

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 fingerprints in dust on his desk, along with a letter from his attorney. Maitland dined with Bannerman, his attorney. Dan set out for Greenhelds, to get his family jewels. During his wait in the country seat, he met the young woman in gray, whom he had seen leaving his bachelors' club. Her auto had broken down. He took 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. 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. Snith," 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 "Snith'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. He gave her the gems, after falling in love at first sight. They were to meet and divide the loot. Maitland revived and regretted missing his engagement.

CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

"Very good, sor." The janitor-valet had previous experiences with Maitland's generosity in grateful memory; and shut his lips tightly in promise of virtuous reticence.

"You won't regret it. Now tell me what you mean by saying that you saw me go out at one this afternoon?"

Again the flood gates were lifted; from the deluge of explanations and protestations Maitland extracted the general drift of narrative. And in the end held up his hand for silence.

"I think I understand, now. You say he had changed to my gray suit?"

O'Hagan darted into the bedroom, whence he emerged with confirmation of his statement.

"'Tis gone, sor, an'—"

"All right. But," with a rueful smile, "I'll take the liberty of countermanding Mr. Snith's order. If he should call again, O'Hagan, I very much want to see him."

"Faith, and 'tis meself will have a word or two to whisper in the ear av him, sor," announced O'Hagan, grimly.

"I'm afraid the opportunity will be lacking. You may fix me a hot bath now, O'Hagan, and put out my evening clothes. I'll dine at the club to-night and may not be back."

And, rising, Maitland approached a mirror; before which he lingered for several minutes, cataloging his injuries. Taken altogether, they amounted to little. The swelling of his wrists and ankles was subsiding gradually; there was a slight redness visible in the corners of his mouth, and a shadow of discoloration on his right temple—something that could be concealed by brushing his hair in a new way.

"I think I shall do," concluded Maitland; "there's nothing to excite particular comment. The bulk of the soreness is inside."

Seven p. m.

"Time," said the short and thick-set man casually, addressing no one in particular.

He shut the lid of his watch with a snap and returned the timepiece to his waistcoat pocket. Simultaneously he surveyed both sides of the short block between Seventh and St. Nicholas avenues with one comprehensive glance.

Presumably he saw nothing of interest to him. It was not a particularly interesting block, for that matter, though somewhat typical of the neighborhood. The north side was lined with five-story flat buildings, their dingy-red brick facades regularly broken by equally dingy brownstone stoops, as to the ground floor, by open windows as to those above. The south side was mostly taken up by a towering white apartment hotel with an ostentatious entrance; against one of whose polished stone pillars the short and thick-set man was lounging.

The sidewalks, north and south, swarmed with children of assorted ages, playing with the ferocious energy characteristic of the young of Harlem; their blood-curdling cries and premature Fourth-of-July fireworks created an appalling din, to which, however, the more mature denizens had apparently become callous, through long endurance.

Beyond the party-colored lights of a drug store window on Seventh avenue, the electric arcs were casting a sickly radiance upon the dusty leaves of the tree-lined drive. The avenue itself was crowded with motor cars and horse-drawn pleasure vehicles, mostly bound uptown, their occupants seeking the cooler air and wider spaces to be found beyond the Harlem river and along the Speedway. A few blocks to the west Cathedral heights bulked like a great wall, wrapped in purple shadows, its jagged contour stark against an evening sky of suave old rose.

The short and thick-set body, however, seemed to have no particular appreciation of the beauties of nature as exhibited by West One Hundred and Eighteenth street on a summer's evening. If anything, he could apparently have desired a cooling breeze; for, after a moment's doubtful consideration, he unbuttoned his waistcoat and heaved a sigh of relief.

Then, carefully shifting the butt of a dead cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other, where it was almost hidden by the jutting tangle of his black mustache, and drawing down over his eyes the brim of a rusty plug hat, he thrust fat hands into the pockets of his shabby trousers and lounged against the polished pillar even more chertically than before. If that were possible. An unromantic, apathetic figure, fitting so naturally into his surroundings as to demand no second look



She Had Watched the House from the Window of a Top-Floor Hall Bedroom in the Boarding-House Opposite.

even from the most observant; yet one seeming to possess a magnetic attraction for the eyes of the hallboys of the apartment hotel (who, acquainted by sight and hearsay with the stout gentleman's identity and calling, bent upon him a steadfast and adoring regard), as well as for the policeman who lorded it on the St. Nicholas avenue corner, in front of the real estate office, and who from time to time shifted his contemplation from the infinite spaces of the heavens, the better to exchange a furtive nod with the idler in the hotel doorway.

