

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 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. 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. 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. Anisty, masquerading as Maitland, narrowly avoided capture through mysterious tip. The girl in gray visited Maitland's apartments during his absence and returned gems, being discovered on return. Maitland, without cash, called up his home and heard a woman's voice expostulating. Anisty, disguised as Maitland, told her his real identity and realizing himself tricked tried to wring from her the location of the gems. Then he proposed marriage. A crash was heard at the front door. Maitland started for home. He found Anisty and the girl in his rooms. Again he overcame the crook, allowing him to escape to shield the young woman.

CHAPTER XI.—Continued.

"Not quite," Maitland contradicted, brusquely, wearing of the complication. "You say you met me on the stoop here. At what o'clock?" "One; 'nd yeh takes me to lunch at Eugene's."

"Ah! When did I leave you?" "I leaves yeh there at two."

"Well, O'Hagan will testify that he left me in these rooms, in dressing-gown and slippers, at about one. At four he found me on this divan, bound and gagged, by courtesy of your friend, Mr. Anisty. Now, when was I with you in Harlem?"

"At seven o'clock, to the minute, yeh comes—"

"Never mind. At ten minutes to seven I took a cab from here to the Primordial club, where I dined at seven precisely."

"And what's more," interposed the cabman, eagerly, "I took yer there, sir."

"Thank you. Furthermore, sleuth, you say that you followed me around town from seven o'clock until—when?"

"I said—" stammered the plain-clothes man, purple with confusion. "No matter. I didn't leave the Primordial until a quarter to eleven. But all this aside, as I understand it, you are asserting that, having given you all this trouble to-day, and knowing that you were after me, I deliberately hopped into a cab 15 minutes ago, came up Fifth avenue at such breakneck speed that this officer thought it was a runaway, and finally jumped out and ran upstairs here to fire a revolver three times, for no purpose whatsoever beyond bringing you gentlemen about my ears?"

Hickey's jaw sagged. The cabby ostentatiously covered his mouth with a huge red paw and made choking noises.

"Pass it up, sarge, pass it up," he whispered, hoarsely.

"Shut yer trap," snapped the detective. "I know what I'm doin'. This crook's clever all right, but I got the kibosh on him this time. Lemme alone." He squared his shoulders, blustering to save his face. "I don't know why yeh done it—"

"Then I'll tell you," Maitland cut in, crisply. "If you'll be good enough to listen." And concisely narrated the events of the past 24 hours, beginning at the moment when he had discovered Anisty in Maitland Manor. Save

that he substituted himself for the man who had escaped from Higgins and eliminated all mention of the gray girl, his statement was exact and convincing. As he came down to the moment when he had called up from the Bartholdi and heard mysterious sounds in his flat, substantiating his story by indicating the receiver that dangled useless from the telephone, even Hickey was staggered.

"But not beaten. When Maitland ceased speaking the detective smiled superiority to such invention. "Very pretty," he conceded. "Yeh c'n tell it all to the magistrate to-morrow morning. Meantime yeh'll have time to think up a yarn explainin' how it come that a crook like Anisty made three attempts in one day to steal some jewels, 'nd didn't get 'em. Where were they all this time?"

"In safe-keeping," Maitland lied, manfully, with a furtive glance toward the alcove.

"Whose?" pursued Mr. Hickey, truculently.

"Mine," with equanimity. "Seriously—sleuth!—are you trying to make a charge against me of stealing my own property?"

"Yeh done it for a blind. 'Nd that's enough. Officer, take this man to the station; I'll make the complaint."

The policeman hesitated, and at this juncture O'Hagan put in an appearance, lugging a heavy brown-paper bundle.

"Beg pardon, Mither Maitland, sor—?"

"Well, O'Hagan?"

"The crowd at the dure, sor, is dispersed," the janitor reported. "A couple av cops kem along an' fanned 'em. They're askin' for the two av yees," with a careless nod to the policeman and detective.

"Yeh heard what I said," Hickey answered the officer's look.

"I'm thinkin'," O'Hagan pursued, calmly ignoring the presence of the



The Detective Stepped Forward and Unlocked the Handcuffs.

outsiders, "thot these do be the soot that domned thafe av the worruld stole off yeh the day, sor. A laad brought ut at ayeleven o'clock, sor, wid particular rayquest thot ut be daylivered to ye at once. The paper's tore, an—"

"O'Hagan," Maitland ordered sharply, "undo that parcel. I think I can satisfy you now, sleuth. What kind of a suit did your luncheon acquaintance wear?"

