

HOUSE OF SHADOWS

by Ida R. Gleason
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CHAPTER I

It was a week after her father's funeral, Claire Fossick stood in the luxuriously furnished library and looked about her with a shudder. Almost as though she half expected some menacing shadow to reach out from the familiar shadows and clutch her. Then she jerked herself together with an effort. Over there, by her favorite lamp, his body had been found, slumped forward in an unnatural, twisted position. She could see it yet, though she had tried to forget. Fearfully she looked there now, and was conscious of a feeling of relief when only the outlines of the cushions of the big wing chair and the curve of the table met her gaze.

The death certificate had said heart trouble, and there had been no autopsy. Nick Baum had managed that for her. But always in the back of Claire's mind would be the question—why had her father died so unexpectedly? He had seemed as well as usual when she bade him goodnight and left him chatting with Nick. And Nick had said that when he left at 11 o'clock Mr. Fossick walked to the door with him and seemed in the best of spirits. Yet he was gone, and now Claire was alone with the wreck of the family fortune. This city house and the mountain property were about all that was left, and she knew only too well that Nick Baum had claims on both. Her father's words came back to her. "We must pay Nick by this time next month, daughter."

"But, Daddy," she had exclaimed. "Surely Nick will—"

"You don't understand, child. Nick has been more than lenient. I couldn't ask him to extend the time again. We've got to find the money somehow."

But how? Wearily Claire inventoried again her chances of supplying a large sum of money in a limited space of time. Trained for nothing but a society life, lacking money that seemed as far distant as the snow-capped mountain peaks, what could she do?

As though in answer to her problem, the door behind her opened and a tall young man came eagerly toward her and took both her cold hands in his.

"Nick! I didn't know you were here. I didn't hear you come in."

"Because I came through the garden. Cut across from the garage. The maid opened the French window for me. Are you glad to see me, Claire?"

He kissed her fingers as he spoke, and then stood looking down at her, his flashing dark eyes admiring every line of her. "You're prettier every time I see you."

The girl freed her hands with an uneasy little gesture. "Of course I'm always glad to see you, Nick," she answered. "You've been awfully good to me. I don't know how I could have gone through everything without you, but—"

She jarred back against a small table, crashing a delicate Dresden figure to the floor. It lay shattered into bits. She gazed down at it dazedly. It was like her own world—the world that had always been so beautiful and safe. Smashed into broken pieces.

"But what, Claire?" he persisted. "You know I'm crazy about you and want you to marry me. Why won't you say yes? You're the loveliest girl I've ever known—and the dearest. Can't you like me a little, dearest?"

Claire looked regretfully at him. Certainly, he seemed everything a girl could desire, as he stood there pleading with her, handsome, young and ardent. Yes, she was a fool, yet—

"I do like you a lot, Nick," her voice was sincere. "I like you but—oh, don't ask me now. I don't know—I'm—I'm so uncertain about everything. I'm going up to the mountain house for a few days. Maybe when I come back—maybe later, Nick, dear—please!"

With a choked sob she turned and ran out into the hall and upstairs to her own room. Crumpling in a heap before her dressing table, she pressed small, clenched fists to her cheeks. "I can't—I just can't! I must find some other way out." The words ended in tears.

"Claire, honey!" An elderly maid's startled face appeared around an open closet door. She hurried to the girl and put her arms around about her, every inch of her rugged gauntness bristling with material protectiveness.

"Tell Hannah all about it now, child." She smoothed Claire's rumpled curls as she had done years before when she was nurse to the motherless little girl. "Anyone been pestering you?" She poked her cap to a belligerent angle, her seams, weather-bitten face glaring defiance.

Claire laughed shakily. Drawing Hannah's head down, she kissed her. "Don't frown so fiercely, old dear. Anyone would think you were still fighting Apaches out on your ranch in the early days. Some scrapper yet, aren't you?" Claire got up and dabbed at her eyes.

Hannah nodded. "You said it, honey. I am when anyone goes trying to drop a loop over you if you ain't willing. Go on now, tell me. Is it that Baum fellow again?"

"Yes," Claire answered slowly. "He's awfully nice and he loves me, but—"

"But you don't want to marry him," Hannah finished the sentence for her. "Well then, you don't have to."

"But I know Daddy hoped I would, Hannah. Nick was very close to him. Had even loaned him a lot of money, and we can't pay it back."

