fumbling with drawstring. "If you will be kind enough to step over here—"

Mr. Snaith, still unconvinced, hesitated, then assented, halting a brief distance from Maitland and toying abstractedly with his cane while the young man plucked at the drawstring.

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Quick eyes roaming the desk observed the telegram form upon which Maitland had written Cressy's name and address. Momentarily perplexed,

the thief pondered this; then, with a laughing oath, seized the pen and scribbled, with no attempt to imitate the other's handwriting, a message: "Regret unavoidable detention. Letter of explanation follows."

To this Maitland's name was signed. "That ought to clear him neatly, if I understand the emergency."

The thief rose, folding the telegraph blank, and returned to the bedroom, taking up his hat and the murderous cane as he went. Here he gathered together all the articles of clothing that he had discarded, conveying the mass to the trunkroom, where an empty and unlocked kit-bag received it all.

"That, I think, is about all."

He was very methodical, this criminal, this Anistey. Nothing essential escaped him. He rejoiced in the minutiae of detail that went to cover up his tracks so thoroughly that his campaigns were as remarkable for the clues he did leave with malicious design, as for those that he didn't.

One final thing held his attention: A bowl of hammered brass, inverted beneath a ponderous book, upon the desk. Why? In a twinkling he had removed both and was studying the impression of a woman's hand in the dust, and nodding over it.

"That girl," deduced Anistey. "Novice, poor little fool!—or she wouldn't have wasted time searching here for the jewels. Good looker, though—from what little he"—with a glance at Maitland—"gave me a chance to see of her. Seems to have snared him, all right, if she did miss the haul. . . . Little idiot! What right has a woman in this business, anyway? Well, here's one thing that will never land me in the pen."

As, with nice care, he replaced both bowl and book, a door slammed below stairs took him to the hall in an instant. Maitland's Panama was hanging on the hatrack, Maitland's collection of walking sticks bristled in a stand beneath it. Anistey appropriated the former and chose one of the latter. "Fair exchange," he considered, with a harsh laugh. "After all, he loses nothing. . . . but the jewels."

He was out and at the foot of the stairs just as O'Hagan reached the ground floor from the basement.

"Ah, O'Hagan!" The assumption of Maitland's ironic drawl was impeccable. O'Hagan no more questioned it than he questioned his own sanity. "Here, send this wire at once, please; and, pressing a coin into the ready palm, 'keep the change. I was hurried and didn't bother to call you. And, I say, O'Hagan!' from the outer door: 'Yissor.'"

"If that fellow Snaith ever calls again, I'm not at home."

"Very good, sor."

Anistey permitted himself the slightest of smiles, pausing on the stoop to draw on the chammois gloves. As he did so his eye flickered disinterestedly over the personality of a man standing on the opposite walk and staring at the apartment house. He was a short man, of stoutish habit, sloppily dressed, with a derby pulled down over one eye, cigar butt protruding arrogantly from beneath a heavy black mustache, beefy cheeks, and thick-soled boots dully polished.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PRODUCT OF FAR-OFF BRAZIL.

Druggist Explains Where Seductive Sarsaparilla Comes From.

The druggist served his warm and thirsty patrons with icy sarsaparilla—called "sasp'rella" in the vernacular.

"Did you ever stop to think where this delicious stuff comes from?" he asked.

"Sassafras, isn't it?" they hazarded.

"Sassafras nothing," said the druggist. "Sarsaparilla is made of zarza roots, and zarza roots come from the Amazonas swamps of Brazil."

"Fearful swamps they are. Smelly black mud—mosquitoes in millions—snakes and crabs—heat, poison, orchids, fever."

"And here the natives camp for weeks at a time, gathering zarza roots for the summer sarsaparilla trade. The vine runs along the ground, the roots are located and half of them are taken, the remaining half is carefully covered with soil again, so that they will sprout for next year."

"It is because sarsaparilla, like quinine, grows in fever soil that it is good for fever."

Costly Necklaces.