Presently—at no great lapse of time after the short and thick-set man had stowed away his watch—out of the thronged sidewalks of Seventh avenue a man appeared, walking west on the north side of the street and reviewing carelessly the numbers on the illuminated fanlights; a tall man, dressed all in gray, and swinging a thin walking stick.

The short, thick-set person assumed a men of more intense abstraction than ever.

The tall man in gray paused indefinitely before the brownstone stoop of the house numbered 205, then swung up the steps and into the vestibule. Here he halted, bending over to scrutinize the names on the letter boxes.

The short, thick-set man reluctantly detached himself from his polished pillar and waddled ungracefully across the street.

The policeman on the corner seemed suddenly interested in Seventh avenue, and walked in that direction.

The gray man, having vainly deciphered all the names on one side of the vestibule, straightened up and turned his attention to the opposite wall, either unconscious or indifferent to the shuffle of feet on the stoop behind him.

The short, thick-set man removed one hand from a pocket and tapped the gray man gently on the shoulder.

"Lookin' for McCabe, Anisty?" he inquired, genially.

The gray man turned slowly, exhibiting a countenance blank with astonishment. "Beg pardon?" he drawled; and then, with a dawning gleam of recognition in his eyes: "Why, good

evening, Hickey! What brings you up this way?"

The short, thick-set man permitted his jaw to droop and his eyes to protrude for some seconds. "Oh," he said in a tone of great disgust, "hell!" He pulled himself together with an effort. "Excuse me, Mr. Maitland," he stammered, "I wasn't lookin' for yeh."

"To the contrary, I gather from your greeting you were expecting our friend, Mr. Anisty?" And the gray man smiled.

Hickey smiled in sympathy, but with less evident relish of the situation's humor.

"That's right," he admitted. "Got a tip from the c'missioner's office this evening that Anisty would be here at seven o'clock lookin' for a party named McCabe. I guess it's a bum tip, all right; but of course I got to look into it."

"Most assuredly." The gray man bent and inspected the names again. "I am hunting up an old friend," he explained, carelessly; "a man named Simmons—knew him in college—down on his luck—wrote me yesterday. There he is; Fourth floor, east. I'll see you when I come down, I hope, Mr. Hickey."

The automatic lock clicked and the door swung open; the gray man passing through and up the stairs. Hickey, ostentatiously ignoring the existence of the policeman, returned to his post of observation.

At eight o'clock he was still there, looking bored.

At 8:30 he was still there, wearing a puzzled expression.

At nine he called the adoring hall-boy, gave him a quarter with minute instructions, and saw him disappear into the hallway of No. 205. Three minutes later the boy was back, breathless but enthusiastic.

"Missis Simmons," he explained between gasps, "says she ain't never heard of nobody named Maitland. Somebody rang her bell a while ago an' apologized for disturbin' her—said he wanted the folks on the top floor. I guess yer man went across the roofs; them houses is all connected, and yeh c'n walk clear from the corner here tuh half-way up tuh Nineteenth street, on Sain' Nicholas avenue."

"Uh-huh," laconically returned the detective. "Thanks." And turning on his heel, walked westward.

The policeman crossed the street to detain him for a moment's chat.

"I guess it's all off, Jim," Hickey told him. "Some one must 've tipped that crook off. Anyway, I ain't goin' to wait no longer."

"I wouldn't neither," agreed the uniformed member. "Say, who's yer friend yeh was talkin' tuh, 'while ago?"

"Oh, a frien' of mine. Yeh didn't have no call to git excited then, Jim. G'night."

And Hickey proceeded westward, a listless and preoccupied man by the vacant eye of him. But when he emerged into the glare of Eighth avenue his face was unusually red. Which may have been due to the heat. And just before boarding a downtown surface car, "Oh," he enunciated with gusto, "hell!"

One a. m.

Not until the rich and mellow chime had merged into the stillness did the intruder dare again draw breath. Coming as it had the very moment that the door had closed noiselessly behind her, the double stroke had sounded to her like a knell; or, perhaps more like the prelude to the wild alarm of a tocsin, first striking her heart still with terror, then urging it into panic flutterings.

But these, as the minutes drew on, marked only by the dull methodic ticking of the clock, quieted; and at length she mustered courage to move from the door, against which she had flattened herself, one hand clutching the knob, ready to pull it open and fly upon the first aggressive sound.