"Listen, child," Hannah broke in. "Your father was the best man in the world, bar none, but just because he was so darn good himself, he was a mere babe in arms when it came to some other things. Now you've got your own life to live, and he's gone. It's all bosh being tied up by dead folk's wishes. Nobody oughter try to run the affairs of the living from the grave. How about trying to unearth that blasted jewel your Uncle Lyman said he hid in the house in the mountains? Wouldn't that help, Claire?"

"I was just thinking of that, Hannah," Claire looked up eagerly. "Oh, if I could only find it! But we've gone over every inch of the place hundreds of times. Daddy had about decided it was just Uncle Lyman's delirium when he was dying. You know he spoke of it again, but couldn't tell us where it was. But if there really was a jewel, and I could find it, everything would be all right. I could pay Nick and—"

"Then your father didn't know whether he got all your uncle's jewels or not?"

"We've never been sure, Hannah. You know, Uncle had some wonderful stones. He was an authority on such things and bought them all over the world on his various travels. But he was always boasting about his 'Jewel of the Rockies,' as he called it. He spoke of it again as he lay dying. Said it was hidden in the house, and that we must never let the place go out of our possession, sure whether it was just a fancy or not. You know Uncle was dreadfully eccentric."

Hannah shrugged. "Pshaw, looked, if you ask me. That he could put up with after we looked and looked without finding anything, we weren't with that trifling Susie Spratt for

housekeeper proves enough. Then look what he called his outlandish house—the House of Long Shadows. Nobody but a crack-wit would ever

put such a brand on that kind of a place. All carved walnut woodwork to catch the dust, and those gosh-awful high ceilings! That house wouldn't be much of a loss if you

did have to let it go. And I don't envy Eb Spratt and his sister, Susie, trying to take care of it for you, either."

"But it was the pride of Uncle Lyman's heart, Hannah. He spent a small fortune copying the eastern mansions he'd known. He thought nothing was too grand to build in

the morning and at Harrisburg at night. Several former Harrisburg pastors have been reappointed or sent to new charges. Rev. K. K. Clark was returned to West Salem; Rev. Edwin Rounds was given leave of absence that he might attend school; Rev. C. R. Mitchell will be supply pastor at Warrenton; Rev. W. B. Empey was returned to Junction City.

CLUB HAS MEETING
COTTAGE GROVE, July 2.—(Special)—A special meeting of the Phi Theta Rho Girls' club was held Monday evening at the I. O. O. F. hall. As Monday was the fifth Monday in June it was necessary to hold the meeting as a special one since first and third Mondays are regular meeting nights.

Elaine Fry, who was president, has moved to Newport. Discussion was held on holding a dance in the early fall. The club will hold a regular meeting, July 6.

ITALY ORDERS PROTEST
ROME, July 2.—(AP)—The Italian government today ordered a protest to Switzerland against the arrest at Geneva yesterday of eight Italian newspapermen who blamed Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in the league of nations assembly.

COTTON GOES DOWN
ST. GERMAIN, France, July 2.—(AP)—Marcel Dallemagne won the French open golf championship today, defeating Henry Cotton 139 to 140 in the 36-hole playoff over the St. Germain course.

MINISTER RETAINED
HARRISBURG, July 2.—(Special)—Word has been received here from the Methodist Episcopal conference at Corvallis that Rev. Francis Kinch will be returned to the Shedd-Harrisburg charge. Arrangements between the two places will be as last year. Rev. Mr. Kinch preaching at Shedd

LOS ANGELES, July 2.—(AP)—The Olympic flag, treasured in Los Angeles since the 1932 international games here, goes to a new custodian this summer at Berlin.

In accordance with Olympic custom, the flag will be sent by the mayor of Los Angeles to the mayor of the German capital, with William May Garland, senior American member of the international Olympic committee, as official bearer.

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PORTLAND'S FINEST HOTELS

Wendling Listed
Wendling, July 2.—(Special)—Mrs. Everett Keeler gave a birthday party Monday, June 29, in honor of her daughter, Audrey, on her sixteenth birthday. Those enjoying the afternoon were: Teresa Kykendall, David Swafford, Edward Swafford, Larry Eyles, Junior Bunch, Arthur Cofer, Billy Crow, Joan Cox, Margaret Kine, Charles, Helen and Dorothy Kincaid, Berenice Peterson, Delores and Marjorie Reines, Eileen Laurensen, Audrey Keeler, Mrs. J. L. Raines, Mrs. T. E. Keeler and the hostess.