"Gray."

"An' here ut is," O'Hagan announced, arraying the clothing upon a chair. "Iv'ry domn' thing, aven down to the socks. And a note for ye, sor."

As he shook out the folds of the coat a square white envelope dropped to the floor; the janitor retrieved and offered it to his employer.

"Dear Mr. Maitland," he read aloud; "'As you will probably surmise, my motive in thus restoring to you a portion of your property is not altogether uninfluenced by personal and selfish considerations. In brief, I wish to discover whether or not you are to be at home to-night. If not, I shall take pleasure in calling; if the contrary, I shall feel that in justice to myself I must forego the pleasure of improving an acquaintance begun under auspices so unfavorable. In either case, permit me to thank you for the use of your wardrobe—which, quaintly enough, has outlived its usefulness to me; a fat-headed detective named Hickey will tell you why—and to extend to you expression of my highest consideration. Believe me, I am enviously yours, Daniel Anisty"—Signed," added Hickey mechanically, his face working.

"Satisfied, sleuth?"

By way of reply, but ungraciously, the detective stepped forward and unlocked the handcuffs.

Maitland stood erect, smiling. "Thank you very much, sleuth. I shan't forget you. . . . O'Hagan," tossing the janitor the keys from his desk, "you'll find some—ah—lemon-pop and root-beer in the buffet. This officer and his friends will no doubt join you in a friendly drink downstairs. Cabby, I want a word with you. . . . Good morning, gentlemen. Good morning, sleuth."

And he showed them the door. "I

shall be at your service, officer," he called over the janitor's shoulder, "at any time to-morrow morning. If not here, O'Hagan will tell you where to find me. And, O'Hagan!" The janitor fell back. "Keep them at least an hour," Maitland told him guardedly. "And say nothing."

The Irishman pledged his discretion by a silent look. Maitland turned back to the cabby.

"You did me a good turn, just now," he began.

"Don't mention it, sir; I've carried you hofen before this evenin', and—excuse my sayin' so—I never 'ad a fare as tipped 'andsomer. It's a real pleasure, sir, to be of service."

"Thank you," returned Maitland, eying him in speculative wise. "I wonder—"

The man was a rough, burly Englishman of one of the most intelligent, if not intellectual, kind; the British cabby, as a type, has few superiors for sheer quickness of wit and understanding. This man had been sharpened and tempered by his contact with American conditions. His eyes were shrewd, his face honest if weather-beaten, his attitude respectful.

"I've another use for you to-night," Maitland decided, "if you are at liberty and—discreet?" The final word was a question, flung over his shoulder as he turned toward the escritoire.

"Yes, sir," said the man thoughtfully. "I allus can drive, sir, even when I'm drinkin' 'ardest and can't see nothink."

"Yes? You've been drinking to-night?" Maitland smiled quietly, standing at the small writing-desk and extracting a roll of bills from a concealed drawer.

"I'm fair blind, sir."

"Very well," Maitland turned and extended his hand, and despite his professed affliction, the cabby's eyes bulged as he appreciated the size of the bill.

"My word!" he gasped, stowing it away in the cavernous depths of a trousers pocket.

"You'll wait outside," said Maitland, "until I come out or—send somebody for you to take wherever directed. Oh, that's all right—not another word!"

The door closed behind the overwhelmed night hawk, and the latch clicked loudly. For a space Maitland stood in the hallway, troubled, apprehensive, heart strangely oppressed, vision clouded by the memory of the girl as he had seen her only a few minutes since; as she had stood beneath the chandelier, after acting upon her primary clear-headed impulse to give her rescuer the aid of the light.

He seemed to recall very clearly her slight figure, swaying, a-quiver with fright and solicitude—care for him!—her face, sensitive and sweet beneath its ruddy crown of hair, that of a child waking from evil dreams, her eyes seeking his with their dumb message of appeal and of . . . He dared not name what else.

Forlorn, pitiful, little figure! Odd it seemed that he should fear to face her again, alone, that he should linger reluctant to cross the threshold of his study, mistrustful and afraid alike of himself and of her—a thief.

For what should he say to her, other than the words that voiced the hunger of his heart? Yet if he spoke . . . words such as those to—a thief . . . what would be the end of it all?

