

The King of the King

by SAMUEL SPEWACK

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Phillip Edison is host at a night-club party and his just-recently divorced wife and Oliver Sewell, sportsman and Don Juan, Edison presumes that Sewell and the divorcee are to be married.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER III.

Edison repaired to the lounge, decorated excessively in the Louis XV period as conceived by a real estate entrepreneur from the Bronx. He lit a cigarette in his impatience and paced up and down the top-thick rug. Finally, weary, he slumped into a gilt armchair and tried to relax, but he couldn't. He kept his head turned to the entrance, watching for Sewell to be ushered in through the bronze door. A half hour passed. Then an hour.

Suddenly the telephone operator raced into the lounge. "You wanted to see Mr. Sewell, sir?" He was obviously laboring under considerable excitement, and he did not wait for a reply. "Mr. Sewell's been murdered!"

THE MURDER

Inspector Marx was that type of officer who, in mystery plays, is made the butt of ridicule. His grammar was primitive, his conversation was prolix, he had no scintillating powers of deduction to present with the flare of the showman. In short, his general equipment fitted him for the police station rather than for the stage, which, upon due reflection, is not as incongruous as it may seem.

Ten minutes after the news of Sewell's violent end was telephoned to headquarters, it was relayed to Marx's unpretentious flat in the East Nineties.

"Robbery?" demanded the inspector of Detective Sergeant Carraway, who was telephoning from Sewell's flat.

"No. Not a sign of it. Looks like straight murder."

"All right. I'll be up."

Marx put down the telephone, and his big red face seemed sour with displeasure.

"What's up, precious?" demanded Mrs. Marx, who was big and fat and housewifely.

"Killing."

"Who?" Mrs. Marx displayed the usual interest of a spouse in her husband's labor.

"One of those damn society murders." Marx reached for his collar (size seventeen) discarded during an informal but stout dinner, and then swore at a recalcitrant street sign named Sewell. . . . Bridge player . . . mucky-mucky-muck . . .

"Oh, it'll be big in the papers."

"Yea," grunted Marx. "It'll be big in the papers. They'll be yelling for my scalp!"

"Oh, I don't know, honey. You may get a good break on it."

A good break on a society murder? Show me one of them where we did anything with it. Why, we're helpless. Those society people can't be dragged down to headquarters on suspicion. You

gotta treat 'em with kid gloves. It ain't like a regular killing, where you don't know where you're at."

Marx no wugged at his coat. He believed that crime was the exclusive business of the underworld, and was always annoyed when amateurs forced themselves on the attention of the police. In the underworld there were known criminals and stool pigeons. Every crime had its guide posts. But in these amateur affairs of the emotions a man worked behind a curtain.

In the street, Marx plunged into the subway and was deposited a few doors from the skyscraper apartment where Sewell made his home.

A uniformed policeman greeted him.

"Sergeant Carraway and some detectives are upstairs. The Assistant Medical Examiner is coming soon, sir."

Marx nodded. "Keep the reporters out," he commanded. Marx distrusted reporters. "And keep all the guys that work in the building here. Nobody's to leave."

The officer saluted. Marx stepped into the elevator cage. A stalwart youth of twenty-four was his pilot, and under his nervous hands the cage literally leaped to the twenty-sixth and top-most story.

There was, Marx found, only one apartment on the floor, and that was Sewell's. It was an extraordinary apartment, designed by an extraordinary man, for Sewell had personally supervised its construction.

Marx entered from the elevator through a stout green door, and down a long corridor, passing a kitchen, a butler's pantry, and a butler's bedroom and bath. Then Marx found himself in the huge living room of a duplex apartment, with a miniature minstrel gallery gracing one side of it. Sewell had covered the four walls of this giant room with clear mirrors that flashed into Marx's bewildered eyes, and made him blink.

From this room of mirrors, through a narrow door, you came upon a terraced garden, wide enough to hold several chairs, a table and a garden lounge. Here one could look out upon a city of lights and stone, and a sky that was not quite so black and smudged and mottled as it appeared from the streets below.

