

SERIAL STORY

PICTURES BY A. WEIL

The BRASS BOWL

By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

(Copyright 1927, The Bohls-Merrill Co.)

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 Greenwich 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 bachelor's 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 Anisty. Anisty, having noticed Maitland open his safe, took therefrom the jewels, and gave them to her, first forming a partnership in crime. The real Dan Anisty, 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. Smith," introducing himself as a detective. To shield the girl in gray, Maitland, about to show him the jewels, supposedly lost, was felled by a blow from "Smith's" cane. The latter proved to be Anisty himself and he secured the gems. Anisty, who was Maitland's double, masqueraded as the latter.

CHAPTER V.—Continued.

At sight of him the thief was conscious of an inward tremor, followed by a thrill of excitement like a wave of heat sweeping through his being. Instantaneously his eyes flashed; then were dulled. Imperturbable, listless, hall-marked the prey of ennui, he waited, undecided, upon the stoop, while the watcher opposite, catching sight of him, abruptly abandoned his slouch and hastened across the street.

"Excuse me," he began in a loud tone, while yet a dozen feet away, "but ain't this Mr. Maitland?"

Anisty lifted his brows and shoulders at one and the same time and bowed slightly.

"Well, my good man?"

"I'm a detective from headquarters, Mr. Maitland. We got a 'phone from Greenfields, Long Island, this morning—from the local police. Your butler—"

"Ah! I see; about this man Anisty? You don't mean to tell me—that? I shall discharge Higgins at once. Just on my way to breakfast. Won't you join me? We can talk this matter over at our leisure. What do you say to Eugene's? It's handy, and I dare say we can find a quiet corner. By the way, have you the time concealed about your person?"

Anisty was fumbling in his fob-pocket and inwardly cursing himself for having been such an ass as to overlook Maitland's timepiece. "Deuced awkward!" he muttered in genuine annoyance. "I've mislaid my watch."

"It's most one o'clock, Mr. Maitland."

Flattered, the man from headquarters dropped into step by the burglar's side.

CHAPTER VI. Eugene's at Two.

"Since we don't want to be overheard," remarked Mr. Anisty, "it's no use trying the grillroom downstairs, although I admit it is more interesting."

"Just as yeh say, sir."

Awed and awkward, the police detective stumbled up the steps behind his imperturbable guide; it was a great honor, in his eyes, to lunch in company with a "swell." Man of stodgy common sense and limited education that he was, the glamour of the Maitland millions obscured his otherwise clear vision completely. And uneasily he speculated as to whether or not he would be able to manipulate correctly the usual display of knives and forks.

An obsequious headwaiter greeted them, bowing, in the lobby. "Good afternoon, Mr. Maitland," he murmured. "Table for two?"

"Good afternoon," responded the masquerader, with an assumed abstraction, inwardly congratulating himself upon having hit upon a restaurant where the real Maitland was evidently known. There were few circumstances which he could not turn to profit, fewer emergencies to which he could not rise, he complimented Handsome Dan Anisty.

"A table for two," he drawled Maitland-wise. "In a corner somewhere, away from the crowd, you know."

"This way, if you please, Mr. Maitland."

"By the way," suggested the burglar, unfolding his serviette and glancing keenly about the room—which by good chance was thinly populated, "by the way, you know, you haven't told me your name yet."

"Hickey—John W. Hickey, detective bureau."

"Thank you." A languid hand pushed the pink menu card across the table to Mr. Hickey. "And what do you see that you'd like?"

"Well . . ." Hickey became conscious that both unwieldy feet were nervously twined about the legs of his chair; blushed; disentangled them; and in an attempt to cover his confusion, plunged madly into consideration of a column of table-d'hotel French, not one word of which conveyed the slightest particle of information to his intelligence.

"Well," he repeated, and moistened his lips. The room seemed suddenly very hot, notwithstanding the fact that an obnoxious electric fan was sending a current of cool air down the back of his neck.

"I ain't," he declared in ultimate desperation, "hungry, much. Had a bite a little while back, over to the Gilsey house bar."

"Would a little drink—?"

"Thanks. I don't mind."

"Walter, bring Mr. Hickey a bottle of No. 72. For me—let me see—safe as lait," with a grand air, "and rolls . . . You must remember this is my breakfast, Mr. Hickey. I make it a rule never to drink anything for six hours after rising." Anisty selected a cigarette from the Maitland case, lit it, and contemplated the detective's countenance with a winning smile.

"Now, as to this Anisty affair last night."