What did it matter? Surely he, who knew the world wherein he lived and moved and had his being, knew better well the worth of his verdicts. The world might go hang, for all he cared. At least his life was his own, whether to make or to mar, and he had not to answer for it to any power this side of the gates of darkness. And if by any act of his the world should be given a man and a woman in exchange for a thief and an idler, perhaps in the final reckoning his life might not be accounted altogether wasted. . . .

He set back his shoulders and inspired deeply, eyes lightening; and stepped into the study, resolved.

"Miss—" he called huskily; and stopped, reminded that not yet did he even know her name.

"It is safe now," he amended, more clearly and steadily, "to come out, if you will."

He heard no response. The long gleaming folds of the portieres hung motionless. Still, a sharp and staccato clatter of hoofs that had risen in the street, might have drowned her voice.

"If you please—" he said again, loudly.

The silence sang sibilant in his ears; and he grew conscious of a sense of anxiety and fear stifling in its intensity.

At length, striding forward, with a swift gesture he flung the hangings aside.

CHAPTER XII.

On Reconsideration.

Gently but with decision Sergt. Hickey set his face against the allurements of his wine-cup and the importunities of his fellow-officers.

He was tired, he affirmed with a weary nod; the lateness of the hour rendered him quite indisposed for convivial dalliance. Even the sight of

O'Hagan, seduction incarnated, in the vestibule, a bottle under either arm, clutching a box of cigars jealously with both hands, failed to move the temperate soul.

"Nah," he waved temptation aside with a gesture of finality. "I don't guess I'll take nothin' to-night, thanks. G'night all."

And, wheeling, shaped a course for Broadway.

The early morning air breathed chill but grateful to his fevered brow. Oddly enough, in view of the fact that he had indulged in no very violent exercise, he found himself perspiring profusely. Now and again he saw fit to pause, removing his hat and utilizing a large soiled bandana with grim abandon.

At such times his face would be upturned, eyes trained upon the dim infinities beyond the pale moon-smitten sky. And he would sigh profoundly—not the furnace sigh of a lover thinking of his mistress, but the heartfelt and moving sigh of the man of years and cares who has drunk deep of that cup of bitterness called Unappreciated Genius.

Then, tucking the clammy bandana into a hip pocket, and withdrawing his yearning gaze from the heavens, would struggle on, with a funereal countenance as the outward and visible manifestation of a mind burdened with mundane concerns; such as (one might shrewdly surmise) that autographed portrait of a deputy commissioner of police which the detective's lynx-like eyes had discovered on Maitland's escritoire, unhappily, toward the close of their conference, or, possibly, the mighty processes of departmental law, with its attendant annoyances of charges preferred, hearings before an obviously prejudiced yet high-principled martinet, reprimands and rulings, reductions in rank, "breaking," transfers; or—yet a third possibility—with the prevailing rate of wage as contrasted between detective and "sidewalk-pounder," and the cost of living as contrasted between Manhattan, on the one hand, and Jamaica, Bronxville, or St. George, Staten Island, on the other.

A dimly-lighted side-entrance presently loomed invitingly in the sergeant's path. He glanced up, something surprised to find himself on Sixth avenue; then, bowed with the fatigue of a busy day, turned aside, entering a dingy back room separated from the bar proper (at that illicit hour) by a curtain of green baize. A number of tables whose sloppy imitation rosewood tops shone dimly in the murky gaslight, were set about, here and there, for the accommodation of a herd of sleepy-eyed, case-hardened habitués.

Into a vacant chair beside one of these the detective dropped, and familiarly requested the lantern-jawed waiter, who presently bustled to his side, to "Back meh up a tub of suds, George. . . . Nah," in response to a concerned query, "I ain't feelin' up to much to-night."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ALL MATTER OF PROPINQUITY. It is the Event Near at Hand That Counts Most in Everything.

The death of hundreds of people in a distant part of the country from where we live hardly arouses more than passing interest, and the more or less sudden taking away of thousands of lives in some far remote land evokes no more than a word of sympathy from those a long distance away. But the single death near at hand, the funeral across the street, makes the strongest possible mark on the mind.

Propinquity, in that as in everything else, is what counts. The death in the family cuts into the heart for years. If accompanied by details that make it a horror, the shock often remains with the survivors to the end of their own lives. If the lost relative has met a violent death, by accident or otherwise, the anguish of those left behind is all the more poignant and enduring. Worst of all, and most lasting in its effect upon the survivors, is the death where unexpected financial distress or ruin follows the loss of the family head. It is a wretched home circle for many a year when the chief is taken away, leaving only debts, with no property, not even a little insurance policy, behind.

