

The **MYSTERY OF THE SILVER DAGGER** BY RANDALL PARRISH

AUTHOR OF "THE STRANGE CASE OF CAVENTISH" ILLUSTRATIONS BY AWEIL

CHAPTER X



The Proof of Murder—The Back Room of Costigan's

I watched her through the glass doors until she vanished among the crowd in the lobby. I could not permit her to go away like this; to get beyond my sight and knowledge—yet I hesitated too long, until she had merged into the swirling crowd and was lost.

It was indeed a strange feeling of loneliness which swept over me in that moment. Never before had I felt such depth of interest in a woman, or experienced such regret at parting. With no apparent effort, seemingly utterly indifferent, she had nevertheless become intertwined with my life, her presence a necessity for my happiness. The soft pressure of her body, the touch of her hand, was intoxication; the glance of her eyes sent the warm blood pulsing through my veins. She had become to me an inspiration, a memory to dream over, a hope no longer to be resisted.

This was strange, so strange as to be beyond understanding. I argued it with myself, but to no result. The fact would not be denied. Here was an unknown woman, original and beautiful, to be sure, yet one whose very identity was shrouded in mystery. To all appearances she was actively engaged in conspiracy against the government of Chile, in a crime against human life. She was unquestionably the authorized agent of a gang of revolutionary plotters—I had witnessed their reception of her as one of their own, and could not doubt the evidence of my own eyes. She had borne them instructions, and stood in their midst, in secret conclave, speaking as one having authority. More than that, even, she had refused to deny this connection, to reveal her name, or acknowledge any other purpose. She had used me to further her ends, whatever they might be, preying upon my personal interest in her, and yet refusing to lift a single fold of this curtain of mystery.

What could it mean, but that she was secretly ashamed to permit of my full understanding? The thought of the stolen money, the murder of Alva, recurred to me; the invitation I had overheard for her to accompany him on his fatal trip, and her acceptance; the positive assertion of Harris that she had done so; her confessed knowledge that the money had actually been given into the possession of the Chilean captain; the nature of the weapon with which he had been killed; her remaining in New York instead of returning to Washington. I could not blot these things out, no matter how hard I endeavored to reconcile them with her denials. I trusted her; I would continue to trust her against the world, yet deep down in my heart lingered a question unanswered. If she was honest, square, actuated by some worthy purpose, why did she still refuse to confide in me? Surely I had been sufficiently tested—and she knew who I was. If she was the sister of a classmate whom I knew and loved, what necessity remained for the concealment of her name? What, indeed, except shame at the part she was playing in this sordid drama of life? Some of my earlier suspicion had been eradicated, for now it was clearly demonstrated that it could not have been her knife which had pierced Alva's heart. Whatever else I might believe against her, this evidence no longer existed, for she still wore the dagger in her hat. Peculiar as the design was, the weapon locked in my valise, which I had picked up blood-stained on the floor of the car, was not hers; it had been welded in its deadly work by some other hand. But whose? Did she know? Did she even suspect the assassin? Was she even now endeavoring to conceal his identity? These questions were unanswerable; I could only partially drive them back by memory of the girl herself: it was impossible to recall her vividly to mind, and yet associate her with so foul a crime.

I was still immersed in such thoughts, mentally struggling for her honor, and my own justification, when I finally attained the quiet of my room. I was squarely up against a stone wall; there was no light perceptible anywhere. Neither Harris nor Waldron was guilty of this crime; they were obliterated from further consideration. These two worthies had undoubtedly done their best, but had been outgeneraled by some one else; and, whoever that other might be, he had made a clear get-away, leaving not even a lurking suspicion behind him. It was the job of a master-thief, an expert in crime—or else had been accomplished through the blind luck of some one whose very identity cloaked any possibility of suspicion.



The Dagger I Had Concealed There Was Gone.

My glances wandering about the room aimlessly fell upon the valise in one corner. It was just where I remembered leaving it when I went out, yet I saw something which surely resembled a slash in the leather. I crossed over, and bent down; it was a slash, the clean cut of a knife, running from end to end, penetrating through both leather and cloth. Whoever had done the deed had been unable to operate the lock, and had used the blade as a last resort, slitting the entire bag wide open. I inserted my hand and felt within; nothing seemed missing, or greatly disturbed. I explored to the bottom, and then sprang to my feet in startled amazement—the dagger I had concealed there was gone!