Returning to the mirrored room, you mounted the walnut stairway to the gallery, and found there a master bedroom and bath. The bedroom had four separate closets, which struck the practical minded Marx as wasteful luxury. It was in the room of mirrors that Sewell was found. He was seated in a low blue and white chair, his head bent, hands folded, facing the mirror of the left wall. He was dressed for dinner, and the blood on his shirt bosom told Marx he had been shot through the heart. As Marx surveyed him, he had an uneasy feeling that other dead men were in the room—for the mirrors echoed the murder from each wall.

Marx moved nearer to Sewell. He was struck by the unusual

calm of the still face. It was as if the man had been murdered in his sleep.

"Pretty, ain't it?" breathed Carraway, who stood behind Marx.

"Yea," drawled Marx. "Now let's see . . . He paused reflectively. "Who found him?"

"His butler, valet or whatcha call him. Russian, or something."

"Where is he?"

"Jim!" Carraway bawled to one of the detectives. "Bring in the stob!"

The detectives brought Sewell's sole servant from the corridor into the room. He was a little over forty, with high cheekbones, and rather small, black eyes. He carried himself well; not so much with the faintly subservient manner of the good domestic as a man who had known wealth.

"What's your name?" growled Marx.

"Ivan Stanupin."

"Good." One of the detectives grinned. "I know nothing—nothing at all," the butler protested.

"You found him, didn't you?"

"Yea."

"When?"

"At two o'clock. I have already told the gentlemen. He gave me the evening off. He was going to a party. And I went to Elizabeth-town where I have my friends, and I did not come home until two o'clock. Then I opened the door and put on the light, and I am thinking of nothing, and I go into this room when—"

The butler turned to look at the seated corpse, and paused. "You found him in this chair?"

"Yea. So I go to the elevator and make excitement, and that is all I know."

"Mmm. . . Was this your night off?"

"No, sir. Mr. Sewell asked me

to take the night off."

"Did he often ask you to take the night off?"

"Yea."

"Why?"

"I do not know."

"How long have you been with him?"

"Six months."

"Where were you before?"

"Russia."

"Mmm. . . What did you do in Russia?"

"I was an officer in the Guards before the revolution." The man seemed a little more certain of himself then. Marx looking at him could believe he had been a soldier.

"Now, listen," began Marx, taking out a cheap cigar and lighting it. "Was there anything taken that you know of?"

"I do not know," the butler waved his hands.

"Was the place out of order, any?" snapped Marx.

"No. Just like always."

"You found him sitting in his chair?"

"Yea."

"Dead?"

"Yea."

"When did you leave the house?"

"At six o'clock."

"And you came back at two?"

"Yea, sir."

"So he was murdered between six and two, ha?"

"I do not know."

"No. You don't seem to know a helluva lot." Marx glared at him. The butler puzzled him.

"You got no idea where he went?"

"No, sir."

"You know who his friends are, don't you?"

"No, sir. He never told me."

"Oh—he didn't!" Marx sneered. "I suppose nobody ever called on him, did they?"

GOOD-NIGHT STORIES

By Max Tyrell

The Shadow-Children, Dodging the Sun, Move Into a House of Cards

"I wish," said Yam, "that we didn't have so much sunshine."

Mij, Flor, Hanid and Yam, the other little shadow children, with the backward names—nodded their heads.

"Yes," they agreed, "that would be pleasant."

"Shadows, you see, don't like sunshine. That's why they are always using their masters and mistresses as a shield. Now they dart in front of them, now they hide behind them—always they seek to get as far away from the sun as possible. It is the same with all shadows, even your own."

"If we could only move—" began Flor.

"—could only move into a house where there was no sunshine," broke in Mij, who was Flor's twin.

"We could move to the North Pole," said Yam. "Then we'd have six months of night with no sunshine at all."