Bride Honored
Mrs. Lyle Smith, a recent bride, was honored with a miscellaneous shower at the community hall Tuesday afternoon. The committee in charge was: Mrs. Hiram Shedd, Mrs. Albert Smith, Mrs. Eddie Jordan, Mrs. Inor Reimond, Miss Celia Grant and Mrs. Chester Hufstader. The program: "Love Nest," Audrey Keeler; piano solo, Muriel Dillon; "Say You'll Be Mine," Delores Raines and Ruth Sauer. Little Bobby Prickett acted as master of ceremonies. Muriel Ciesler and Bobby Prickett were brides and groom. Those enjoying the afternoon were: Mrs. Clara Prickett, Mrs. George Brandt, Mrs. Sauer, Mrs. Craig, Mrs. Leila Craig, Mrs. Kattie Craig, Eugene, Mrs. Walter Wicks, Mrs. Seth Bryer, Mrs. Ruth Smith, Mrs. T. G. Bilderback, Mrs. J. E. Fisher, Mrs. Pete Johnson, Miss Rita Abercrombie, Mrs. Ted Prickett, Nellie and Bobby, Mrs. Perry Wiles, Mrs. Ed Keeler, Mrs. Loran Raines, Mrs. Ben Jordan of Howard, Kansas, Mrs. George Gilbert, Miss Elizabeth Matson, Mrs. Delbert Metzger, Mrs. Marvin Dorsey, Mrs. Charles Rockwell, Mrs. Muriel Dillon, Delores Raines, Ruth Sauer, Mrs. Albert

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"I was just thinking of the jewel, Hannah," Claire said. "Oh, if I could only find it! Everything would be all right. I could pay Nick and—"

his beloved mountains. That housewren woman with her feet on the ground and her head full of horse sense. Or you might be going 'round, too, with your ideas in the clouds. What you go in to do now?"

Claire had jumped to her feet as though she had come to a sudden decision. "I'm going up to the House of Long Shadows right now and start

looking again. If there's anything hidden there I'm going to find it. I've got to! Help me into my riding clothes—there's a dear!"

"But, Claire, it's past 9 o'clock. You can't go gallivanting up to the mountains alone at this time of night. You wouldn't get there for hours. It's 50 miles from here."

Nonsense, Hannah. Remember I'm going for my car. Not on horseback. I'll be a heap sight safer out on the road than here, wasting precious time. Besides, the Spratt family is there. They'll take almost as good care of me as you would."

Still Hannah shook her head doubtfully. "Well, if you're set to go—but this Nick Baum. Does he know about this—this jewel or whatever it is, Claire?"

"I don't know," the girl replied. "We haven't known Nick so very long, you know. But Daddy was awfully fond of him, so he might have mentioned it."

"Um," Hannah reluctantly held out Claire's coat. "I'm telling you I got a hunch about all this that I ain't likin' any too well."

"Hannah! Your hunches—you're worse than an Indian medicine man. Go on to bed and forget it. I'll send you word tomorrow that I'm all okay. Probably Eb Spratt'll be coming down or can send the man." Claire pulled on a pair of driving gloves. "Remember you taught me yourself never to be afraid of anything. Besides, what on earth could happen in such a peaceful old place as the mountain house? It's an event if even a peddler finds his way up there from the village." She dropped a light kiss on Hannah's nose, and without waiting for any more objections went downstairs.

As she passed the library she halted a minute and softly closed the door which was half open. She had been pretty hard on Nick. She had done so much. Why couldn't she love him as she had always hoped she would love the man she married?

She let herself out into the garden and hurried to the garage. Here she got her own little car and soon was threading her way through the traffic of the city, headed for the road that ran straight as an arrow toward the mountains.

The way was too familiar to make the trip at night seem an undertaking. Hadn't she driven it more times than she could remember when she and her father had gone to the House of Long Shadows, to spend the week-end? She settled down to a steady pace which would bring her to her destination long before midnight.

After half an hour the houses began to thin out and small dry farms took the place of suburbs. The cool evening air of the open country blew against her cheeks. As always, a tingle of anticipation ran through her when she entered the foothills, with the high peaks hunched dimly behind them.

The mountains invariably held that attraction for Claire, no matter how familiar she was with them. For her, nothing could ever take the place of their changing moods. All the mad, colorful life of the hardy seekers for gold, their tragedies and romances, successes and failures, seemed embodied in the towering snow-capped crags that jagged against the skyline.

