

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 he "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. Half-hypnotized, Maitland opened 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. The criminal kept Maitland's engagement with the girl in gray.

CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

It was very plain—to a deductive reasoner—from the girl's attitude toward him that she had fallen into relations of uncommon friendliness with this Maitland, young as Anisty believed their acquaintance to be. There had plainly been a flirtation—wherein lay the explanation of Maitland's forbearance; he had been fascinated by the woman, had not hesitated to take Anisty's name (even as Anisty was then taking his) in order to prolong their intimacy.

So much the better. Turn about was still fair play. Maitland had sown as Anisty; the real Anisty would reap the harvest. Pretty women interested him deeply, though he saw little enough of them, partly through motives of prudence, partly because of a refinement of taste; women of the class of this conquest-by-proxy were out of reach of the enemy of society. That is, under ordinary circumstances. This one, on the contrary, was not; whatever she was or had been, however successful a crackswoman she might be, her cultivation and breeding were as apparent as her beauty; and quite as attractive.

A criminal is necessarily first a gambler, a votary of Chance; and the blind goddess had always been very kind to Mr. Anisty. He felt that here again she was favoring him. Maitland had eliminated from this girl's life; Maitland had failed to keep his engagement, and so would never again be called upon to play the part of burglar with her interest for incentive and guerdon. Anisty himself could take up where Maitland had left off. Easily enough. The difficulties were insignificant; he had only to play up to Maitland's standard for a while, to be Maitland with all that gentleman's advantages, educational and social, then gradually drop back to his own level and be himself, Dan Anisty. "Handsome Dan," the professional, the fit mate for the girl.

What was she saying?
"But you have lunched already!" with an appealing pout.
"Indeed, no!" he protested, earnestly. "I was early—conceive my eagerness!—and by ill chance a friend of mine insisted upon lunching with me. I had only a cup of coffee and a roll." He motioned to the waiter, calling him "Waiter!" rather than "Garcon!"—intuitively understanding that Maitland would never have ailed his French in a public place, and that he could not afford the least slip before a woman as keen as this.

"Lay a clean cloth and bring the bill of fare," he demanded, tempering his lordly instincts and adding the "please" that men of Maitland's stamp use to inferiors.

"A friend!" tardily echoed the girl when the servant was gone.

He laughed lightly, determined to be frank. "A detective, in point of fact," said he. And he enjoyed her surprise.

"You have many such?"

"For convenience one tries to have one in each city."

"And this—?"

"Oh, I have him fixed, all right. He confided to me all the latest developments and official intentions with regard to the Maitland arrest."

Her eyes danced. "Tell me!" she demanded, imperious; the emphasis of intimacy irresistible as she bent forward, forearms on the cloth, slim white hands clasped with tense impatience, eyes seeking his.

"Why . . . of course Maitland escaped."

"No!"

"Fact. Scared the butler into un-gauging him; then, in a fit of pardonable rage, knocked that fool down and dashed out of the window—presumably in pursuit of us. Up to a late hour he hadn't returned, and police opinion is divided as to whether Maitland arrested Anisty, and Anisty got away, or vice versa."

"Excellent!" She clasped her hands noiselessly, a gay little gesture.

"So, whatever the outcome, one thing is certain: Higgins will presently be seeking another berth."

She lifted her brows prettily. "Higgins?"—with the rising inflection.

"The butler. Didn't you hear—?"

Eyes wondering, she moved her head slowly from side to side. "Hear what?"

"I fancied that you had waited a moment on the veranda," he fessed.

"Oh, I was quite too frightened."

He took this for a complete denial. Better and better! He had actually feared she had eavesdropped, however warrantably; and Maitland's authoritative way with the servants had been too convincingly natural to have deceived a woman of her keen wits.

There followed a lull while Anisty was ordering the luncheon; something he did elaborately and with success.



"A Detective, in Point of Fact," Said He.

telling himself humorously: "Hang the expense! Maitland pays." Of which fact the weight in his pocket was assurance.

Maitland. . . . Anisty's thoughts verged off upon an interesting tangent. What was Maitland's motive in arranging this meeting? It was self-evident that the twain were of one world—the girl and the man of fashion. But, whatever her right of heritage, she had renounced it, declassing herself by yielding to thievish instincts, voluntarily placing herself on the level of Anisty. Where she must remain, for ever.

