

# Mr. Pringle's Plot

By ALICE E. IVES

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Jack Pringle sat for some time like one stunned. Then he took up the terrible thing and read it again as one does hoping with a forlorn hope that there may be some mistake or some loophole of escape.

But no, it seemed even more horrible than at first, since now the whole meaning of his ruined life and what it must bring to her, the woman he loved better than his life, came over him with a crushing force, and bowing his face upon his hands his body shook with a mighty sob.

In the morning it seemed that he could not meet his mother, but he forced himself to the ordeal, and both white, haggard and stricken, faced each other with a silent pressure of the hand.

After a time she spoke, a world of entreaty in the question:

"You do not blame me, my son?"

"Mother, you tried to save me from the misery of it. I know that, but if you had spoken before—I before I went her love—before I brought this horror into her life!"

"You were away, dear. You did not tell me till you came back. How did I know? I always thought it would be time enough when I found you were beginning to care very much for some woman. When I saw you so happy I—I could not."

It was hours before he could muster the courage to face Sibyl. When he finally did, she started with a little cry of alarm.

"Jack, what has happened? Are you ill?"

"For answer he put the letter in her hand.

"I never knew this till last night. Read it. I will wait for you in the garden." He went slowly down the path. Dropping into a garden seat, he waited, knowing that her coming must be another agony.

He heard her step upon the porch, her light tread upon the gravelly walk. The next instant her cheek was against his head and her arms were about him.

"My poor, poor boy!" she said.

"Dearest heart, that is like you. You don't speak of yourself. It is my misery which you think first. Oh, why couldn't I have known this before I ever saw you? I would have carried away that one blessed moment—the memory of it—and never have brought my wretched self near you again."

"But think how you would have robbed me! I don't believe much in heredity anyway."

"I do. I have always been a firm believer in inherited traits and diseases, especially those of the brain. My own observations have been borne out, too, by scientific men."

"But the doctors are often wrong. This may never come to you."

"For your sake, dear, it is too terrible a risk."

"But, darling, I am not afraid. Let us have it together."

"Have you thought what that means—the horrible form this insanity takes? Think, think—the possibility of becoming your murderer! No, no! God forbid!"

He stood up and looked at her with a great despair.

Words seemed such useless things. Then he strained her to his breast, kissing her long and passionately.

"Goodby," he said, and putting her gently from him, went down the path. She ran after him with a storm of pleading and remonstrance, begging him to come back. It mattered nothing to her. It would kill her to lose him. Like one deaf, he never turned, but kept on his way.

For many weary days he would not go beyond the tiny walled garden. He seemed to shrink from the eyes of men as though every one must know he was accused.

Sibyl came, but he would not see her. The two women went together, their common grief bringing them closer into each other's affections than ever before.

Then Sibyl fell ill, and Mrs. Pringle spent all the time she could spare taking care of her at the girl's bedside. The one constant fear of both was that he would take his own life.

One morning his door was locked, and all their knockings and entreaties brought no response. The door was broken open.

He was not dead, as the poor woman had feared. He sat in one corner of the room, and his eyes glared at her like those of a caged tiger. He did not speak or know her.

The curse had come.

She crept away, trembling and terrified, and a servant was left to guard the insane man.

Something must be done at once. In her extreme she thought herself of the only relative likely to be of assistance, her husband's brother, George Pringle.

A telegram brought the gentleman the next morning, during which time poor Jack had grown worse, having attempted to take his own life.

George Pringle was greatly shocked and deeply sympathetic when he heard of the young man's condition.

"But what could have caused it?" he exclaimed.

She placed the letter in his hand. He read it through.

"Why, good heavens, there has never been any insanity in our family back to the remotest ancestor!"

She looked at him, a mixture of amazement and indignation.

"How dare you say that?" she exclaimed. "Are you talking to me as though I were a child to be put off, or are you branding your dear brother as a liar?"

"Neither."

"Then in God's name what do you mean?"

"Have you noticed that Richard did not sign the letter?"

"Yes; but he died suddenly and may have intended to do so."

"No. He never intended to do so." "But it is his handwriting." "Yes."

