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# THE CASE OF JENNIE BRICE

By MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

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SYNOPSIS Jennie Brice and her husband, Ladley, quarrel. She disappears from Mrs. Pit-man's boarding house during a Pittsburgh flood.

Mrs. Pitman recalls that Howell, a re-porter, was with Jennie Brice and Ladley shortly before Jennie disappeared. Holcombe finds incriminating evidence in Ladley's room. An onyx clock is miss-ing. Mrs. Pitman's knife has been stolen and broken.

Holcombe believes Ladley is guilty. Ladley returns to Mrs. Pitman's. Holcombe watches him through the ceiling. A woman's headless body is found. Howell was seen with a veiled woman re-sembling Jennie Brice the night she dis-

No one can identify the headless body, which has an odd scar on the breast

Apparently Jennie Brice was alive three days after her disappearance, and this fact is known by Howell. Ladley's trial

CHAPTER XI.

T HE prosecution produced many witnesses during the next two witnesses during the next two days; Shanty Boat Tim's story withstood the most vigorous cross examination. After him, Mr. Bronson from the theater corroborated Miss Hope's story of Jennie Brice's attack of hysteria in the dressing room and told of taking her home that night.

He was a poor witness, nervous and halting. He weighed each word before he said it, and he made a general un favorable impression. I thought he was something back. In view of what Mr. Pitman would have called the denouement, his attitude is easily explained. But I was puzzled then

So far, the prosecution had touched but lightly on the possible motive for a crime-the woman. But on the third day, to my surprise, a Mrs. Agnes Murray was called. It was the Mrs. Murray I had seen at the morgue.

have lost the clipping of that day's trial, but I remember her testimony perfectly.

She was a widow, living above a small millinery shop on Federal street, Allegheny. She had one daughter, Alice, who did stenograpy and typing as a means of livelihood. She had no office and worked at home. Many of the small stores in the neighborhood employed her to send out their bills. There was a card at the street entrance beside the shop, and now and then strangers brought her work.

Early in December the prisoner had brought her the manuscript of a play to type, and from that time on he came frequently, sometimes every day. bringing a few sheets of manuscript at a time. Sometimes he came without any manuscript and would sit and talk while he smoked a cigarette. They had thought him unmarried.

On Wednesday, Feb. 28, Alice Murray had disappeared. She had taken some of her clothing-not all-and had left a note. The witness read the note aloud in a trembling voice:

Dear Mother-When you get this I shall be married to Mr. Ladley. Don't worry. Will write again from N. Y. Lovingly, ALICE. From that time until a week before, Then she had a card, mailed from

Madison Square station, New York city. The card merely said: Am well and working. ALICE. The defense was visibly shaken.

They had not expected this, and t thought even Mr. Ladley, whose calm had continued unbroken, paled.

So far all had gone well for the prosecution. They had proved a crime, as nearly as circumstantial evidence could prove a crime, and they had established a motive. But in the identification of the body so far they had failed. The prosecution "rested," as they say, although they didn't rest much on the afternoon of the third day.

The defense called, first of all, Eliza Shaeffer. She told of a woman an-For a limited time only, six pairs of our finest 35c value Guaranteeded Hose any color with written guarantee and a pair of our well known Men's Paradise Garters for one dollar, and 10c for postage, woman, but was not certain. She told real foot comfort. they have no seams to rip. They never become loose and baggy as the shape is knit in, not pressed in. They are Guaranteed for fine ness, for style, for superiority of material and workmanship, absolutely stain-less and workmanship, absolutely stain-less and to the same that th less and to wear six months without As the face was in shadow, knew it more by the dress and hat. She described the black and white dress and

the hat with red trimming. The defense then called me. I had to admit that the dress and hat as described were almost certainly the nes I had seen on the bed in Jennie Brice's room the day before she disappeared. I could not say definitely whether the woman in the photograph was Jennie Brice or not; under a mag-

nifying glass thought it might be. Defense called Jonathan Alexander, a druggist who testified that on the night in question he had been roused at half past 3 by the prisoner, who had said his wife was ill, and had purchased a bottle of proprietary remedy from him. His identification was ab-

The defense called Jennie Brice's sister, and endeavored to prove that Jennie Brice had had no such scar. It was shown that she was on intimate terms with her family and would hardly have concealed an operation of

tires 15 per cent additional, red tubes
15 per cent above gray. All new, had shown that the prisoner had told
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Time Examination. town called Horner, and had gone Tire Factories Sales Co. town called Horner, and had gone from there on Wednesday after the better let me do t cept. A Dayton, Ohio crime. And they had shown that this change my mind."

woman was attired as Jennie Brice

That was the way things stood on the afternoon of the fourth day when of anxiety, turning red and white by court adjourned. Mr. Reynolds was at home when I



"That's curious!" he said.

ubdued since the developments of that first day of the trial, sat mostly in his own room and had twice brought me a bunch of jonquils as a peace offering. He had the kettle boiling when I got

"You have had a number of visitors," he said. "Our young friend Howell, has been here, and Mr. Holcombe has arrived and has a man in his room." Mr. Holcombe came down a moment

after, with his face beaming. "I think we've got him, Mrs. Pit-man." he said. "The jury won't even go out of the box."