There was comfort in that reflection. He glanced up to find her eyes bent in gravity upon him. She, too, it appeared, had fallen a prey to reverie. Upon what subject? An absorbing one, doubtless, since it held her abstracted despite her companion's direct, unequivocally admiring stare.

The odd light was flickering again in the crackman's glance. She was then more beautiful than aught that ever he had dreamed of. Such hair as was hers, woven seemingly of dull flames, lamber, witching! And eyes—beautiful always, but never more so than at this moment, when filled with sweetly pensive contemplation. . . . Was she reviewing the last 24 hours, dreaming of what had passed between her and that silly fool, Maitland? If only Anisty could surmise what they had said to each other, how long they had been acquainted; if only she would give him a hint, a leading word!

If he could have read her mind, have seen behind the film of thought that clouded her eyes, one fears Mr. Anisty might have lost appetite for an excellent luncheon.

For she was studying his hands, her memory harking back to the moment when she had stood beside the safe, holding the bull's-eye.

In the blackness of that hour a disk of light shone out luridly against the tapestry of memory. Within its radius appeared two hands, long, supple, strong, immaculately white, graceful and dexterous, as delicate of contour as a woman's, yet lacking nothing of masculine vigor and modelling; hands that wavered against the blackness, fumbling with the shining nicked disk of a combination lock. . . .

The impression had been and remained one extraordinarily vivid. Could her eyes have deceived her so? "Thoughtful?"

She nodded alertly, instantaneously mistress of self; and let her gaze, serious yet half smiling, linger upon his the exact fractional shade of an instant longer than had been, perhaps, discreet. Then lashes drooped long upon her cheeks, and her color deepened all but imperceptibly.

The man's breath halted, then came a trace more rapidly than before. He bent forward impulsively. . . . The girl sighed, ever so gently.

"I was thoughtful. . . . It's all so strange, you know."

His attitude was an eager question. "I mean our meeting—that way, last night." She held his gaze again, momentarily, and—

"Damn the waiter!" quoth savagely Mr. Anisty to his inner man, sitting back to facilitate the service of their meal.

The girl placated him with an insignificant remark which led both into a maze of meaningless but infinitely diverting inconsequences; diverting, at least, to Anisty, who held up his head, giving her back look for look, jest for jest, platitude for platitude (when the waiter was within hearing distance); altogether, he felt, acquitting himself very creditably.

As for the girl, in the course of the next half or three-quarters of an hour she demonstrated herself conclusively a person of amazing resource, developing with admirable ingenuity a campaign planned on the spur of a chance, observation. The gentle mannered and self-sufficient natural was taken captive before he realized it, however willing he may have been. Enmeshed in a hundred uncomprehended subtleties, he basked, purring, while she insinuated herself beneath his guard and stripped him of his entire armament of cunning, vigilance, invention, suspicion, and distrust.

He relinquished them without a sigh, barely conscious of the spoliation. After all, she was of his trade, herself mired with guilt; she would never dare betray him, the consequences to herself would be so dire.

Besides, patiently—almost too much so—she admired him. He was her hero. Had she not more than hinted that such was the case, that his example, his exploits, had fired her to emulation—however weakly feminine? . . . He saw her before him, dainty, alluring, yielding, yet leading him on—altogether desirable. And so long had he, Anisty, starved for affection!
"I am sure you must be dying for a smoke."

"Beg pardon!" He awoke abruptly, to find himself twirling the sharp-ribbed stem of his empty glass. Abstractedly he stared into this, as though seeking there a clue to what they had been talking about. Hazily he understood that they had been drifting close upon the perilous shoals of intimate personalities. What had he told her? What had he not?

No matter. It was clearly to be seen that her regard for him had waxed rather than waned as a result of their conversation. One had but to look into her eyes to be reassured as to that. One did look, breathing heavily. . . . What an ingenious child it was, to show him her heart so freely! He wondered that this should be so, feeling it none the less a just and graceful tribute to his fascinations. . . . She repeated her arch query. She was sure he wanted to smoke.

Indeed he did—if she would permit? And forthwith Maitland's cigarette case was produced, with a flourish.
"What a beautiful case!"

In an instant it was in her hands. "Beautiful!" she iterated, inspecting the delicate tracery of the monogram engraver's art—head bended forward, face shaded by the broad-brimmed hat.