Royal Chickens of Japan.

"The most beautiful and extraordinary chickens in the world are those bred by the royal family of Japan, the privilege of raising them not being accorded to any of the Mikado's subjects," said Mr. L. J. De Courcey of Yokohama. "These chickens are celebrated for the wonderful growth of their tail feathers, a full grown rooster's tail often reaching a length of 20 feet. The tail is of a lovely deep blue shade, while the body is buff, and about the neck is a white ring. A pair of these chickens has been known to sell to a wealthy Englishman for \$1,000 on condition that he would take them out of the country.

"I believe that ere long the species will entirely disappear, as I heard before leaving Japan that it was the intention of his majesty to cease their breeding."

FLOWER IS QUITE POPULAR

Gladiolus Is One of Best Summer-Flowering Bulbs—Plant About Same Time as Sweet Corn.

(By LEROY CADY.)

One of the best summer-flowering bulbs is the gladiolus. The bulbs may be purchased from any reliable nurseryman or seedsman for from one to three dollars per hundred, for the commoner mixed bulbs, up to several dollars a dozen for the more fancy bulbs.

They should be planted about the same time sweet corn is planted, and given much the same cultivation as any other garden crop. Plant three to four inches deep, in rows thirty inches apart, and six or eight inches apart in the rows.

The blooms may be cut when the first bloom opens, and the buds will continue to open for a week or two, if placed in water. At the end of the growing season, dig and dry the bulbs until the bulbs and bulbets can easily be separated. Store in any cellar where they will not get wet or dry out. The small bulbets may be saved and sowed like peas in the spring, producing flowering plants in about two years.

TO BUILD POULTRY HOUSES

Can Be Successfully Constructed of Almost Any Material—Three Important Essentials.

A poultry house can be successfully constructed of almost any material as lumber, brick, stone, adobe, sod or cement and even a dugout will answer very well. Many of our fanciers put too much money into the buildings. All that is necessary is that the houses are warm, properly ventilated and well lighted. The wall does not need to be doubled providing the single one is tightly constructed. With a frame house one thickness of good matched lumber such as drop siding, flooring or shiplap is all that is necessary. It is a good plan to build the outside wall of some of the cheaper materials than matched lumber—such as barn siding with battens—and then lath and plaster on the inside or line it with building paper, preferably tar paper. This makes a warm house, which is somewhat more expensive than a single walled but does not present so good an outside appearance. However, for a good cheap house that presents a good appearance, there is nothing better than the single wall, covered with drop siding.

Hints for the Hog Raiser.

If the litters begin to run down in number and size the fault is seldom to be found with the boar, but it generally lies with the sow.

More small hogs have probably been marketed in the past two years than ever before during the same time.

When a hog reaches 200 pounds in weight it requires extra good care and an expert feeder to continue to lay on flesh at a profit.

Too many farmers have an aversion to feeding hogs in cold weather because it is an unpleasant job and sell off their herd early and then when the weather becomes good haul their corn to market.

Care of the Incubator.

If you use an incubator you must practically sleep with it—that is, you must watch it day and night, and after you have thoroughly learned all that the manufacturer tells you in the directions on the machine you must use your own common sense and comply with the varying conditions of climate. When the youngsters come out of the shell they, too, must be watched every day and be cared for in every detail all of the time. Young chickens cannot be raised by any person who is frequently away from home for long intervals. One must be on the job all the time.

Notes of the Sheepfold.

Sheep do not require much shelter except to keep off the rain. I always put my flock up in falling weather except during the summer when it is hot and the rain is a relief to them, says a writer in an exchange.

It is best to leave them out in the coldest weather, except of course at lambing time when they must be sheltered.

Lambs will stand the cold better than any other young animals and there is not much difficulty in saving them if they get full of their mother's milk once.

Contents of Food.

Protein, starch, fat, sugar and fiber are the nutriment that make up foods. Protein is the only one from which muscle and tissue can be made; the others serve to produce heat, energy and fat. Starch and sugar are equal in food value. The fiber in the plant cut green has the same food value as starch—when the plant is mature the fiber becomes largely indigestible, as in starch. Fat serves the same purpose in the animal body as starch; it is more concentrated, having two and one-fourth times as much nutriment in a given weight.