

The Woman In the Alcove

By ANNA KATHARINE GREEN,
Author of "The Millionaire Baby," "The Millionaire's Boy," "The House in the Mist," "The Amethyst Box," Etc.

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AFTER XVII.—(Continued.)

...now that he had a ticklish
to handle, he prepared for it,
with a certain amount of circum-
spection. They were now a half mile
from the mill and were in a perfectly
desolate region.
"A manufacturer, here?" enquired
Mr. Grey. It was the first word he
had uttered since starting.
"Not far from here," was Sweetwater's
casual reply, and the road
took a turn almost at the
moment of his speaking, he turned
west and pointed out a building stand-
ing on the right hand side of the road
with its feet in the water. "That's it,"
said he. "You see, I had it well
enough for me to know it when I see
it. Looks like a robber's hole at this
time of night," he laughed. "But what
can you expect from a manufacturer of
patent medicine?"

Mr. Grey was silent. He was look-
ing very earnestly at the building.
"It is larger than I expected," he re-
minded at the last.
Sweetwater himself was surprised,
but as they advanced and their point
of view changed, he found it to be
really an insignificant structure, and
Mr. Wellgood's portion of it more in-
significant still.
In reality it was a collection of three
stores under one roof, two of them
were shut up and evidently unoccu-
pied, the third showing a lighted win-
dow. This was the manufactory. It
occupied the middle place and present-
ed a tolerably decent appearance. It
showed, besides the lighted lamp I
have mentioned, such signs of life as a
few painting boxes crowded out on the
small platform in front, and a whinny-
ing horse attached to empty buggy,
tied to a post on the opposite side of
the road.
"The glad to see the light," muttered
Sweetwater. "Now, what shall we do?
It is light enough for you to see
his face, if I can manage to bring him
to the door."
Mr. Grey seemed startled.
"It's darker than I thought," said he.

...would make this postoffice worth
while. Then the drugs ordered by
Wholesale. Those boxes over there
were his ready to be carried out to his
manufactory. Count them, some one,
and then of the bottles and boxes of
stuff they stand for. If it sells as he
says it will, then he will soon be rich,
and so on, till Sweetwater brought the
garulous Dick to a standstill by ask-
ing whether Wellgood had been away
for any purpose since he first came to
town. He received the reply that he
had just come home from New York,
where he had been for some articles
needed in his manufactory. Sweet-
water felt all his convictions confirmed
and ended the colloquy with the final
question:
"And where is his manufactory?
Might be worth visiting perhaps?"

The other made a gesture, said some-
thing about nightwork and failed to
help a customer. Sweetwater took the
opportunity to glide away. More ex-
plicit directions could easily be got
elsewhere, and he felt anxious to re-
turn to Mr. Grey and discover if pos-
sible whether it would prove as much
a matter of surprise to him as to
Sweetwater himself that the man who
answered to the name of Wellgood
was the owner of a manufactory and a
barrel or two of drugs, out of which he
proposed to make a compound that
would rob the doctors of their business
and make himself and this little vil-
lage rich.

Sweetwater made only one stop on
his way to Mr. Grey's hotel rooms, and
that was at the stables. Here he
learned whatever else there was to
know, and, armed with definite infor-
mation, he appeared before Mr. Grey,
who, to his astonishment, was dining
in his own room.
He had dismissed the waiter and
was rather brooding than eating. He
looked up eagerly, however, when
Sweetwater entered and asked what
news.
The detective, with some semblance
of respect, answered that he had seen
Wellgood, but that he had been un-
able to detain him or bring him within
his employer's observation.
"He is a patent medicine man," he
then explained, "and manufactures his
own concoctions in a house he has
rented here on a lonely road some half
mile out of town."
"Wellgood does—the man named
Wellgood?" Mr. Grey exclaimed, with
all the astonishment the other secretly
expected.
"Yes, Wellgood—James Wellgood.
There is no other in town."
"How long has this man been here?"
the statesman inquired after a moment
of apparently great discomfiture.
"Just twenty-four hours this time.
He was here once before, when he
rented the house and made all his
plans."
"Ah."
Mr. Grey rose precipitately. His
manner had changed.
"I must see him. What you tell me
makes it all the more necessary for me
to see him. How can you bring it
about?"
"Without his seeing you?" Sweet-
water asked.
"Yes, yes; certainly without his see-
ing me. Couldn't you rap him up at
his own door and hold him in talk a
minute while I looked on from the car-
riage or whatever vehicle we can get
to carry us there? The least glimpse
of his face would satisfy me—that is,
tonight."
"I'll try," said Sweetwater, not very
sanguine as to the probable result of
this effort.