"You like it? You would care to own it?" Anisty demanded, unsteadily.
"I?" The inflection of doubtful surprise was a delight to the ear. "Oh! . . . I couldn't think of accepting. . . . Besides, I have no use for it."

"Of course you ain't—are not that sort." An hour back he could have kicked himself for the grammatical b'nder; now he was wholly illuded; besides, she didn't seem to notice.
"But as a little token—between us—"

She drew back, pushing the case across the cloth; "I couldn't dream—"

"But if I insist—?"

"If you insist? . . . Why, I suppose . . . It's awfully good of you." She flashed him a maddening glance.

"You do me pro-honor," he amended, hastily. Then, daringly: "I don't ask much in exchange, only—"

"A cigarette?" she suggested, hastily.

He laughed, pleased and diverted. "That'll be enough now—if you'll light it for me."

She glanced dubiously round the now almost deserted room; and a waiter started forward as if animated by a spring. Anisty motioned him imperiously back. "Go on," he coaxed; "no one can see." And watched, flattered, the slim white fingers that extracted a match from the stand and drew it swiftly down the prepared surface of

the box, holding the flickering flame to the end of a white tube whose tip lay between lips curved, scarlet, and pouting.

"There!" A pale wreath of smoke floated away on the fan-churned air, and Anisty was vaguely conscious of receiving the glowing cigarette from a hand whose sheer perfection was but enhanced by the ripe curves of a rounded forearm. . . . He inhaled deeply, with satisfaction.

Undetected by him, the girl swiftly passed a furtive handkerchief across her lips. When he looked again she was smiling and the golden case had disappeared.

She shook her head at him in mock reproval. "Bold man!" she called him; but the crudity of it was lost upon him, as she had believed it would be. The moment had come for vigorous measures, she felt, gulle having paved the way.

"Why do you call me that?"

"To appear so openly running the gauntlet of the detectives."

"Eh?"—startled.

"Of course you saw," she insisted.

"Saw? No. Saw what?"

"Why. . . . perhaps I am mistaken, but I thought you knew and trusted to your likeness to Mr. Maitland."

Anisty frowned, collecting himself, bewildered. "What are you driving at, anyhow?" he demanded, roughly.

"Didn't you see the detectives? I should have thought your man would have warned you. I noticed four loitering round the entrance, as I came in, and feared—"

"Why didn't you tell me, then?"

"I have just told you the reason. I supposed you were in your disguise."

"That's so." The alarmed expression gradually faded, although he remained troubled. "I sure am Maitland to the life," he continued with satisfaction. "Even the head-waiter—"

"And of course," she insinuated, delicately, "you have disposed of the loot?"

He shook his head gloomily. "No time, as yet."

Her dismay was evident. "You don't mean to say—?"

"In my pocket."

"Oh!" She glanced stealthily around. "In your pocket!" she whispered. "And—and if they stopped you—"

"I am Maitland."

"But if they insisted on searching you. . . ." She was round-eyed with apprehension.

"That's so!" Her perturbation was infectious. His jaw dropped.

"They would find the jewels—known to be stolen—"

"By God!" he cried, savagely.

"Dan!"

"I—I beg your pardon. But . . . what am I to do? You are sure—?"

"McClusky himself is on the nearest corner!"

"Phew!" he whistled; and stared at her, searchingly, through a lengthening pause.

"Dan . . ." said she at length.

"Yes?"

"There is a way."

"Go on."

"Last night, Dan"—she raised her glorious eyes to his—"last night, I . . . I trusted you."

His face hardened ever so slightly; yet when he took thought the tense lines about his eyes and mouth softened. And she drew a deep breath, knowing that she had all but won.

"I trusted you," she continued softly. "Do you know what that means? I trusted you."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LITTLE TRAFFIC ON THE NILE.

Not Much Use Made of Water Transportation in Egypt.

It is a curious fact that the Nile and most of the canals in Egypt run north and south. The wind blows nearly all the year from the north, and thus furnishes the cheapest propelling power for boats going south. When the boats return north the rapid current of the Nile is the motive power. The regularity of the wind and the steadiness of the current are two reasons why boats propelled by any other power are so little used. Time is not so important an element in business in Egypt as in some other countries, and it does not matter, therefore, that boats propelled by wind or current are slow. But not so much use is made of water transportation in Egypt as one might think, in view of the possibilities offered by the Nile and the many canals throughout the Delta. The Nile is navigable for many hundred miles. The first cataract is at Assouan, but there is no interruption of traffic until Wadi Halfa is reached, 800 miles from Cairo. The primary object of the canals is to distribute water for irrigation, but they are really broad and deep water courses, easily navigable by sailing boats and small steam tugs. With Egypt's awakening the value of these canals will soon be realized.