"Do you mean to tell me Richard would have thought of writing such a thing, such a ghastly just, if it had not been true?"

"Yes."

"Then he was insane when he wrote it?"

"No."

Mrs. Pringle rose, with a half bewildered, half frightened stare at her guest.

"Wait," he said, "hear me out. You know Richard out of business hours as a sort of recreation occasionally sent short stories for publication. I believe they generally came back to him."

"Yes; I know. I never had much sympathy with his scribbles."

"There has never been any insanity in our family."

"He knew that and seldom read them to you. But I believe I had rather more patience with his literary efforts. I distinctly remember now this letter was to be the center of a great plot. He wrote it out and read it to me; but, poor fellow, he never wrote the story. In less than two weeks he had passed out. You found it in that second drawer there, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"I saw him put it there. He was never very orderly about his papers, so he said to me when he slipped it in, 'I'll just drop it in there with those important papers so I can't mislay it.' I remember his exact words. Isn't it a dandy of a letter? It'll be the keynote of a great story. And he ran on telling me the plot. By the way, the story wasn't exactly as the real thing was turned out."

"And I have lived under that horrible shadow for eight years."

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## WASHINGTON LETTER

(Special Correspondence.)  
Emperor William of Germany has presented a silver watch and chain to George Ellis, the negro who saved from destruction the statue of Frederick the Great erected in the grounds of the War college at the Washington barracks. The watch and chain were sent to the department of state by Baron Russell, charge d'affaires of the German embassy. Accompanying the gift was a letter from the baron, in which he said he was directed by his imperial master to transmit the watch with the request that it be delivered to Ellis as a recognition of the "courageous conduct of the negro George Ellis, whose intrepid interference saved the statue from the effects of Rosseau's dynamite bomb."

**Dunning Government Employees.**  
The question of claims for debt against employees of the navy department having been brought to the attention of Secretary Bonaparte, he has issued the following order after consideration of the practice of the different governmental departments. This order applies to civilian employees only and does not change the practice in effect in regard to the commissioned or enlisted personnel of the navy.

Hereafter the navy department will take no cognizance of a complaint against an employee by an alleged creditor so far as the complaint is concerned beyond acknowledging receipt of his communication. Persons claiming to be creditors and collectors of debts or claims will be denied access to employees for the purpose of presenting or collecting claims during the hours set apart for the transaction of public business while the employees concerned are on duty.

But, although the department will not permit itself to be used as a collection agency, it does not consider one who falls without justification to pay his just debts a person suitable for public employment. Therefore upon receipt of a complaint of nonpayment of debts it will be referred to the proper chief of bureau for a report in writing from the employee concerned, which, together with a summary of the conclusions reached by the department in the matter, will be made part of his official record.

An employee who falls without justification to pay his just debts may be discharged for this reason if the offense shall seem to the department of sufficient gravity.

**Men Who Refuse Passes.**  
Secretary Bonaparte's is not the only cabinet pocket wherein no railroad passes are to be found. Announcement from the navy department that he had courteously declined offers of the attractive little cards which fit nicely in leather made cases to be had at any of the leather stores in town has made his attitude prominent. Mr. Bonaparte, to be sure, declined in far more graceful terms than did Representative Baker, the radical Brooklyn member, a couple of years ago when a railroad forwarded him an annual pass.

He made public the letter in which he scolded the railroad for its tender. Mr. Bonaparte does not give the name of the railroad, but indicates that his refusal was an entirely polite one, which could not have given offense.

There are other men around President Roosevelt's cabinet table who have not accepted courtesies from the railroads and are not doing so now. There are also cabinet members who are traveling on passes. One holder of a portfolio said the other day that he had steadfastly declined these favors ever since he entered the cabinet, but did not wish to advertise his declination to the world. Cabinet members travel on public business, as a rule, in which case, of course, they are entitled to reimbursement from the government. They also travel a deal on their private account. To some of them, not men of large means, the use of railroad passes could be a help financially in view of the meager salaries that cabinet officers are paid.

**Bonaparte Refuses Hairbrush.**  
Charles Jerome Bonaparte, the new secretary of the navy, has refused to purchase a hairbrush said to have been used in arranging the locks of his granduncle, the great Napoleon.

