

The Leading Lady

By GERALDINE BONNER

WNO Service

(Copyright by The Hobbs-Merrill Co.)

What human being does not love a mystery story? Especially one of those affairs in which a puzzling crime suddenly disturbs the lives of a group of people who have been going along in a normal way. All at once a dead of majesty is committed which turns their placid little world topsy turvy. No one knows the perpetrator of the crime, but circumstances are such that any one of the apparently honest, sincere members of the group may come under suspicion. New angles of the affair and new mysteries develop, and a period of the most wracking suspense exists for all.

In this case there is no super-detective with his mathematics, his chemicals, his measuring devices and his methods of deduction to trap the criminal and, by the very completeness of the case against him, force him to a confession. No one but a few confused civilians and a couple of fairly astute law officers, both of the latter working in different directions and by the variance of their theories obstructing rather than aiding a solution. It was one of those crimes which seemed likely to remain a mystery unless some accident occurred to clear it up. And the accident did occur; one of the strangest accidents ever written into a mystery plot, and so terrifying in its effects that it brought a voluntary and quite unexpected confession from the guilty party.

Geraldine Bonner has written many clever stories and established herself as a master of thrill fiction.

PROLOGUE

One of the morning trains that tap the little towns along the sound ran into the Grand Central depot. The passengers, few in number—for it was midsummer and people were going out of town, not coming in—stood stragglingly up the long platform to the exit. One of them was a girl, fair and young, with those distinctive attributes of good looks and style that drew men's eyes to her face and women's to her clothes.

him, had the old English tradition—and Anne Tracy for Olivia. At that name Miss Saunders had exclaimed in evident pleasure. Anne Tracy would be perfect, and it would be so lovely having her, they were such friends.

"And I'm going to give you my best director, Hugh Bassett. If with you and him they don't pull off a success the Maine public's dumber than I thought."

Her business accomplished, Miss Saunders went home. She lived in one of those mid-town blocks of old brownstone houses divided into flats. Letting herself in with a latchkey she ascended the two flights at a rapid run, unlocked her door and entered upon the hot empty quietude of her own domain. She threw her hat on a chair, and falling upon the divan opened the paper that she had carried since she left the Grand Central station.

She folded the pages back at the personal column and settled over it, bent, motionless, her eyes traveling down its length. Suddenly they stopped, focused on a paragraph. She took a pad and pencil from the desk, drew a small table up to the divan, spread the newspaper on it, and copied the paragraph onto the pad. It ran as follows:

"Sister Carrie:
"Edmund stoney broke but Albert able to help him. Think we ought to chip in. Can a date be arranged for discussing his affairs?"

"Sam and Lewis."

She studied it for some time, the pencil suspended. Then it descended, crossing out letter after letter, till three



Now He Had Grown Bolder, Telling Her Where He Was.

words remained—"Edmonton, Alberta, Canada." The sign, she guessed as the name he went by.

She burned the written paper, grinding it to powder in the ash tray. The newspaper she threw into the wastebasket where Luella, the mulatto woman who "did up" for her, would find it in the morning. She felt certain Luella was paid to watch her. But she had continued to keep the evil-eyed creature, fearful that her dismissal would make them more than ever wary, strengthen their suspicion that Sybil Saunders was in communication with her lover.

The deadly danger of it was cold at her heart. She had heard directly from him once, a letter the day after he had fled; the only one that even he, reckless in his despair, had dared to send. In that he had told her to watch the personal column in a certain paper and had given her the names by which she could identify the paragraphs. She had watched and twice found the veiled message and twice waited in sickening fear for discovery. It had not happened. Now he had grown bolder, telling her where he was—it was as if his hand beckoned her to come. She could write to him at last, do it this evening and take it out after dark. Lying very still, her hands clasped behind her head, she

ran over in her mind letter boxes, post offices where she might mail it. Were the ones in crowded districts or those in secluded byways, the safest? It was like walking through grasses where live wires were hidden.

A ring at the bell made her leap to her feet with wild visions of detectives. But it was only Anne Tracy, come in to see if she was back from her visit on the sound. It was a comfort to see Anne, she always acted as if things were just as they had been and never asked disturbing questions.

She was Sybil's best friend, was to have been her bridesmaid. But she knew no more of Sybil's secrets since Jim Dallas had disappeared than anyone else. And she never sought to know—that was why the friendship held.

They had a great deal to talk about, but chiefly the "Twelfth Night" affair. Anne was immensely pleased that Sybil had agreed to play. She did not say this—she avoided any allusions to Sybil's recent conducting of her life—but her enthusiasm about it all was irresistible. It warmed the sad-eyed girl into interest; the Viola costume was brought from its cupboard, the golden wig tried on. When Anne took her departure late in the day, she felt much relieved about her friend—she was "coming back," coming alive again.

