

Mrs. Thaw's Weird Adventures With the Hired Midnight Apache

*How the Wealthy
Beauty, with
Typical Yankee Pluck,
Trapped the Paris
"Dance Bandit"
Who Stole Her Jewels*

**Mrs. Benjamin
Thaw, Heroine
of the Half
a Million
Dollar Jewel
Robbery in a
Paris Cabaret.**



"The Apache," a Striking Study by Moffet of the Paris "Gigolo" as Interpreted by Andreas Pavley in One of His Famous Apache Dances.



LAST May much discussion followed a newspaper page headed: "HIRING AN APACHE FOR A THRILL," with the following sub-caption: "Smart Paris women have discovered that dancing with strangers and ex-convicts at one hundred francs per hour meets their primitive craving for abysmal sensations."

That story, like many from the romantic French capital, appeared highly fanciful. The following narrative from another and thoroughly reliable news source is a startling verification and a dramatic aftermath.

PARIS.
DRUGGED and robbed in a boulevard jazzery by the handsome "gigolo" she was paying to fox-trot with her, Mrs. Benjamin Thaw, society beauty of New York and Pittsburgh, matched her woman's wits against the Paris underworld, tricked her dancing Apache into making a rendezvous with her, had him arrested after a chase through the lobby of a swaggar hotel, and got back her stolen jewels.

This is the amazing story just revealed by friends of Mrs. Thaw. Her exploit is the talk of Paris—first, because of her ingenuity and courage, and, second, because the bold robbery has started a panicky reaction against "gigolos" among American women who "adored" dancing with these parasites of the Paris cafes and trotteries.

"Gigolo" is simply French argot for one who makes a living dancing with excitement seeking women whose escorts are too clumsy or too lazy to shake a foot themselves. "Tea hound" would be the American slang parallel for the term if the "gigolo" had not made his dancing more of a cash paying profession.

At Paris, Deauville, Biarritz and other fluff resorts the gigolo's fee is ten francs and sometimes twenty francs per trot. He will hire out his arms and his charms for an entire evening for one hundred francs. That is the gigolo "union" price, though in many of the lurid Montmartre hide-aways bargain rates prevail.

In these haunts, where throat-slitting and garroting are not uncommon crimes, most of the gigolos are Apaches. But among the blazing lights of the boulevards the gigolos are slim, immaculate youths, with the manners of a chevalier, the grace of Maurice himself, and the speed of sun-streaks.

The gigolo who snaffled Mrs. Thaw's jewels was a combination of both, a dark and interesting Adonis, who, say Mrs. Thaw's friends, was known only as "Cho-Cho" by the fragile butterflies who fluttered in for tea trots and after-theatre tangoes at the cafe which he made his headquarters.

He was a swaggar, "nifty" conversationalist and an expert dancer. So why should Mrs. Thaw have suspected for an instant that this well-groomed, petted favorite might be a notorious Apache, carrying drugs in the crook of his palm and scissors up his sleeve?

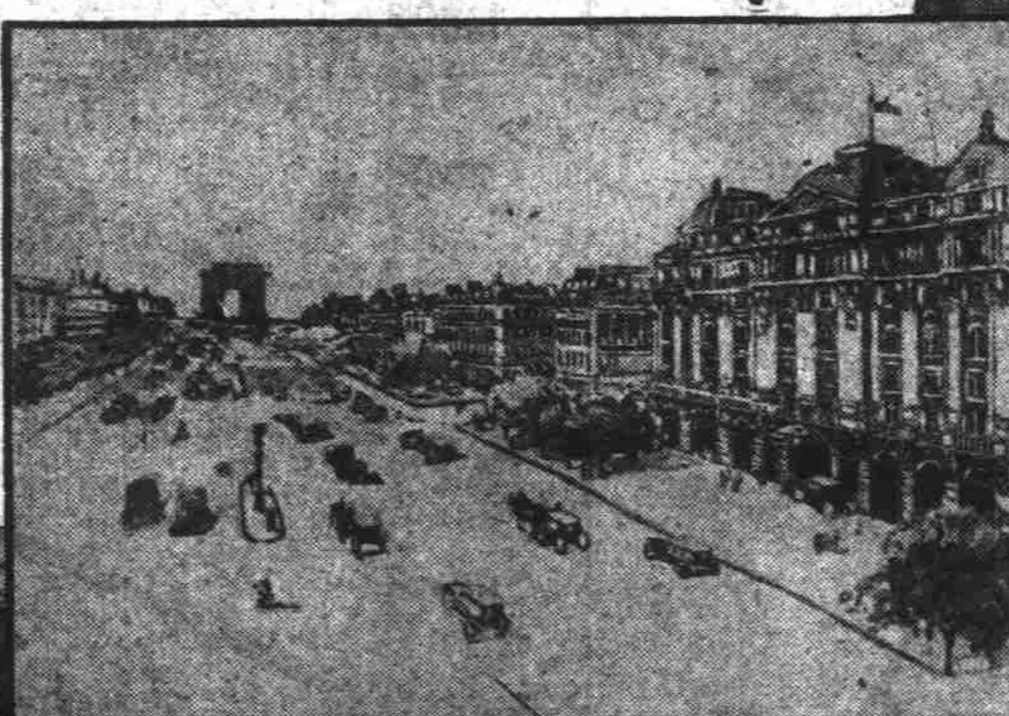
It is readily understandable, however, that among all his beautiful patrons "Cho-

Cho" should see in Mrs. Thaw not simply a lady who would pay him handsomely for an hour's trotting, but a potential victim for a typical Apache trick—the old game of "knockout drops."