Under the stimulus of the champagne, to say naught of his relief at



"Good Afternoon," Responded the Masquerader.

having evaded the ordeal of the cutlery, Hickey discoursed variously and at length upon the engrossing subject of Anisty, gentleman-cracksman, while the genial counterpart of Daniel Maitland listened with apparent but deceptive apathy, and had much ado to keep from laughing in his guest's face as the latter, perspiring earnest, unfolded his plans for laying the burglar by the heels.

From time to time, and at intervals steadily decreasing, the hand of the host sought the neck of the bottle, inclining it carefully above the thin-stemmed glass that Hickey kept in almost constant motion. And the detective's fatuous loquacity flowed as the contents of the bottle ebbed.

Yet, as the minutes wore on, the burglar began to be conscious that it was but a shallow well of information and amusement that he pumped. The game, fascinating with its spice of daring as it had primarily been, began to pall. At length the masquerader calculated the hour as ripe for what he had contemplated from the beginning; and interrupted Hickey with scant consideration, in the middle of a most interesting exposition.

"You'll pardon me, I'm sure, if I trouble you again for the time."

The fat red fingers sought uncertainly for the timepiece; the bottle was now empty. The hour, as announced, was ten minutes to two.

"I've an engagement," invented Anisty, plausibly, "with a friend at two. If you'll excuse me—? Garcon, l'addition!"

"Then I understand, Mister Maitland, we c'n count on yeh?"

Anisty, eyelids drooping, tipped back his chair a trifle and regarded Hickey with a fair imitation of the whimsical Maitland smile. "Hardly, I think."

"Why not?"—truculently.

"To be frank with you, I have three excellent reasons. The first should be sufficient: I'm too lazy."

Anisty airily waved the indictment aside. "Moreover, I have lost nothing. You see, I happened in just at the right moment; my criminal friend got nothing for his pains. The jewels are safe. Reason No. 2: Having retained my property, I hold no grudge against Anisty."

"Well—I dunno—"

"And as for reason No. 3: I don't care to have this affair advertised. If the papers get hold of it they'll cook up a lot of silly details that'll excite the cupid of every thief in the country, and make me more trouble than I care to—ah—contemplate."

Hickey's eyes glistened. "Of course, if yeh want it kept quiet—" he suggested, significantly.

Anisty's hand sought his pocket. "How much?"

"Well, I guess I can leave that to you. Yeh ought to know how bad yeh want the matter hushed."

"As I calculate it, then, fifty ought to be enough for the boys; and fifty will repay you for your trouble."

The end of Hickey's expensive panacea was tilted independently toward the ceiling. "Shouldn't wonder if it would," he murmured, gratified.

Anisty stuffed something bulky back into his pocket and wadded apothecary something—green and yellow colored—into a little pill, which he presently flicked carelessly across the table. The detective's large mottled paw closed over it and moved toward his waistcoat.

"As I was sayin'," he resumed, "I'm sorry yeh don't see yer way to givin' us a hand. But n'rhaps yeh're right. Still, if the citizens'd only give us a hand out in a while—"

"Ah, but what gives you your living, Hickey?" argued the amateur sophist. "What but the activities of the criminal element? If society combined with you for the elimination of crime, what would become of your job?"

He rose and wrung the disconsolate one warmly by the hand. "But there, I am sorry to have to hurry you away. . . . Now that you know where to find me, drop in some evening and have a cigar and a chat. I'm in town a good deal, off and on, and always glad to see a friend."

At another time, and with another man, Anisty would not have ventured to play his catch so roughly; but, as he had reckoned, the comfortable state of mind induced by an unexpected addition to his income and a quart of champagne, had dulled the official apprehensions of Sergt. Hickey.

Mumbling a vague acceptance of the too-genial invitation, the exalted detective rose and ambled cheerfully down the room and out of the door.

Anisty lit another cigarette and contemplated the future with satisfaction. As a diplomat he was inclined to hold himself a success. Indeed, all things taken under mature consideration, the conclusion was inevitable that he was the very devil of a fellow. With what consummate skill he had played his hand! Now the pursuit of the Maitland burglar would be abandoned; the news item suppressed at headquarters. And it was equally certain that Maitland (when eventually liberated) would be at pains to keep his part of the affair very much in shadow.

The masquerader ventured a mystical smile at the world in general. One pictured the evening when the infatuated detective should find it convenient to drop in on the exclusive Mr. Maitland.

"Mr. Anisty?"

CHAPTER VII. Illumination.