Good God! what could be the meaning of this? She had worn that ornament in her hat openly, purposely, to fool me into believing her innocent. There could be no other explanation. She had confessed being at the hotel, seeking to locate me, and the number of my room. What would prevent her coming up here unobserved, then, while I was out, and gaining entrance? And who else would have any reason to thus search through my things, and abstract this important evidence of crime?

Yet how did she know I had it? How did she even suspect I was the first to discover the dead body, and bear away with me the tell-tale weapon with which Alva had been murdered? I had no means of knowing how—only she alone had special reason to regain possession of that knife. And she had even dared later to flaunt it in my very face, to show it to me in her possession, just as though it had never passed out of her hands! Here was revealed a depth of duplicity, a criminal audacity, not to be expressed in words; this soft spoken girl, this woman to whom I knew I had given my heart, stood revealed now in all her hideousness—a murderess, a thief, a scheming criminal, coolly concealing the trail of her crime, and using her very charms of face and manner to conceal from me her true nature.

Perhaps she would see me again—perhaps! The lie was yet warm upon her lips. She had gone away laughing at the simpleton who had believed her, the dupe who had so easily been deceived by her smiles. The chances were she had disappeared already, vanished, left the city, assured that no evidence now remained behind to ever connect her with this terrible affair. She cared nothing for me—I had been a mere tool, pliant in her hand—I remained merely in her memory as something to laugh about, another victim, a blind, groping fool, with whom she had played to her heart's desire.

I sat with my head in my hands staring at the mutilated bag, racked with anger and misery. I had been easy, a mark of derision and ridicule; a mere screen for her to hide behind, while her accomplice, if she had one, escaped with the spoils. Then the reaction came; the thought that perhaps I had not read the story wholly aright; the faint hope that it might not prove exactly as I had pictured it. It was too infamous, too unthinkable. Why, if she was guilty, should she have remained in New York? Why should she have sought me out, or listened so intently to the quarrel of those two men at Perond's? What could she possibly gain by thus overbearing the tale of their failure, if she already knew who was the murderer of Alva, and what had become of the spoils?

I could ask these questions, but not one was answerable. They merely mocked me with their emptiness.

Then, shrill and insistent, the telephone rang.

My heart was beating like a trip-hammer as I took down the receiver. Who could be calling me at this hour? Who except she alone in this city knew my name and hotel?

"Hello."

A man's voice spoke huskily. "This you, Daly?"

"Yes," hastily, instantly aware of who was on the other end of the wire, yet feeling it best to dissimulate until I learned the purpose.

"Who is speaking?"

"The fellow you bumped with a bottle tonight. No, I ain't got no hard feelings. Besides, I got something else to think about than a cracked dome. Say, I got some dope on how that job was did, an' maybe could tell you something else of interest. I got to talk with you privately—that's what. It's a matter for the girl as well as yourself. I'm playing square as long as you do the right thing, but I know who the dame is, an' am liable to squeal if I get a raw deal; that's putting it straight, Harry."

"You know who she is, you say?"

"Sure I do. Old Pierre, over at Perond's, told me. He never forgets a face, or a name, that old duffer. He knew you the minute you blew in, and he knew her, too; she'd been there before slumming."

"Who is she, then?"

"That's all right—I know; but I ain't fool enough to blow it over the wire. If you'll come over here and have a talk, I'll spill a few things in your ear that'll make you wise."

"Where are you?"

"At Costigan's."

"What's become of your partner?"

"Who's that—Waldron? He ain't no partner of mine. Say, you must have handed that guy some jolt. The last I saw of him, he was laid out on a bench in Perond's back room breathing like a stuck pig, dead to the world. Will you come over here?"

"What have you got to tell me?"

"Well, there's the dame's name for one thing. I'll bet you don't even



"I'll Bet You Don't Even Know Who She Is."

know who she is, or how she's stringing you. Then I'm on to where a part of that hoodie's planted—anyhow I've got a hunch. If we turn it up, I'm still strong on the fifty-fifty proposition."

I turned it over swiftly in my mind, the receiver still at my ear. I felt no particular fear of Harris; to be sure, in all probability, he was only feeling about in the dark, hoping in this way to learn something of value, yet it might be that he had accidentally uncovered the girl's identity, and that alone was inducement enough to urge me to take the risk. If he actually knew who she was, he was the kind that might become ugly, and, however much I suspected her in my own mind, I had no desire to leave her undefended at his mercy. Guilty or not guilty, my inclination was to protect her to the last. Besides I was eager to obtain the information he claimed to possess; indeed, all progress on the case was blocked until I did obtain it. As to his boast that he knew where the stolen money was concealed, I took little stock in that. Doubtless he merely threw that in for good measure. But the other looked reasonable enough; she had confessed being at Perond's before; Pierre was fully as likely to recall her to memory as he was to remember Daly, and Harris could never have made so shrewd a guess, unless he had really been told the facts. Another thing gave me courage to go to Costigan's. I was still accepted by these people as Harry Daly, crook. I would undoubtedly be so received, so treated. Under these circumstances there could be no personal danger; I held the whip-hand, the advantage—Harris was only endeavoring to see what he could get out of me; he had abandoned force to resort to diplomacy.