The relic was offered to Mr. Bonaparte by a man who had been painted from life. The price of the memento would have absorbed Mr. Bonaparte's salary for one year. He makes it a rule never to purchase such things, no matter how little or how much is asked for them.

**New Capitol Doors Ready.**  
The large bronze doors to be hung at the south end of the capitol at the main entrance to the house of representatives, corresponding with those on the senate side and in the center of the building, have arrived from Chicopee, Mass., where they were made. The doors are of solid bronze and are among the finest of the kind in the world.

The design of the new doors is by Crawford, the artist who designed the statue of Freedom topping the capitol dome. The plans were drawn in 1846, but were laid aside until a few years ago, when congress appropriated \$45,000 for the execution of the work.

CARL SCHOFFIELD.

**A Consistent Career.**  
I can remember when the wealthy Mr. Hilden didn't have a dollar of his own," said the man who disparages.

"Well," answered the misanthrope, "it is said that he is still doing business entirely with other people's dollars."—Washington Star.

Never hold any one by the button or the hand in order to be heard of, for if people see unwilling to hear you you had better hold your tongue than them.

—Chesterfield.

## WOMAN AND FASHION

**Suit For Young Girl.**  
Here is a smart model designed with an eye to the youthful charms of the young girl. Its good style recommends this suit for church wear, but it is practical for every day as well. Backward turning plaits appear in skirt and jaunty bolero forming a trimming that has met with popular approval. Brown promella cloth in any of the late shades can be used with



BOLERO COSTUME.

good effect in this suit, and if one selects a longer blouse to wear under the short coat so much the better. Pupils are also well liked, as are mohair, shepherd plaid and rajah silk.

For medium size five and three-quarter yards material, thirty-six inches wide, are required.

**The Sack Jacket.**  
The sack jacket, made on the square lines of the Chinese mandarin's coat, threatens to become most popular. It looks its best when covered with a braiding and may be most especially recommended to the stout matron, so that if she be not too stout below the waist she will find this exceedingly becoming, and a capital effect is gained by one in dark red braided in gray and lined with gray, the skirt being plain and the blouse beneath it of gray crepe de chine embroidered with hand red silk, intersected with designs of white lace.

**Concerning Wrappers.**  
The old fashioned idea of the cashmere wrapper which was once the vogue in every family in the land has been superseded by the one made of silk and of the silky velvings. Henrietta also plays an important part in the wardrobe which one wears on the day at home, and even pongee and mohair have been impressed into the service. You must have something light and pretty, thin and cool, yet adapted to wear for day occasions. The elaborate figured silks are hardly appropriate, but there are cheap soft silks which are good.

**Fairy Scares For Cool Nights.**  
There is a great revival of Spanish lace shawls, and scarfs of all shapes are being worn either in black or cream color, and many of them are dyed in a soft pastel shade. Another fetching lace shawl is of coffee colored silk eluzy, shaped like a fleu with long, tapering ends. Cream colored net is also outlined in rich shape with heavy Arabian lace.

**A Modish Little Wrap.**  
The devotees of fashion are again realizing the graceful becomingness of the cape, and it is seen in varying form and styles as a part of the most fashionable togeth. The little cape shown here is one of the latest models in white taffeta. No adornment mars its simplicity, for the neat stitching which follows its edges. The lower edge shapes downward in front



LATE CAP MODEL.

and opens in a V at the neck, which is finished with a collar of fanciful outline. This garment owes its entire style to the cut, there being no seam or other feature where a mistake could possibly be made in the reproduction. The collar may be omitted if preferred. This little cape would be very effective with a light dress to match a cloth skirt or of linen or rajah to complete a costume.

**Dumas' Scheme.**  
Alexandre Dumas, Sr., was once visiting his son, who at that time lived in a villa near Paris. They sat in a tiny native garden behind the house, under the one small tree it contained. It was a broiling hot day, and Dumas, who was very stout, said to his son: "I am suffocating with the intense heat."

"What shall I do, father?"

"Suppose you open your chamber window and let a little air into the garden," replied said Alexandre, with gravity.