Anne occupied another little flat on another of the mid-town streets in another of the brownstone houses. Hers was one room larger, for her brother, Joe Tracy, lived with her when not pursuing his profession on the road. There were hiatuses in Joe's pursuit during which he inhabited a small bedroom in the rear and caused Anne a great deal of worry and expense. Joe apparently did not worry, certainly not about the expense. Absence of work wore on his temper not because Anne had to carry the flat alone, but because he had no spending money.

They said it was his temper that stood in his way. Something did, for he was an excellent actor with that power of transforming himself into an empty receptacle to be filled by the character he portrayed. But directors who had had experience of him, talked about his "natural meanness" and shook their heads. People who tried to be sympathetic with Anne about him got little satisfaction. All the most persistent ever extracted was an admission that Joe was "difficult." Hugh Bassett had boosted and helped and lectured him. And not for love of Joe, for in his heart Bassett thought him a pretty hopeless proposition.

That evening, alone in her parlor, Anne was thinking about him. He had no engagement and no expectation of one, and it was not wise to leave him alone in the flat without occupation. She went to the window and leaned out. The air rose from the street, breathless and dead, the heated exhalation of walls and pavements baked all day by the merciless sun. To leave Joe to this while she was basking in the delights of Gull Island—apart from anything he might do—it wasn't fair. And then suddenly the expression of her face changed and she drew in from the window—Hugh Bassett was coming down the street.

The bell rang, she pushed the button and presently he was at the door saying he was passing and thought he'd drop in for a minute. He was a big thick-set man with a quiet reposeful quality unshaken even by the heat. He had dropped in a great deal this summer and as the droppings-in became more frequent Anne's outside engagements became less. They always simulated a mutual surprise, giving them time to get over that somewhat breathless moment of meeting.

They achieved it rather better than usual tonight for their minds were full of the same subject. Bassett had come to impart the good news about Sybil, and Anne had seen her and heard all about it. Finally when they had thrashed out all the matters of first importance Bassett said:

"Did you tell her that Walberg wanted Aleck Stokes for the Duke?"

"No, I didn't say a word about it. What was the use? It would only have upset her and you'd put a stop to it."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Nye's One Experience With Cyclone Enough

I have not the necessary personal magnetism to look a cyclone in the eye and make it quail. I am stern and even haughty in my intercourse with men, but when a Manitoba simoon takes me by the brow of my pantaloons and throws me across township 28, range 18, west of the fifth principal meridian, I lose my mental reserve and become anxious and even taciturn.

As the people came into the forest with lanterns and putted me out of the crotch of a basswood tree with a "tackle and fall," I remember I told them I didn't yearn for any more atmospheric phenomena.

The cyclone is a natural phenomenon, enjoying the most robust health. It may be a pleasure for a man with great will power and an iron consti-

tution to study more carefully into the habits of a cyclone, but as far as I am concerned I could worry along some way if we didn't have a phenomenon in the house from one year's end to the other. As I sit here, with my leg in a silicate of soda corset and watch the merry throng promiscuous down the street, I cannot repress a feeling toward a cyclone that almost amounts to disgust.—From "Bill Nye, His Own Life Story," by Frank W. Nye.

Book Once Popular

The "Anatomy of Melancholy," the famous work of Robert Burton, which was published in 1621, under the pseudonym of Democritus Junior, went through eight editions within a half-century after its publication.

METALLIC TOUCH IN BLOUSES; GAY FELTS FOR SCHOOL WEAR

EVERYTHING in fashion's realm seems to glitter and scintillate with metallic splendor these days, and the blouse is no exception to the rule. Seldom does the blouse, even if it be for daytime wear, forego at least a touch of metal embroidery, if it be not made entirely of cloth of gold or silver.

A metal cloth blouse worn with a velvet skirt is a favorite theme with the stylist. For evening wear the sleeveless type is tres chic. It is an easy matter to make one at home—just two underarm and shoulder seams to sew up. Bind all edges with a bias metal piping or cording. Cut two slots

amidst the tumultuous throng of gridiron fans, bright hued felts are sure to lend color to the scene. True, for a time the fate of the felt hat hung in the balance, but this fleeting hesitation on the part of the mode has given way to a revived enthusiasm for felts even greater, if that be possible, than in the past. There can be no doubt in anyone's mind of the favor accorded the felt hat. For the schoolgirl the felt hat is an absolute essential to youthful and stylish appearance.

In choosing from among the latest felt arrivals young girls are confronted by two outstanding propositions distinctly different yet equally charm-



For Afternoon Occasions.

at the low waistline in front and finish with a facing. Through these, draw a folded strip of metal cloth for a belt, fastening with a rhinestone clasp or buckle. Wear a colorful shoulder flower, carry an ostrich fan and presto! one is arrayed befitting any queen of fashion.