(To Be Continued.)

BODY OF SOLDIER TO GO TO SEATTLE

Effect of Gassing While in Service Fatal To George Winslow Shortly After Move To Bend.

Relatives of George Winslow, ex-soldier who died at his rooms in the O'Donnell building as the indirect result of gas poisoning while in the service, will have the body shipped to Seattle for burial. The widow, a mother, and a small stepson are the immediate relatives left.

Winslow and his family had moved yesterday to Bend from Pringle Falls, where they had been staying for his health. At midnight it was found necessary to call a physician, but no remedial treatment was possible, and two and one-half hours later Winslow died.

INCOME TAX HARD TO PAY, IS FOUND

Over a Million and a Quarter Paying On Less Than \$5,000 Are Using Installment Plan.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29.—If members of Congress have any doubt that it is harder for the man with a small income and consequently a smaller tax to pay to meet his obligation to the government, he might scan tax return figures just made public.

The figures show that 1,227,141 persons with a taxable income under the \$5,000 mark found it necessary to pay on the installment plan. Only 402,575 persons with incomes of over \$5,000 found it necessary to pay in installments.

for on this discovery all else hinged. If violence, or treachery, was intended, I would be found prepared, and well able to defend myself.

The neighborhood into which I was venturing induced me to take a taxi, and, within ten minutes, I was deposited at the door of the saloon. I pressed open the swinging door, and stepped into the brilliantly lighted bar-room.

Costigan was behind the bar, but, at sight of me, rounded the end, and shook hands cordially, removing his apron, and slipping into a coat, in token that he had changed his occupation.

"Better call Charlie," he said to a man beside him, "for I'll be off for an hour or so. You came to see George?"

"Yes; he telephoned me."

"Said he was goin' to. He's waitin' in the office there. I'll go along with you."

He pushed a passage through the crowd, his breadth of body according me ample room in which to follow without being obstructed, and opened the closed door with a pass-key. To a wave of his big hand I passed confidently past him, and entered. The next instant he had pressed me forward, came in also, and closed the door; the sharp click of the lock sounded like the report of a pistol. One startled glance at the interior told me I was trapped, and the swift instinct of defense led me to step aside, so that I should have my back to the wall. Harris sat in the swivel chair, with feet elevated on the desk, sardonically grinning at me over a half-cheered cigar tilted between his teeth. A white rag was bound round his head, through which a few drops of blood had oozed, leaving a dark stain. Leaning against the wall opposite was Waldron, one eye half-closed, and his lip split, giving to his face a look of savage brutality, rendered peculiarly sinister by a grim effort to smile. Costigan remained motionless, with back against the door, as though thus barring all possibility of escape. I had walked into their trap, and the jaws had closed.

(To Be Continued.)

SUMMONS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON, FOR THE COUNTY OF DESCHUTES

E. T. YOUNGFELT, Plaintiff,

vs. SEABRON F. JOHNSON, Defendant.

TO SEABRON F. JOHNSON, Defendant:

In the name of the State of Oregon, you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled action within six weeks after the first publication of this summons, and in case of your failure to so appear and answer for want thereof plaintiff will take judgment against you for the sum of \$555 with interest thereon at 6 per cent per annum from March 27, 1920, and the costs and disbursements of the action.

This summons is served upon you by publication thereof pursuant to the order of the Hon. T. E. J. Duffy, Judge of the above entitled court, made and entered therein on November 25, 1921.

The date of the first publication of this summons is November 26, 1921.

ROSS FARNHAM, Attorney for Plaintiff, Residence and postoffice address, Bend, Oregon. 146, 152, 5, 11, 17, 23c.