## CHOICE MISCELLANY

**Millions at a Mule's Hoof.**  
In the World's Work this story is told of the discovery of the famous Coeur d'Alene mines. Half the land that has been mined in the United States has come from the famous Coeur d'Alene, the most productive lead mines in the world. Like many of the richest mines they were discovered by pure luck.

A man lent his mule to two prospectors. In the course of their wanderings while in the tract, and he becoming impatient, paved the ground and uncovered a lead vein which is now the site of the famous Bunker Hill Sullivan mine. The owner of the mule sued for a third interest in the claim, and the courts granted it to him, stating that as the mule had made the discovery and that as he was its owner he was entitled to the mule's share.

The three owners sold their discovery for \$300,000, and nothing was too good for that mule for the rest of his days. He was exhibited in a private car and lived on the fat of the land, and now a tombstone marks his grave.

**Sea Animals in the Desert.**  
Scientists of the University of California who have been searching for prehistoric animals on the Nevada desert for the last few months have succeeded in finding skeletons of some sea mammoths on the dry wastes. One of the specimens is twenty-nine feet long and packed occupies fifty-four boxes. This specimen was found on the great forty-mile desert in Humboldt county and is considered one of the most valuable fossils ever unearthed.

The professors say that the deserts of Nevada are rich in such prehistoric relics, and they intend to spend several weeks more in research. The large sea animal has been shipped to the University of California and will be placed in the museum at Berkeley. The professors intend to cover the whole state of Nevada before returning to California, but so numerous have been their finds in the Humboldt desert that they may confine their work to that place alone.—San Francisco Chronicle.

**Russia's Cheerless Cities.**  
There is something terribly depressing about these ungainly Russian cities. In extent, though comparatively small in population and more like overgrown villages than real towns. There are very many of them scattered about over the length and breadth of the empire, both in Europe and Asia, all very much alike, all dirty and uncomfortable, untidy and, with a few exceptions, utterly devoid of anything worth seeing. Every one seems oppressed by the unutterable dreariness and monotony of life, by the squalor and the sordid poverty, especially in wet weather, when the filthy streets become rivers of mud and the cabs have just enough life in them to bespatter luckless foot passengers from top to toe.—From Villari's "Russia."

**A New Method of Cooling Rooms.**  
John Arbuckle, the rich Brooklyn manufacturer, has invented a method of cooling and drying the air of rooms, no matter how hot and humid it may be outside. The plan consists of pipes containing brine, which is carried around the room, being forced very much like the heat is forced in winter, and the more intense the pressure the lower will become the temperature. The secret of it is that the moisture is taken from the air, being condensed on the pipes, from which it is then removed, and the humidity is thus done away with. No ice or chemicals are used. This method of cooling has been experimentally demonstrated in a big hotel, and those who have seen it in operation say it is a great success.—New York World.

**Boarding United States Criminals.**  
A female pickpocket, known all over the United States, got off with a four months' sentence in Toronto last night because Judge Morgan believes that Canada should not have to support United States criminals. Out in British Columbia the point of view is different. When a criminal halting from the United States into the clutches of the law he is given all the law allows, the opinion prevailing that it is cheaper to board one United States criminal for a long time than many United States criminals all the time. The British Columbia view is the right one.—Montreal (Que.) Gazette.

**A Modest Duke.**  
The Duke of Norfolk's dislike of pompousness has given rise to many stories. A school teacher was being held in Arundel Park, his splendid ancestral home, and the duke was crossing one of the lawns when a teacher, unaware of the duke's identity, rushed across to him and shouted: "Come off the grass at once! It is people like you whose behavior gets parks shut to the public!" On another occasion, it is said, the duke went to a concert to preside over a gathering. The sister who opened the door thought the snubstrive stranger was seeking assistance and gently told the duke there was nothing for him!

**A Rare Butterfly.**  
The British museum has in its collection a rare butterfly which was obtained in a remarkable manner. On a steamship bound for Sydney, N. S. W., several men were shooting at a mark with a revolver. As one of them was about to fire he noticed a butterfly hovering over the ship. He shot at it and brought it to the deck, considerably mangled. The insect was so beautiful that the pieces were collected and sent to an English entomologist. The butterfly proved to be of a species entirely unknown to the scientific world.