But further than that he would not explain. He said he had a witness locked in his room, and he'd be glad of supper for him, as they'd both com a long way. And he went out and bought some oysters and a bottle or two of beer. But as far as I know he kept him locked up all that night in the second story front room. I don't think the man knew he was a prisoner. I went in to turn down the bed, and he was sitting by the window, reading the evening paper's account of the trial-an elderly gentleman, rather pro-

fessional looking.

Mr. Holcombe slept on the upper landing of the hall that night, rolled in a blanket-not that I think his witness even thought of escaping, but the

little man was taking no chances.
At 8 o'clock that night the bell rang. It was Mr. Howell. I admitted him myself, and he followed me back to the dining room. I had not seen him fo several weeks, and the change in him startled me. He was dressed carefully, but his eyes were sunken in his head, and he looked as if he had not

slept for days.

Mr. Reynolds had gone upstairs, not finding me socially inclined. "You haven't been sick. Mr. Howell,

have you?" I asked. "Oh, no, I'm well enough. I've been traveling about. Those infernal sleep-His voice trailed off, and I saw him

looking at my mother's picture, with the jonquils beneath.
"That's curious!" be said, going closer. "It-it looks almost like Lida Harvey."

"My mother," I said simply. "Have you seen her lately?"
"My mother?" I asked, startled.

"No, Lida." "I saw her a few days ago."

"Yes; she came here, Mr. Howell. two weeks ago. She looks badly-as

for the next ten days, TIRES-TUBES it' she is worrying." "Not-about me?" he asked eagerly "Yes, about you. What possessed you to go away as you did? When my-bro-when her uncle accused you of something you ran away instead of

facing things like a man." "I was trying to find the one person who could clear me, Mrs. I'itman.' He sat back, with his eyes closed. He looked ill enough to be in bed. "And you succeeded?"

I thought perhaps he had not been eating, and I offered him food, as I had once before. But he refused it, with the ghost of his boylsh smile. "I'm hungry, but it's not food want. I want to see her," he said.
I sat down across from him and I sat down across from him and will be paid by us. C. O. D. on 15 per tried to mend a tablecloth, but I could cent of amount of order. Our output young things, each sick for a sight of the other and from wishing they the other, and, from wishing they

lanning it for them. "Perhaps," I said finally, "if you want it very much"-"Very much!"

ould have a minute together, I got to

"And if you will sit quiet and stop tapping your fingers together until you drive me crazy I might contrive it for you. For five minutes," 1 said. "Not second longer." He came right over and put his arms

"Who are you, anyhow?" he said. "You who turn to the world the frozen mask of a Union street boarding house

landlady, who are a gentlewoman by

every instinct and training and a girl at heart? Who are you?" "I'll tell you what I am," I said. "I'm a romantic old fool, and you'd better let me do this quickly before L

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neasured by big moments.

If I let the two children in the din

The defense did an unexpected thing in putting Mr. Ladley on the stand. That day, for the first time, he showed the wear and tear of the ordeal. He had no flower in his buttonhole, and the rims of his eyes were red. But he was quite cool. His stage training had taught him not only to endure the eyes of the crowd, but to find in its gaze a sort of stimulant. He made a good

He replied to the usual questions After five minutes or so Mr easily. Llewellyn got down to work.

He freed me at that, but he followed to the telephone and stood by while got Lida. He was in a perfect frenzy turns, and in the middle of the con versation taking the receiver bodily from me and holding it to his own ear. She said she thought she could get away; she spoke guardedly as if Alma were near, but I gathered that she

would come as soon as she could, and, from the way her voice broke, I knew was as excited as the boy be-She came, heavily coated and veiled, at a quarter after 10 that night, and 1 took her back to the dining room, where he was waiting. He did not make a move toward her, but stood there with his very lips white, looking at her. And at first she did not make move either, but stood and gazed at nim, thin and white, a wreck of him

self. Then: "Ell!" she cried, and ran around the table to him as he held out his arms. The schoolteacher was out. I went into the parlor bedroom and sat in the cozy corner in the dark. I had done a wrong thing, and I was glad of it. And, sitting there in the darkness, I went over my life again. After all, it had been my own life; I had lived it; no one else had shaped it for me. And if it was cheerless and colorless now. it had had its big moments. Life is

ing room have fifteen big moments instead of five who can blame me? The next day was the sensational one of the trial. We went through every phase of conviction: Jennie was living. Jennie Brice was dead. The body found at Sewickley could not be Jennie Brice's. The body found at Sewickley was Jennie Brice's And so it went on.

witness I must admit.

(To be continued next week)

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