In a breath was self-satisfaction banished; simultaneously the masquerader brought his gaze down from the ceiling, his thoughts to earth, his vigilance to the surface, and himself to his feet, summoning to his aid all that he possessed of resource and expedient.

Trapped!—the word blazed incandescent in his brain. So long had he foreseen and planned against this very moment.

Yet panic swayed him for but a little instant; as swiftly as it had overcome him it subsided, leaving him shocked, a shade more pale, but rapidly reasserting control of his faculties. And with this shade of emotion came complete reassurance.

His name had been uttered in no stern or menacing tone; rather its syllables had been pitched in a low and guarded key, with an undertone of raffish and cordiality. In brief, the moment that he recognized the voice as a woman's, he was again master of himself, and, aware that the result of his instinctive impulse to rise and defend himself, which had brought him to a standing position, would be interpreted as only the natural action of a gentleman addressed by a feminine acquaintance, he was confident that he had not betrayed his primal consternation. He bowed, smiled, and with eyes in which astonishment swiftly gave place to gratification and complete comprehension, appraised her who had addressed him.

She seemed to have fluttered to the table, beside which she now stood, slightly swaying, her walking costume of gray shot silk falling about her in soft, tremulous petals. Dainty, chic, well-poised, serene, flawlessly pretty

in her miniature fashion: Anisty recognized her in a twinkling. His perceptions, trained to observations as instantaneous as those of a snap-shot camera, and well-nigh as accurate, had photographed her individuality indelibly upon the film of his memory, even in the abbreviated encounter of the previous night.

By a similar ploy of educated reasoning faculties keyed to the highest pitch of immediate action, he had difficulty as scant in accounting for her presence there. What he did not quite comprehend was why Maitland had used her so kindly; for it had been plain enough that that gentleman had surprised her in the act of safe-breaking before conniving at her escape. But, allowing that Maitland's actions had been based upon motives vague to the burglar's understanding, it was quite in the scheme of possibilities that he should have arranged to meet his protegee at the restaurant that afternoon. She was come to keep an appointment to which (now that Anisty came to remember) Maitland had alluded in the beginning of their conversation.

Well and good; once before, within the past two hours, he had told himself that he was Good-enough Maitland. He was even better now.

"But you did surprise me!" he declared, gallantly, before she could wonder at his slowness to respond. "You see, I was dreaming."

He permitted her to surmise the object round which his dreams had been woven.

"And I had expected you to be eagerly watching for me!" she parried, archly.

"I was . . . mentally. But," he warned her, seriously, "not that name. Maitland is known here; they call me Maitland—the waiters. It seems I made a bad choice. But with your assistance and discretion we can bluff it out, all right."

"I forgot. Forgive me." But now she was in the chair opposite him, tucking the lower ends of her gloves into their wrists.

"No matter—nobody heard."

"I very nearly called you Handsome Dan." She flashed a radiant smile at him from beneath the rim of her picture hat.

A fire was kindled in Anisty's eyes; he was conscious of a quickened drumming of his pulses.

"Dan is Maitland's front name, also," he remarked, absently.

"I thought as much," she responded, quietly speculative.

The burglar hardly heard. It has been indicated that he was quick-witted, because he had to be, in the very nature of his avocation. Just now his brain was working rather more rapidly than usual, even; which was one reason why the light had leaped into his eyes.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

GREEN SPOTS IN WILDERNESS. Relieve the Desolation of Desert of Northern Chile.

Northern Chile, which is so largely mountain or desert, is generally regarded as a forbidden wilderness, but in spite of its natural desolation the landscape presents a scene of great beauty under the softening hues of sunset, and here and there in the waste of sand and salt may be found, by looking for them, a number of oases, the most conspicuous of which are Pica and Matilla. These oases are supplied with water from the high Andes, but the particular streams that support their life are not certainly known. It has been found that in various parts of the great Atacama desert the earth underneath the surface layer of sand or salt is sufficiently moist to grow crops, capillary attraction spreading the water through the soil. The rainless Atacama desert is the scene of the greatest industry of its kind in the world, yielding enormous quantities of nitrates, used to enrich the fields of Europe and the United States. The oases play a very important economic role in the industries of the region, supplying vegetables and foodstuffs for the support of the workmen, alfalfa for the cattle, and various fruits, and also serving as timber producers for the nitrate works, which require much fuel. There is no part of the world where agriculture is more extensively carried on than in these green spots in the Atacama desert.—Zion's Herald.

Coloring Straw Hats.