He could have had no doubt that the pearls around Mrs. Thaw's neck, the rings on her fingers and the bracelets about her wrists were all genuine. For Mrs. Thaw is one of the best-known members of the American colony in Paris and one of the richest.

Her husband, Benjamin Thaw, a half-

Below, the Priceless Botticelli Masterpiece, "Madonna and Child," Now in the Collection of Mrs. Benjamin Thaw.



The Claridge on the Champs Elysees Where Brave Mrs. Thaw Lured the Apache Jewel Robber Into a Police Trap.

brother of Harry Kendall Thaw, slayer of Stanford White, inherited more of the Thaw millions than any of his multi-millionaire father's children. And he is credited with building them into a greater fortune than his father boasted.

For some years Mrs. Benjamin Thaw lived in Pittsburgh. Later she had a magnificent home at 1046 Fifth avenue and was a leader in the New York "400." Among her collection of famous works of art is the "Madonna and Child," by Botticelli. After the death of her son, Alexander B. Thaw, who was killed flying in France in 1918, she sold the Fifth avenue home and her Newport cottage. Since then Mrs. Thaw has spent much of her time abroad.

In Paris, according to tourist gossip, Mrs. Thaw renewed with double measure that keen interest in dancing which she had always displayed when, as a young matron in Pittsburgh and later in New York, she was as popular at balls and tenebancas as any debutante.

She is a radiant figure at all the functions of the social season, and when functions are lacking she is seen frequently with other wealthy women of the millionaire American set, dancing at the swankier cafes along the boulevards and in the Bois.

It may seem strange to people in the

United States, which has codes of conduct for society as well as the proletariat, for women of impeccable standing and reputation to hire perfect strangers to dance with them.

But many things that are proper in Paris would be impossible in New York. Gigolos are one of them. Many a staid business man who would be outraged at home if a man spoke to his wife without an introduction, has sat complacently at a table in the Dead Kat or Maxim's while his spouse and daughters waited about the polished floor in the arms of Jules the Knife.

Thus, when Mrs. Benjamin Thaw, of Pittsburgh, New York and Newport, dropped into her favorite trottery and summoned the gigolo, and danced off with him to the latest imported ragtime, no one of her acquaintances at the neighboring tables chattered about it.

But fifteen minutes later, when Mrs. Thaw was discovered at a table in a palm-sheltered corner, her head and arms slumped across the cloth spotted by wine from an over-turned glass, there were shouts, screams and excited questions.

"Drugged!" clipped out the American who picked up her glass and sniffed it. And that was the whole story—except that Mrs. Thaw's necklace and rings and bracelets were gone, and she could remember nothing that happened after "Cho-Cho" smiled as she drank her champagne after the dance.

It was easy enough, however, to reconstruct what had happened—the glittering eyes of the gangster appraising Mrs. Thaw's jewels as he danced with her, his deft arm steering her to a secluded table, the powder slipped into her wine; then, as she fell forward, a swift "snip-snip" with the scissors and a busy two minutes with his fingers—"Cho-Cho" nonchalantly strolls out with his hat and his overcoat on his arm, his partner unconscious behind the palm, and \$500,000 worth of sparklers in his pockets!

That story, sitting through the Amaz-

ican colony, caused swears and hysterics. Apoplectic husbands, who had nodded good-naturedly over their port while their wives trotted and tangoed with agile gigolos, laid down righteous ultimatums. And frightened wives and daughters, who had thought it exciting to dazzle with diamonds the Apaches who sometimes boasted in whispers of bashed heads and cut throats in Clichy sewers, now made haste to check their valuables at the door or to shake their heads when a gigolo presented his card.

But the story of the robbery, sensational though it may be, caused only a ripple to the buzz of gossip that began a week later, when it was discovered Mrs. Benjamin Thaw was wearing once more the jewels she had been mourning as "gone forever."

"Do you mean to say the Paris police actually recovered them?" asked astonished cynics. That was one version. But "insiders" are telling another.

According to their story, the American beauty, instead of kicking up a rumpus and setting officialdom by the ears, pretended to make light of her loss. Instead of renouncing dancing forever, she appeared at first one cabaret and then another, and danced with this new gigolo and that one. And to one of these she casually let slip her desire to meet "that very handsome gigolo they call Cho-Cho."

The story goes that Mrs. Thaw's dupe shook his head and shrugged his shoulders. "Cho-Cho" was in retirement. No one had seen him in weeks. But he was a susceptible fellow. And he liked Americans. Perhaps, if madame could advance five hundred francs to pay the "expenses" of finding "Cho-Cho"—ah! he would try to make an appointment.

The appointment was made—at an obscure corner of Claridge's lounge. And—admirably exclaim Mrs. Thaw's friends—the lady courageously walked in alone to keep the "date" with a man she knew was desperate, spotted him at a glance, gave the alarm, and had the pleasure of seeing the fleeing "Cho-Cho" brought down with a football tackle in the Claridge lobby by a couple of husky gendarmes. Some of Mrs. Thaw's jewels were found on him. Others, too valuable to be readily disposed of, were recovered in his den-