"But," interrupted Hanid, "then we'd have six months of daylight, with nothing but sunshine."

All at once Knarf gave a shout. "I know a house," he exclaimed, "where there's never any sunshine and where we can go to live at once." The others gazed at the little shadow-boy in puzzlement. As a rule when Knarf made a suggestion like this, he had a surprise in store. But no—he looked quite serious this time.

"Is it far from here?" asked Hanid.

"It's on the table in the nursery," was his amazing reply.

"In the nursery?" they cried. "Why, what kind of a house is it?" For answer Knarf led them into the nursery. Sure enough, on the table was the semblance of a house. It had an entrance and a little porch, and a square roof and several stories.

"The shadow-children walked

around it several times, admiring the outside, which was covered with designs.

"Let's go inside and—" began Flor.

"—and look around," concluded Mij.

They walked in on the ground floor and found themselves in a cozy room.

"Isn't the wallpaper pretty!" exclaimed Yam. "It's all little different-colored hearts."

"The next floor," said Knarf, pointing above, "is done in diamonds."

"Isn't the Wallpaper Pretty?"

"It doesn't seem to have any windows," remarked Hanid.

"Of course not," said Knarf. "That is why the sunlight doesn't get in. It's dim all the time."

It certainly seemed as if Knarf were right. "We can move in this very minute," he added.

"I'll take this corner," said Yam.

"And I'll take that corner," said Hanid.

"And we'll take the other two corners," said the twins. As there were no corners left, Knarf took the middle.

"Now let's all take a nap in our new home," said Yam.

Scarcely had they closed their eyes, when India, the maid entered the nursery. "A little fresh air," she said, flinging open the window, "will do no harm."

But she was wrong. It did do harm. It let in a breeze which

Home-Making Helps

By ELEANOR ROSS

GET FULL VALUE FROM THE CAREFUL WRAPPING OF FOODSTUFFS

Our astonishment at the way good food is sold in market places abroad is only equalled by the amusement with which French women in particular, regard our passion for wrapping everything.

In the French streets it's a regular sight—the half-yard of bread tucked under the housewife's arm, and no paper or anything to cover it. Not that the streets abroad are more immaculate than ours, or that their germs are better trained and don't alight on exposed stuffs. Merely habit—and rigid economy.

Here everything we buy is wrapped most skillfully. Bread comes in tightly sealed wrappers and quite mechanically the grocer will wrap our pound of butter in an extra paper, despite the fact that it comes in its own carton, oil-paper lined. So much the better. Here we believe there's no such thing as too much vigilance in protecting our foods from exposure to the dirt-laden air.

Yet, in handling foods, once they get into the home, there are some habits which rather nullify the work of the manufacturer who so carefully wraps everything and for which, incidentally, we pay when we buy these well-protected foods. One curious habit which is found in many kitchens is to toss the loaf of bread, paper wrapper and all, into the nice clean bread-box. Now, although the paper wrapper protects the bread, the wrapper itself is kept exposed, both in transportation to the shop and while on the grocer's shelves. Therefore, it should be removed immediately it comes into the kitchen. Only the bread should be kept in the bread-box, never the paper.

Similarly, the carefully wrapped meat comes from the butcher promptly blew down the shadow-children's house. For it was nothing but a house of cards, you see.

and is placed, paper and all in the refrigerator. Not so good—for several reasons. Paper which has been handled by several persons and exposed to the outside air shouldn't be placed in the immaculately clean refrigerator. Also, if the meat is covered by thick chilling in the refrigerator. Consequently, the better plan is to remove the meat immediately if it comes to the kitchen from its paper wrapper, place in the plate or bowl reserved for the purpose, and put in the refrigerator where it will be kept thoroughly cold until ready to use.

Any food that comes wrapped in paper boxes or cartons should be removed immediately and stored in the kitchen in tin, glass or china containers. To leave an opened paper box on the kitchen shelf is to invite any insects that may be lurking in the neighborhood—and some always are. The insect world is always with us, whether with easy visible distance or not. Any exposed food will bring them out in an amazingly brief space of time.