Returning to the stables, he ordered
the team. With the last ray of the sun
they set out, the reins in Sweetwater's
hands.
They headed for the coast road.

CHAPTER XVIII.
THE road was once the highway,
but, the tide having played so
many tricks with its number-
less foldings, a new one had
been built farther up the cliff, carry-
ing with it the life and business of the
small town. Many old landmarks still
remained—shops, warehouses and even
a few scattered dwellings. But most
of these were deserted, and those that
were still in use showed such neglect
that it was very evident the whole re-
gion would soon be given up to the
encroaching sea and such interests as
are inseparable from it.
The hour was that mysterious one
of the late twilight, when outlines lose
their distinctness and sea and shore
melt into one mass of uniform gray.
There was no wind, and the waves
came in with a soft splash, but so near
to the level of the road that it was evi-
dent even to these strangers that the
tide was at its height and would pre-
sently begin to ebb.

Soon they had passed the last prop-
erly tenanted dwelling, and the open
lay behind them. Sand and a few
rocks were all that lay between them
and the open stretch of the ocean,
which at this point reached the
foot of a small bay. It was marked on
the map by a small bay, and was called
at its side by a name which was
This was what made the bay at C-
It was very still. They passed one
team, a single one. Sweetwater look-
ed very sharply at this team and at its
driver, but saw nothing to arouse sus-
picion.

water's eye had reached the level of
the still he could see the interior with-
out the least difficulty. There was no
body there. The lamp burned on a
great table littered with papers, but
the rule came chair before it was stop-
ped, and so was the room. He could see
into every corner of it, and there was
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had been burning with considerable
stake, flared up and went out. Sweet-
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darkness, slid from his perch to the
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Approaching Mr. Grey for the second
time, he said:
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the one. Well, he won't leave him
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animal or do you prefer to return to
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Mr. Grey was slow in answering.
Finally he said:
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to see the man before he escaped."
"Yes, but—"
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"Yes—"
"Well, I was just making that a little
bit impracticable. A small pebble in
the keyhole and—why, see now, his
horse is walking off! Gee! I must have
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There was no answer, and the young
detective, masking for the noise as
Mr. Grey's confidential servant, jump-
ed into the buggy and turned the
horse's head toward C-.

CHAPTER XIX.
THE moon was up when the
small boat in which our young
detective was seated with Mr.
Grey appeared in the bay ap-
proaching the so-called manufactory
of Wellgood. The looked for light on the
waterside was not there. All was dark
except where the windows reflected the
light of the moon.
This was a decided disappointment
to Sweetwater, if not to Mr. Grey.
He had expected to detect signs of life
in this quarter, and this additional
proof of Wellgood's absence from home
made it look as if they had come out
on a fool's errand and might much bet-
ter have stuck to the road.
"No promise there," came in a mutter
from his lips. "Shall I row in, sir, and
try to make a landing?"
"You may row nearer. I should like
a closer view. I don't think we shall
attract any attention. There are more
boats than ours on the water."
Sweetwater was startled. Looking
round, he saw a launch or some such
small steamer, riding at anchor not far
from the mouth of the bay. But that
was not all. Between them and the
rowboat lay their own, resting quietly
in the wake of the moon.
"I don't like so much company," he
muttered. "Something's brewing; some-
thing in which we may not want to
take part."
"Very likely," answered Mr. Grey
grimly. "But we must not be de-
terred—not till I have seen—the boat
Sweetwater did not hear. Mr. Grey
seemed to remember himself. "Row
nearer," he now bade. "Get under the
shadow of the rocks if you can. If
the boat is for him, he will show him-
self. Yet I hardly see how he can
board from that bank."
It did not look feasible. Neverthe-
less, they waited and watched with
such patience for several long min-
utes. The boat behind them did not
advance, nor was any movement dis-
cernible in the direction of the manu-
factory. Another short period, then
suddenly a light flashed from a window
high up in the central gable, spangled
for an instant and was gone. Sweet-
water took it for a signal and, with a
slight motion of the wrist, began to
work his way in toward shore till they
lay almost at the edge of the pier.
"Hark!"
It was Sweetwater who spoke.

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