The most costly necklace in the world belongs to the Countess Henckel, a lady well known in London and Paris society, the value of which is said to be \$250,000. It is really composed of three necklaces, each of historic interest. One was the property of the ex-queen of Naples, sister of the late Austrian empress; the second, once the property of a Spanish grandee, while the third was formerly owned by the Empress Eugenie. Not long ago a necklace composed of 412 pearls, in eight rows, the property of the late duchess of Montrose, was sold for \$60,000. The Empress Frederick of Germany is said to have possessed a necklace of 35 pearls, worth at least \$200,000, while Lady Ilchester's necklace of black pearls is valued at about \$125,000.

POVERTY NOT ALL AN EVIL

Writer Unable to Perceive Manifest Advantage in Being Heir to Great Riches.

Passing more or less friendly comment on the recent birth of another Rockefeller, a grandson of the elder Rockefeller, the Denver Republican says: "If the tinkers with and dabbles in psychology and sociology can show how to make this new boy a Rockefeller in more than name they will render the world a real service."

This latest possible heir to one of the world's largest material fortunes is a problem. What manner of man he will make cannot be determined by all the psychologists, sociologists and biologists of the world. Some allowance must be made for predispositions, for the inherency of the child, and for environmental forces which may either accentuate or check and weaken his inherent inclinations. Like begets like only sometimes. The law of variation, in favorable circumstances, is as unfailing as the law of persistence. Often the boy is his father or his grandfather enlarged or reduced, or merely modified in order to fit into his own social groove.

Born to a fortune of staggering magnitude, the Rockefeller baby cannot be regarded as a promising biological asset; not that any fair man will hold aught against him on account of his wealth, but it must be realized that such a child can ordinarily have little chance to develop the carving qualities of the pioneer, initiative and originality of thought and action, and, therefore, must be in constant danger of lapsing into a life of indifference, ease and indolence.

Poverty is too much lamented, riches too much praised; mere poverty makes a beggar of no man; on the contrary. Want, lean-faced want, is one of the world's greatest benefactors, and the man or woman who has not at some period of life known the spice and impetus of this influence, has missed something worth while.—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Australia's Large Wool Product.

That Australia is first and foremost a wool growing country is shown by the latest statistics for the season which closed in the fall, and which show 1910 to have been the most prosperous year in the history of the wool trade of the commonwealth. This has been due to abundant rainfall which has helped the growth of plenty of feed for the sheep, and to high prices in the market for wool. The flocks of sheep in Australia and New Zealand increased during the year by 6,179,614 head, the total being now 115,525,581 head. The sheep have also shown a greater production of wool per capita than in previous years. The actual over-sea shipments of wool during the past twelve months have amounted to 1,921,705 bales from Australia and 512,938 bales from New Zealand, a total of no less than 2,434,643 bales, or 816,861,665 pounds, valued at \$161,004,490, an increase of 146,539 bales and in money value \$34,953,058 as compared with the record clip of the previous season.

Sharks As Food.

Recent investigation has revealed the fact that the common shark forms no inconsiderable item in the food of fisher folk along the shores of the North Sea. The consumption last year amounted to nearly a million pounds weight.

The fish naturally does not come to market under its proper name, but is first smoked or pickled in strips and in this form is sold as sea eel. The sharks are captured as they pursue herring or mackerel shoals or lie in wait for ray and plaice along the coasts.

Another coarse and contemned fish, the pike, is also eaten in large quantities under the name green bones, so called because of the intense arsenical green color the pike's bones take on when cooked. On the shores of the Baltic the devilfish is marketed under the high-sounding designation sturgeon trout.

Epicurism.

Epicurism has been grossly slandered. He did not teach the doctrine that our "first business was to have a good time," and that a good time meant "the gratification of the appetites and passions." He taught that the greatest good consisted of "peace of mind springing from virtue." He distinctly declared that pleasures of the mind were far superior to those of the mere animal nature, and that the only way to be truly and lastingly happy was to subordinate the appetites and passions to reason and live not like an animal, but like a man. It was such happiness that he declared to be the aim of life.

Made of Wood.

Kind Lady—But, my poor man, you old me if I gave you a meal you would keep warm with the snow shovel.

Sandy Pikes—Right you are, mum. I broke it to pieces an' made a cozy little blaze dat took all de frost out of me bones.