But there are other kinds of containers so specially adapted to their foods that they need only be kept as is. Coffee that comes in well-sealed tins need not be transferred, but opened so that the lid is not broken and can always be replaced so as to keep the tin airtight. Olive oil in tins should be left there. It should not be poured even in small quantities in glass bottles and left to stand. Oliveoil is affected adversely by sunlight, and should be kept in an opaque container.

Any liquid foods that are bought in paper jars—like cream, milk, peanut butter, etc.—should be transferred immediately to some more substantial bowl or pitcher. While these containers are made quite sturdy, nevertheless prolonged soaking may affect the flavor of the food—milk and cream being especially sensitive and absorptive.

POLLY AND HER PALS



TILLIE, THE TOILER



LITTLE ANNIE ROONEY



TOOTS AND CASPER



Answers to Health Queries

Q.—What should a girl weigh who is 15 years old and 5 ft. 4 ins. tall?
A.—She should weigh about 105 pounds.

Q.—How can I lose weight?
A.—For your age and height you should weigh about 119 pounds. Weight reduction is chiefly a matter of self-control as regards the diet.

Q.—I have recently had an operation for the removal of tonsils and adenoids and since then my hair has been coming out of the hands—in this case is the other?
A.—This is not unusual—the state of the health has a most decided bearing on the condition of both hair and scalp. Keep up the health and in addition to careful shampooing use a good, stimulating hair tonic.

Q.—What do you advise for a waxy feeling under the right short rib, whole right side is sore?
A.—See your doctor for an examination.

RIGHT LIVING BRINGS FINANCIAL DIVIDENDS

Many of Those Illnesses Which are a Drag on the Family Income Can Be Prevented by Practicing Simple Hygiene, Says Dr. Copeland

By ROYAL S. COPELAND, M. D.
United States Senator from New York.
Former Commissioner of Health, New York City.

HAVE you thought about the high cost of being sick? We know about the high cost of living. We know about the high cost of dying. But in many ways there are few things more distressing than the high cost of illness.

It is amazing what percentage of the population is spending its time in the sick bed. The hospitals of a great city, for instance of New York, are crowded all the time.

It is not only physical sickness with which we have to deal. More hospital beds in the United States are occupied by mental cases than by all other sick combined.

I have observed with great interest that a memorial is being planned to the late Dr. Thomas William Salmon, who was distinguished in the field of mental hygiene. As part of the campaign it is being pointed out how prevalent the mental diseases really are. Every clinic and hospital devoted to the diseases of the brain and nervous system are crowded with sufferers.

Of course we hear of more sickness in the cities. But where is there a household in the whole of North America where there is not sickness almost every week? Illness is the cause of great economic distress. It saps the savings of many a family.

A National Committee on Cost of Medical Care has been organized. The New York City Department of Health has undertaken to collect "data from about 400 New York families who can supply a month-by-month record of all illnesses among their members," giving "all expenses for physician's fees, prescriptions, household remedies, druggist supplies, hospital expenses and the like."

We do not need an official report to realize what a burden sickness is. Not alone does it take a lot of money but also the disturbance of the routine of the home and the anxiety of heart and mind cannot be disregarded.

I have no doubt that as a result of this research the facts will be brought home more vividly than ever before. I pray that ways and means can be found to deal with the immediate problems of sickness. But after all it comes back to this, does it not? The most sensible plan that can be devised is to impress on every one the importance of the maintenance of health. The rules of right living and simple hygiene are, in the vast analysis, the surest remedy. When we can get every person in the civilized world to live so sanely that he will avoid the causes of preventable disease, then much of the economic distress will disappear.

Answers to Health Queries

Q.—What should a girl aged fifteen, four feet eleven inches tall, weigh?
A.—How can I grow taller?

By CLIFF STERRETT

By RUSS WESTOVER

By VERD

By JIMMY MURPHY