In the interval her eyes had become accustomed to the darkness. The study door showed a pale oblong on her right; to her left, and a little toward the rear of the flat, the door of Maitland's bed chamber stood ajar. To this she tiptoed, standing upon the threshold and listening with every fiber of her being. No sounds as of the regular respiration of a sleeper warning her, she at length peered stealthily within; simultaneously she pressed the button of an electric hand-lamp. Its circumscribed blaze wavered over pillows and counterpane spotless and undisturbed.

Then for the first time she breathed freely, convinced that she had been right in surmising that Maitland would not return that night.

Since early evening she had watched the house from the window of a top-floor hall bedroom in the boarding-house opposite. Shortly before seven she had seen Maitland, stiff and uncompromising in rigorous evening dress, leave in a cab. Since then only once had a light appeared in his rooms; at about half after nine the janitor had appeared in the study, turning up the gas and going to the telephone. Whatever the nature of the communication received, the girl had taken it to indicate that Maitland had decided to spend the night elsewhere; for the study light had

burned for some ten minutes, during which the janitor could occasionally be seen moving mysteriously about; and something later, bearing a suitcase, he had left the house and shuffled rapidly eastward to Madison avenue.

So she felt convinced that she had all the small hours before her, secure from interruption. And this time, she told herself, she purposed making assurance doubly sure.

But first to guard against discovery from the street.

Turning back through the hall, she dispensed with the hand-lamp, entering the darkened study. Here all windows had been closed and the outer shades drawn—O'Hagan's last act before leaving with the suitcase—additional proof that Maitland was not expected back that night. For the temperature was high, the air in the closed room stifling.

Crossing to the windows, the girl drew down the dark green inner shades and closed the folding wooden shutters over them. And was conscious of a deepened sense of security.

Next going to the telephone, she removed the receiver from the hook and let it hang at the full length of the cord. In the dead silence the small voice of Central was clearly articulate: "What number? Hello, what number?"—followed by the grumbling of the armature as the operator tried fruitlessly to ring the disconnected bell. The girl smiled faintly, aware that there would now be no interruption from an inopportune call.

There remained as a final precaution only a grand tour of the flat; which she made expeditiously, passing swiftly and noiselessly (one contemplating midnight raids does not attire one's self in silks and starched things) from room to room, all comfortably empty. Satisfied at last, she found herself again in the study, and now boldly, mind at rest, lighted the brass student lamp with the green shade, which she discovered on the desk.

Standing, hands resting lightly on hips, breath coming quickly, cheeks flushed and eyes alight with some intimate and inscrutable emotion, she surveyed the room. Out of the dusk that lay beyond the plash of illumination beneath the lamp, the furniture began to take on familiar shapes; the divans, the heavy leather-cushioned easy chairs, the tall clock with its pallid staring face, the small tables and tabourettes, handily disposed for the reception of books and magazines and pipes and glasses, the towering, old-fashioned mahogany book case, the useless, ornamental, beautiful Chippendale escritoire, in one corner; all somberly shadowed and all combining to diffuse an impression of quiet, easy-going comfort.

Just such a study as he would naturally have. She nodded silent approbation of it as a whole. And, nodding, sat down at the desk, planting elbows on its polished surface, interlacing her fingers and cradling her chin upon their backs, turned suddenly pensive. The mood held her but briefly. She had no time to waste, and much to accomplish. . . . Sitting back, her fingers might and pressed the clasp of her hand-bag and produced two articles—a golden cigarette case and a slightly soiled canvas bag. The Maitland jewels were returning by a devious way, to the their owner.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

BOTH THINKER AND DRINKER.

Eminent Englishman One of the Most Bibulous of Men.

The great Porson, librarian and Greek scholar, would sit up drinking all night without seeming to feel any bad effects from it. Horne Tooke told Samuel Rogers that he once asked Porson to dine with him in Richmond buildings, and, as he knew that Porson had not been in bed for the three preceding nights, he expected to get rid of him at a tolerably early hour. Porson, however, kept Tooke up the whole night, and in the morning the latter, in perfect despair, said: "Mr. Porson, I am engaged to meet a friend at breakfast at a coffee house in Leicester square." "Oh," replied Porson, "I will go with you," and he accordingly did so. Soon after they had reached the coffee house Tooke contrived to slip out, and, running home, ordered his servant not to let Mr. Porson in, even if he should attempt to batter down the door. "A man," observed Tooke, "who could sit up four nights successively might have sat up 40."