Competing for honors with the blouse of cloth of gold or of silver, is the all-over embroidered crepe or satin blouse. The white satin blouse is stunning when patterned all over with silver thread stitching. Sometimes wee pearls, paillettes or rhinestones are interworked in the design. Which

ling—no brim versus the wide brim. Just as everyone was beginning to accept the little snug-fitting felt as a matter of course, in comes a type with a definitely wide brim, such as you see at the top of this picture. Just as confidently the piquant Basque beret, as it is called, priding itself on its utter brimlessness appears on the scene, as pictured in all its simplicity to the left. The interesting part of the beret as shown here is that it is a modified version of the Basque hat made by native French in the Pyrenees mountains from one piece of seamless felt. It surely is proving a



Hats for the Schoolgirl.

winner among the younger generation. Needs scarcely any trimming, a pom-pom, a cravat of grosgrain ribbon—but color! Such gay and glorious shades!

These two types, however, are by no means unstriking the field. There is the exquisite veionis model, for instance, as shown below to the left of center whose crown is so modestly creased. Note the hat whose striped ribbons so loyally flank the college colors. This, by the way, is youth's pride, to trim its felts with its own college colors.

There isn't a kink or a crease or a tuck in the style curriculum omitted when it comes to the felts which spell chic for youth. Note the new ruffled crown shown below to the right. Take into account, also, that grosgrain ribbon is the favorite trim for felts, just now.

Wherever youth holds forth, at school, on the campus, the links

DADDY'S EVENING FAIRY TALE

Mary Graham Bonner

THE AIR RIDE

"Toot-toot, honk-honk," came from outside the house and Uncle John said that that particular automobile which was making such a great deal of noise had been sent for them.

"It sounds like a big cat purring," said Dorothy, as she waited on the steps with Douglas while Uncle John was getting his hat and stick. "And something like a cow, too. Though it doesn't sound so much like a cow, and besides a cow wouldn't stand outside the door of a city house! But that purring sound this big car makes does sound something like a pussy cat."

Douglas was laughing hard at Dorothy's remark. "Perhaps," he said, "that it will not be until I own an automobile that I shall stop thinking they're wonderful things. Perhaps I won't stop thinking that even then."

"They're so different from horses and wagons and yet they do the same work. Now think of the difference between that shiny automobile and the double wagon to which we hitch our horses, Fun and Frolic."

"Well," said Dorothy, "of course they seem more amazing to us than to most because we have ridden a little bit; still we don't own any kind of an automobile, as most do."

So they got into the automobile and Dorothy again heard the sound like an enormous pussy cat's purring, and then they were off.

Through the crowded streets they went, and at the corners a big policeman held up his hand for them to stop or go on.

The chauffeur gave Douglas a little lesson in driving when they had gone a little way from the crowd, but he kept his hands on the wheel too.

Then the automobile, people and all, rode in a ferry boat to the other side of the water, where they saw in a field a young man and a huge thing on the ground that looked like a beetle, only a thousand times bigger. They saw the old man whom they had met on the previous day.

"Here are the two children, son," said the old man. "Didn't I describe them well. The girl has deep blue eyes and fair yellow hair and the boy has dark brown hair and eyes just about the color of the girl's eyes."

"And you see the boy is taller—and looks several years older than the girl."

Douglas and Dorothy were much amused as the old man described them. "Now I mustn't talk any more," the old man said, "for I told them, son, that you would take them for a ride."

"We're all ready, I believe," the old man said. And as the son shook hands with Douglas and Dorothy and Uncle John, he said:

"Yes, we're all ready, and it's a splendid day for flying."

Douglas knew he had never felt so excited in all his life. To think that he was actually going up in the air—the thing he had always longed to do and felt as though he never would!

"Are we really, really going to fly?" asked Douglas.

Douglas had been afraid that something would happen to prevent such a wonderful thing as a journey up in the air.

"Yes; get in," he was told. "We must be off."

And into the queer-shaped bird hat they climbed, and with waves of good-bye to Uncle John and the old man they rose slowly, slowly from the ground.

The machine of the airplane buzzed and sounded to the children like an enormous bumblebee. Before long they were so far up the houses looked small and like doll houses. The people looked like little insects and the trolley cars looked just like bugs.

"How queer it is up here!" thought Douglas.

"But how marvelous to be flying!"

"I hope we won't wake up," Dorothy thought, for she was afraid she might be dreaming.

When they landed at last in the field once more Uncle John told them that he was going to take them back to the city under the river.

"What!" exclaimed the children; "first we fly, and then behave like fishes!"

The old man laughed and so did the young man.

"Well," said Douglas, "I don't know how we can go under the river, but I do know that flying is the most wonderful sensation in the world and better than I had even thought it would be."



A Little Lesson in Driving

No. C. Tl. No. C. No. I. C. one adv. Is t. for. C. ter, wel. egg. flou. pow. salt. one. egg. pou. min. sau. Tl. star. of a. pl. ing. have. of a. bies. nutu. Be. three. Add. creat. of. Serv. espec. tapio. Cre. ter. i. powd. half. of. ler. using. sauce. a. col. W. 7. The. the. bar. its. too. agree. book. (E. 27