**One Exception.**  
"No," declared Mr. Nagget, "there is about a woman on earth who could refrain from turning around to rubber at some other woman's clothes."

"No?" replied his wife sweetly.

"Didn't you ever hear of Eve?"—Philadelphia Press.

**Women and Smuggling.**  
Many a lady smuggles who would no more tip her ball into the better position at croquet than she would cut her throat or scuttle a ship.—Andrew Lang.

## NEW SHORT STORIES

**Deeply Disappointed.**  
Congressman Adams of Pennsylvania was talking about his bill for the establishment of a whipping post for wife beaters.

"Any married man who fails to support this bill," he said, "will be regarded with suspicion the rest of his life. If this bill does not become a law I will be as disappointed—I will be as deeply disappointed—but let me tell you the story."

"It was Christmas time, and a faithful and hardworking postman plowed his way through the snow and cold winds, a mail of unusual size in his pack.

"The postman ascended the spacious steps of a millionaire's residence, and in answer to his ring a manservant in rich livery appeared.

"Wait a moment, please," said the servant as he took the mail. "The mistress wishes to speak to you."

"The postman's eye brightened. It was the holiday season. He had served



"DO YOU COME IN THE MORNING?"

the millionaire with fidelity. Now, no doubt in recognition of his regular and faithful service.

"I shall be glad," he said politely, "to await your mistress's pleasure."

"In a few minutes the woman appeared.

"Are you," she asked, "our regular postman?"

"Yes, madam," he answered, bowing.

"Do you come in the morning?"

"Yes, madam."

"And in the afternoon and evening as well?"

"Again he assented, smiling eagerly, and the woman said:

"Then it was you, eh, that broke our bell?"—New York Tribune.

**A Story of Stonewall Jackson.**  
It happened that the writer and another cadet occupied the same room with Major Jackson and another officer of the institute. As we were retiring the major said to the officer mentioned, "captain, what do you do with your watch and purse when spending the night in a hotel?"

"Well," said the captain, "I have no fixed rule, but ordinarily I put my watch in a pocket and my purse in my waistcoat in which I carry them under my pillow."

"I can tell you a much better way than that," said the major. "I always place my watch in one sock and my purse in the other and lay them on the floor as if they had been thrown there carelessly. No one would think of looking into a pair of soiled socks for valuables."

We were up betimes next morning before daybreak, if I recollect aright, and, having breakfasted, started for the wharf to take the boat. We had marched possibly a couple of squares when we were surprised to hear the major's voice giving, with his peculiar intonation, the command: "Detachment, halt. Place rest." Turning to see what was the matter, we perceived the major trotting briskly toward the hotel. He soon returned and marched us to the boat.

Suspecting the cause of the stoppage, I approached him as soon as the boat had started and said:

"Major, I was much struck with your method of concealing your watch and purse last night, and I think I shall adopt it hereafter."

A broad smile crept over his face as he replied:

"Well, Mr. —, if you do follow the plan don't put on clean socks the next morning and forget the soiled ones, as I have done today."—Thomas M. Semmes in Century.

**The Eccentric Depositor.**  
H. A. Fuller, townmaster at the annual banquet of the Pennsylvania bankers' convention in Wilkes-Barre last month, introduced with this story the banker who responded to the toast, "Our Depositors."

"A depositor in a neighboring trust company is an eccentric farmer of middle age. This farmer, though he is wealthy, overdraw his account one day to the tune of \$200.

"Notification of the overdraft was at once sent to him.

"He replied:

"You tell me I have overdrawn my account \$200. Well, I know it. So what is the necessity of bothering me about it? Why not trust me as I do you? Do I go to you when I have money in your institution and shout, 'You have \$500 of mine?' Such statements are superfluous either way."—Buffalo Enquirer.

**Considerate.**  
After the tea things had been cleared away the young wife came over and sat on hubby's knee, put her plump arms about his neck and kissed him half a dozen times.

"Well, what is it now?" he queried.

"A new dress, dear," she answered.

"But don't you know that times are awfully hard just at present?" he queried.

"Of course I do," she replied. "That's why I want to give the poor dress maker something to