Lamp Chimneys.

Hang a hairpin on top of lamp glass and it will never crack. Put salt in kerosene and the light will be brighter.

INJURY WROUGHT BY WEEDS

Seeds of Many Plants Will Retain Their Vitality for Fifteen to Twenty-Five Years.

(By H. H. SHEPARD.)

Weeds rob the soil of moisture. Experiments show that for most of the cultivated grasses from three to five hundred pounds of water must actually pass through the plants to produce a single pound of dry matter.

This is doubtless the most important of the weed injuries, for it must not be forgotten that the moisture in the soil is the all important thing.

Ask the average farmer why he cultivates his corn and he will say "to kill the weeds," when as a matter of fact it should be for the purpose of conserving moisture in the soil. The weeds are killed purely as an incidental matter. A perfectly clean corn field needs cultivation as badly as a weedy one.

Weeds crowd the cultivated plants, depriving them of light and space in both soil and air.

Weeds rob the soil of food element required by other plants.

Weeds harbor injurious insects and plant diseases.

Weeds sometimes injure by killing farm stock, or by rendering their product unsalable.

Annual and bi-annual weeds are produced almost entirely from seed. Plants of these classes especially spring up in the most unexpected places. It has been found that the seeds of many weeds will retain their vitality for 15 to 25 years, possibly longer, and not all of the given year's seed grows in any one year.

This great vitality will explain in part at least why it is so hard to completely eradicate any weed from a given piece of land, even though all reseeded may be prevented.

PROPER FEED FOR DRY COWS

Should Have Run of Well-Protected Warm Yard During the Day and Stabled at Night.

Dry cows that will come fresh in spring should have the run of a well-protected warm yard during the day and stabled at night. A cow that will calve in spring cannot be kept in good order on straw and fodder alone. She should have a little grain in addition. Two quarts of wheat bran and two quarts of crushed corn and cornmeal given daily to each will keep them in good thrifty condition and the calves will be stronger and healthier. Feed may be saved by cutting the fodder and straw and mixing the meal with the cut feed. Mix one bushel of the cut fodder and straw with the corn chop and bran. Mix with just enough water to make the meal stick to the fodder. Give the mixed ration morning and night. Each one should be haltered in her own stall. She can then eat her ration without being crowded out by greedy cattle.

After the mixed feed is eaten turn out in the yard when weather is suitable. A little salt sprinkled over the cut feed will make it more palatable. Heifers and yearlings should be well fed. They are growing and can not be kept healthy unless they have enough nutriment to provide for their natural growth.

The heifers should have a roomy pen to go under in stormy weather and at night.

Keep the calves in a separate pen. Bed heavily with straw. If the straw is clean and dry a large portion will be eaten. By giving a thick bed the cattle can be kept comfortable. They will eat less and keep in good thrifty condition. By this method a large quantity of manure may be made, as all the urine will be absorbed by the straw.

Pure-bred Colts Pay.

Good, pure-bred colts are worth at a very conservative estimate at least \$200 per head as yearlings. The cost of raising them is but little greater than that of raising good grade colts, aside from the greater initial cost of the mares. When we take into consideration the fact that pure-bred mares are sold at from \$500 to \$800 per head, while good grade mares are worth from \$250 to \$350 per head, it may be readily seen that the mature mares will sell much closer to grade mares than pure-bred colts will to grade colts. Pure-bred yearlings that are brought along in first-class shape very frequently sell at from \$300 to \$350 per head.

Walnuts and Butternuts.

Walnuts and butternuts thrive well on rich, well-drained soil and soon come into bearing. There is a fair demand for the nuts in the markets. But only the surplus should be sold. Most of the nuts should be used at home for cake making and eating fresh from the shells.

Barley as Feed.

Judging from the standpoint of analysis and digestibility, barley has about the same feeding value as wheat or corn and slightly more than bran or oats. Bald barley is richer in protein than common barley.