Tooke used to say that "Porson would drink ink rather than not drink at all." Indeed, he would drink anything. He was sitting with a gentleman after dinner in the chambers of a mutual friend, a Templar, who was then ill and confined to bed. A servant came into the room, sent thither by his master, for a bottle of embrocation, which was on the chimney-piece. "I drank it an hour ago," said Porson.—London's T. P.'s Weekly.

Uncle Eben on Spellbinding.

"De difficulty 'bout some o' dese campaign speeches," said Uncle Eben, "is dat dey makes me so powerful enthusiastic dat I can't remember jes' whut de gemman were talkin' 'bout!" —Washington Star.

CHINESE "HELLO GIRLS"

"GIVE ME WO SING," INSTEAD OF NO. UMPTY-STEEN.

In San Francisco's Chinatown Girls in Native Costume Attend Switchboards in a Pagoda-Like Exchange.

San Francisco, Cal.—The strangest "hello girls" in the strangest telephone exchange in the country are ten little Chinese maids in Chinatown, in this city. It is the only foreign exchange in the United States, and was built about a year ago. It is one of the show places of the section, always kept ready for inspection.

It is not an easy matter for the telephone company to secure these picturesque but practical Chinese girls. It was almost unprecedented for any little maid from a Chinese house to go out to business, but long practice has proved that nice young girls are indispensable to the telephone business, and it was not likely that white girls would be sufficiently acquainted with the Chinese language, so diplomacy, persuasion, concessions to custom, the erection of a josh and many arguments had to be tried to fill the positions in the new exchange with the proper young persons. No shirtwaists and no skirts and puffed hair do these hello girls adopt for business wear, but their own comfortable and becoming Chinese costumes.

While the switchboard seems an incongruous setting for these Orientals, the rest of their background is in harmony. An artistic sense and probably an eye to the commercial effect of such an attractive showplace caused the constructors to make the exchange typically Chinese in architecture and decoration. The exterior resembles a palace in China, consisting of three pagodas. The interior woodwork is in rough cut material finished in ebony, and the walls are paneled with glazed tile. Highly colored fresco decorates the upper walls and the inevitable dragon is prominent. The latest Occidental ideas are carried out in the telephone equipment. The San Francisco telephone directory has to have a special section devoted to the Chinatown exchange, but printed in English, in which you call for "China," whether you want Wong Glim Tuck or Yee Sing or the incongruous person Gay Wo, or an American named Elmer Jones, who comes to live in the district. Instead of by number the Chinese call by name when they want a connection.

The Chinatown exchange is managed by an American-born Chinaman, Loo Kum Shu, who has been in the telephone business for ten years. The Chinese are fond of telephoning and patronize the companies to a remarkable degree, subscribing for the best class of service in their homes or places of business. The Chinese government last year sent over a delegation of Chinamen to study telephone, and has appropriated \$20,000,000 for a national system of telephone and telegraph.

WAX FIGURES SHOCK ANTHONY

Comstock Brings Law Upon Owners of Show Windows Who Exhibit Scantily Attired "Dummies."

New York.—Several handsome women have been on exhibition for some time in show windows on Broadway. All had good figures and posed in various advertisements. But they all had extremely red cheeks and a bold, fixed stare. In fact, it was said if a passer-by came within their range of vision they never took their eyes off him, and their raiment was such that in an emergency any one of them might have taken off Salome without having taken off anything else.

So some persons complained to Anthony Comstock of the Society for the Prevention of Vice. Mr. Comstock went to the manufacturers whose show windows the women adorned and ordered the women out of the windows.

Mr. Comstock told the manufacturers they would be liable to arrest, and, if convicted, to fine and imprisonment if they permitted the women to reappear in public. The manufacturers promptly agreed to keep the women under cover. The women, thus solemnly raided and convicted of impropriety, were made of wax.

Mr. Comstock said: "Many complaints about the figures reached me. The exhibition was harmful to good morals. The figures were very objectionable. I read the law to the man who put the figures in the windows and they were taken out, that's all."

Tramp Cut Off Her Hair.

Byesville, O.—"Have you got a piece of pie to spare?" asked a tramp when Mrs. M. C. Krist answered a knock at the door. She told him to step into the kitchen. There, while her back was turned, the tramp knocked her down and cut off her hair. The woman's screams brought a crowd and the tramp was chased, but he escaped.