That was why going to the old house in the mountains had always been an adventure to the girl. The House of Long Shadows—the very name her uncle had given his home made it a house of dreams. Here she could live again, in imagination, the exciting days when the little mining town nearby had been a blaze of hectic life. When fortunes were won or lost in a night and the haunting quest for gold turned the

heads of the staidest of men.

Now the road began to wind sharply upward, coiling about the rugged side of the mountain. Higher and higher went the car, each succeeding loop in the road lifting it above the plain below. Soon the city became a miniature, twinkling fairland, its streets outlined in rows of tiny points of light. Claire never tired of this picture. She threw back her head and filled her lungs with the bracing air, a sense of exhilaration sweeping through her.

Unconsciously she pressed on the accelerator. The car leaped forward with a sudden spurt of speed that sent the gravel flying down the steep side of the mountain. Instantly she jerked back from the danger of taking the curves too fast. She knew only too well how narrow the strip of road was that lay between her and a hurtling death into the dark depths below.

Now she was coming to the narrow twisting road that led from the main highway up to the House of Long Shadows. As she turned into it, another car passed her, going along the main road. In just a few minutes she would be at her destination. She sat back in the seat and relaxed her grip on the wheel.

There was a sudden grinding crash as the car hit a huge log that lay directly across the narrow road. Instantly the lights went out, and splintered glass showered about her. The machine lurched, tilted and stopped. Claire fell limp forward over the steering wheel.

Quick footsteps sounded dimly behind her and the last thing she knew she was being lifted in a man's arms.

When Claire regained her senses she was lying on the ground with a coat for a pillow. A young man was bending over her, an anxious frown on his face. For a minute she stared confusedly, then a smile of recognition touched her lips.

"Pat Magan?"

He grinned. "Sure, the very same. And what do you think you're trying to do to yourself anyway?" With one arm he lifted her to a sitting position, while he held a flask to her lips. "Just a swig of this, and you'll feel finer than frog's hair."

Obediently the girl swallowed the fiery liquor. Presently she straightened up and looked about her as another young man came out of the darkness.

"How is she, Pat?" he asked. "Guess she was just knocked out for a minute," Pat told him. Then, with a wave of his hand at the newcomer, "Claire, this is my side-kick, Bob Steele, a mining engineer, with a good job—believe it or not. He's spending his vacation in the Rockies. Miss Claire Fossick, Bob, I used to aim valentines and spitballs at her when we were in grammar school."

Claire smiled and held out her hand rather shyly. "How about my car, Mr. Steele?"

He shook his head. "Pretty badly damaged. Front axle busted and a lot of minor casualties. Someone had closed the road with that log. We'll have to take you in our bus wherever you are going. Miss Fossick, we heard the smash and came back."

"Closed the road? You mean the log was put there?"

"Sure. Probably repairing or something. But Bob and I are on the loose, and we'll be tickled to death to trundle you any place you want to go. Feel able to make it over to our car?" He helped her to her feet. After a minute she was able to walk unaided, and got into their car to wait until they could move the wreck out of the road.

When finally they came back she had decided to tell them what she was going to do. She was going to the house in the mountains, omitting only her personal reasons.

members and guests.

It was voted to hold a general auction sale on Saturday, August 1. The H. E. C. met at the grange hall on Thursday, with Mrs. V. E. Dwyer as hostess.

World armament cost \$2,531,000,000 in 1913; in 1934, it cost more than \$7,000,000,000.

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Grange at North Fork Has Meeting
NORTH FORK, July 2.—(Special)—North Fork Grange held its regular business and social meeting on Saturday. Mrs. Shirley who was delegate to state grange gave a report. Arros Swearingen, who received a grange scholarship to 4-H summer school at Corvallis, told of her experience there. Wallace Holden also attended summer school on a scholarship but was not present to give his report. Mrs. Helen Block was taken into membership at this meeting. Following the program strawberry shortcake and coffee was served to the

TO GO TO SHANGHAI
MINNAPOLIS, Ore., July 2.—(AP)—Lloyd Milligan, Linfield College sophomore from Eugene, Mont., will be an exchange student with the University of Shanghai, China, the coming school year, President Elam J. Anderson of Linfield said today.

More than 7,000,000 members are enrolled in athletic clubs in Germany.

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