"Some persons take a lot of pleasure and no little pride," said he, "in coloring a meerschaum pipe, and I was thinking the other day what an awful blow it would be to the hat dealers if it got to be a fad to color a straw hat. You know in the course of a summer the average man will use at least two, and some men three, straws. They change them only when they get very black and after one cleaning has taken the vitality out of the hat.

"Men don't like a dirty hat only because it shows that they have had it a long time. However, suppose it was the fashion to color them. Men would admire the hat as it was changing from a delicate brown to a fair black, and the older the hat the better."

SOME FINE FRITTERS

SEVERAL WAYS OF MAKING THESE TASTY ARTICLES.

Recipes That Include Those That Are Concocted With Oysters, Currant Jam, Pineapple, Salmon, Orange and Cranberry.

Plain Fritter Batter.—Beat till light four eggs, adding to them four large tablespoonfuls of sugar, half a cupful of creamed butter, pinch of salt, two cupfuls—one pint—of milk and two-thirds of a cupful of flour. Use a perfectly smooth frying pan, or the cakes will stick; butter it, and when hot pour in enough batter to cover the bottom. When done spread with jelly, sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve at once on a hot platter. These may also be buttered, with a mixture of powdered sugar and cinnamon spread between and over them; when served in layers they are cut like a pie.

Oyster Fritters.—Nothing so appeals to the epicure as oyster fritters; to a cupful of the liquid add one of sweet milk, four eggs, a saltspoonful of salt and enough flour to make a stiff batter; add a pint of chopped oysters and fry in deep fat. Serve at once garnished with white celery tips.

Currant Jam Fritters.—Currant jam fritters are a dream of richness; make the usual batter, and to every cupful add one-half of it add a cupful of the jam, adding sugar to the latter before mixing. Drop by spoonfuls from the spoon into hot fat; sprinkle with sugar and serve with cocoa.

Pineapple Fritters.—Pineapple fritters are a luscious morsel; grate the fruit fine, saving the juice, and adding sufficient water to make it one pint; sift one pint of flour—using juice to make the batter—one-half teaspoonful of salt and yolk of one egg. Drop by spoonfuls into hot fat; drain, dust with powdered sugar and serve.

Salmon Fritters.—The salmon fritters are most appetizing and are more substantial than those of fruit; they are made by stirring into the plain batter enough boned salmon to make one-half the quantity of batter; drain on unglazed brown paper and serve on lettuce leaves or garnished with parsley.

Orange Fritters.—The richness and flavor of the orange fritter is proverbial. Place one cupful of sifted flour in a bowl, add a pinch of salt, then the yolk of one egg, well beaten with one teaspoonful of olive oil; when mixed to a smooth batter add gradually enough water to make stiff enough not to run from the spoon. Beat the white of the egg light and fold into the batter. Put five or six slices of orange into this batter, cover well, then drop into smoking fat and fry a delicate brown; remove, drain, dust with sugar and serve.

Currant Jam Popovers.—To make, use two cupfuls each of flour and milk, two eggs (beaten until stiff), one-half teaspoonful of salt, two of melted butter; bake in cups. When done, cut a little slit in each with a sharp knife and insert a spoonful of currant jam. Serve with sweetened whipped cream.—The Housekeeper.

Real Butter Scotch.

Allow to one pound of brown sugar one teacupful of water and a quarter cupful of butter. Put in a saucepan over the fire and boil, watching carefully, until it begins to turn brown. The moment it reaches a golden brown turn into a shallow buttered tin. Never stir or touch with a spoon.

Cake Hint.

A cake had been set away and forgotten until it was as hard as the proverbial brick. It was wrapped in a cloth wrung out of hot water and then had an outside covering of paper. Let it remain so for about 24 hours, and it will be as moist as if freshly made. This recipe has been tested.

To Save the Cook Book.

A certain careful housekeeper has hit upon a good plan to save her cook book. When preparing a new dish it is necessary to consult the book frequently, sometimes when the hands are sticky or greasy, and the book suffers from the contact. To avoid this take a piece of window pane the size of your cook book, bind the edges by gluing a half-inch strip of thick cloth around it, then when you want to follow a recipe, open the book and lay it down, placing this glass over it.

A Good Pie Crust.

For a meat pie crust, take a quart of flour and three tablespoonfuls of lard, two and a half cups of milk, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder and a teaspoonful of salt. Work all together as quickly and lightly as possible.

Corn Rolls.

One pint of corn meal, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, one teaspoon salt, one pint of boiling milk; stir all together, and let stand till cool. Add three eggs well beaten. Bake in gem pans.