NOTICE OF SALE FOR DELINQUENT ASSESSMENTS

Whereas, on the 10th day of December, 1921, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 19 of the Charter of the City of Bend, there were entered in the Docket of City Liens in the office of the Recorder of said City, assessments for the sprinkling of certain public ways in said City of Bend for the year 1919, in the following respective amounts, against the following described parcels of land, the owners or reputed owners thereof being as follows, to-wit:

Description	Owner or Reputed Owner	Amount
Lot 1, Block 1, Bend	J. C. Vandever	\$14.74
Lot 8, Block 2, Bend	R. B. Mutzig	11.70
Lot 10, Block 4, Bend	J. Snow Farmer	5.85
Lot 14, Block 4, Bend	Ada R. Johnston	5.85
Lot 15, Block 4, Bend	J. N. Hunter	4.09
N 1/2 Lot 11, Block 5, Bend	Geo. Brosterhouse Est.	4.09
S 1/2 Lot 11, Block 5, Bend	J. N. Hunter	23.99
Lot 12, Block 8, Bend	M. A. Palmer	4.68
Lot 11, Block 8, Bend	M. A. Palmer	27.61
Lot 7, Block 9, Bend	J. N. Hunter	34.63
Lot 8, Block 9, Bend	F. H. May	11.70
Lot 9, Block 9, Bend	J. W. Frerich	11.70
Lot 10, Block 9, Bend	G. A. Paddock	11.70
NE 1/2 Lot 2, Block 10, Bend	R. B. Mutzig	44.46
Lot 1, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 2, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 3, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 4, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 5, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 6, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 7, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 8, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	4.10
Lot 9, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	Chas. Carroll & J. S. Innes	4.10
Lot 10, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	Chas. Carroll & J. S. Innes	26.62
Lot 11, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	5.85
Lot 12, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	5.85
Lot 13, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	5.85
Lot 14, Sub. 1, 2 B 12, Bend	D. E. Hunter	5.85
E 32 ft Lot 1, Block 13, Bend	Pearl Corbett	7.49
Lot 4, Block 13, Bend	Lon L. Fox	11.70
Lot 7, Block 13, Bend	L. F. Kernott	40.25
Lot 5, Block 14, Bend	Jacob Mutzig	11.42
Lot 2, Block 15, Bend	M. P. Cashman	11.70
Lot 10, Block 15, Bend	Anna R. Finley	3.28
Lot 11, Block 15, Bend	R. B. Mutzig	10.74
Lot 12, Block 15, Bend	Jacob Mutzig	4.68
Lot 1, Block 16, Bend	Bend Hardware Co.	24.80
N 1/2 Lot 2, Block 16, Bend	Bend Hardware Co.	5.85
Lot 4, Block 16, Bend	Hunter & Staats	11.70
Lot 6, Block 16, Bend	Hunter & Staats	24.80
Lot 15, Block 16, Bend	Bend Hardware Co.	4.68
Lot 1, Block 17, Bend	Hunter & Staats	17.78
Lot 13, Block 17, Bend	Mrs. A. S. Hunter	7.30
Lot 14, Block 17, Bend	J. N. Hunter	4.68
Lot 15, Block 17, Bend	J. N. Hunter	4.68
Lot 16, Block 17, Bend	J. N. Hunter	4.68
Lot 17, Block 17, Bend	J. N. Hunter	4.68
Lot 5, Block 24, Bend	W. P. Vandever	4.10
Lot 6, Block 24, Bend	W. P. Vandever	4.10
Lot 7, Block 24, Bend	W. P. Vandever	4.10
Lot 1, Block 25, Park Add.	Methodist Church	4.68
Lot 4, Block 25, Park Add.	Mary F. Miller	4.68
Lot 5, Block 25, Park Add.	R. J. and M. F. Miller	4.68
Lot 6, Block 25, Park Add.	R. J. and M. F. Miller	4.68
All Block 7, North Add.	Bend Company	21.36

and said assessments not having been paid.

Notice is hereby given, that pursuant to Warrant No. 3-8 issued by the Recorder of said City, to me the undersigned directed, I will on Tuesday, the 10th day of January, 1922, at the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon of said day, in front of the City Hall, at the corner of Lava Road and Minnesota Avenue in said City, sell separately the several tracts of land above described for the amount of said assessments against each, together with interest and all costs and accruing costs.

Dated this 10th day of December, 1921.
R. H. FOX, Chief of Police,
Bend, Oregon.

New Year Greeting

May all my friends and patrons enjoy a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

I wish to express my hearty appreciation for the business tendered me through the old year—and cordially solicit your consideration during 1922.

Carl Johnson
TAYLOR

We take this opportunity to thank our many friends and patrons for their patronage during the year that has just passed.

As we have endeavored to serve you to the best of our ability, so shall we continue.

We only hope we have rendered a service that justifies your patronage.

We wish you all the Happiness the New Year could hold.

M. & C. SERVICE
Station