# Edison Marshall Illustrations by PAUL FREHM

WHAT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE- | well."

Dr. Long, out fishing with Alexander Pierce, a detective, tells of his projected trip to Southerly Downs. Pierce advises him to keep his eyes wide open while there. On the way in a train Dr. Long is attracted by a garl, who later faints. Dr. Long treats asked. her, and looking into her bag, is asounded to find a loaded revolver.

Dr. Long meets Ahmad Das, an Oriental, who conducts him to South ley Downs, where he meets Mr. Southley and his son, Ernest Southley, Mr. Hayward and his son, Vilas, and then Josephine Southley, who is the girl your brother and Ahmad?" he had met on the train. Josephine tells him the story of Southley Downs deal." and its ghost, which is not the ghost of a human being but of a tiger.

Dr. Long has a quarrel with Vilas Hayward over Josephine, and finds that the Haywards have a strange authority over the Southleys. He is ordered to leave Southley Downs. The rain prevents him leaving at once. Dr. Long and Ernest go out on the road in the rain looking for the tracks of a tiger that Ernest says are there.

They find the tracks. Later Ernest and Dr. Long see a prowling creature deviltry.

gaint's blow.

The coroner and police arrive in order to investigate.

Because of the murder, Dr. Long must remain at Southley Downs. All the persons there are questioned by Inspector Freeman. NOW READ ON-

Of course his reason for wanting to know was perfectly obvious. He wanted to see whether I could have possibly had time to hire one of the negroes to murder the elder Hayward. He knew that I had not done the deed with my own hands, from the fact that I had already established an alibi.

"We've got a motive for you, Long," he told me at the end, "but not much else. There are others that we have some of the other things, but no mo-

He called on Ahmad Das. The latter told him how he had gone out to the garage after the car; how he had looked in vain for Hayward on the driveway, and how, later, he had found

The detective flushed slightly and leaned forward.

Ahmad?" Freeman asked abruptly," all other sounds became as nothing. "No, sahib."

"Why didn't you? What had he ever done to you?"

"He was not pleasant to serve, sahib. Many times he swore-" "And I believe he struck you once,

Ahmad.' Ahmad's voice lowered. "Yes."

"And why did he?" "I was slow in a service that he

asked."

"He didn't like you either, Ahmad." "It is true "

"Considering his influence with your he might get you thrown out of em-

ployment? "Employ-" "Get you kicked out of your job" "No, sahib; I never thought of that." spector exulted. "Long, I want you to

strike you before his face."

the closest of friends."

"And where were you just before the bell rang, when Southley told you something new."

to get out the car?" "In the kitchen."

"How long?"

"At least an hour before."

to prove it. Ernest corroborated my story per-

"And what did you think of the

elder Hayward?" he was asked. "I didn't like him."

"And why not?"

father. He was too arrogant, and ions on his feet." demanded more than a guest should. His manners were often boorish. Nor then turned into Ahmad's room. My did I like the way he threw his son admiration for Freeman increased on my sister."

"I believe that was your sister's part to object-not yours."

"Perhaps it is." "And she made no objection?"

sis very well."

in amazement. unusual speech?" the former asked. playing for." "That you don't know your sister very! But evidently Ahmad Das had for-

schools. Both of us are comparative then paused to wipe the little beads strangers to Southley Downs."

The detective turned to Josephine. "And what light have you to throw worth finding." on this matter, Miss Southley?" he He started toward the door. "There's spots are?"

"None at all," the girl replied. "And where were you, after the,

scene in the den?" "I went straight to bed. My maid

helped me undress." "And the Haywards must not have been so unpopular with you as with

"I was with both of them a great "And I think you took Vilas' part

against Dr. Long. Her voice lowered.

"Yes."

"And why did you do that?" "Because I couldn't do anything else under the circumstances."

"You evidently didn't like Dr.

"I did like Dr. Long. But his relation with me was greatly different from that of Vilas."

She looked squarely into his eyes in the hall at Southley Downs. This as she talked. The room faded exfrightens the elder hayward, who also cept for her. The faces of the watch- wasted in theories and talk-" sees it. Ernest begins to feel that ing circle became as mist. I don't Ahmad Das is perpetrating some know why each answer she made seemed to go so deep into me-each The elder Hayward is later found word-each inflection of voice an indead, his neck broken as if by a delible imprint in my memory. I couldn't turn my eyes from her white face. I hardly heard the detective's questions when he turned to Southley.

They came from somewhere far off. "Please tell me, Southley, just what were the relations between you and the Haywards."

oldest friends," the old man answered. | "It's all right in books; but it don't

"They had been here almost a

"Yes." "How long did you ask them for?" His voice changed ever so slightly. "As long as they would remain."

"You were in the den, in the scene between Dr. Long and the younger to lecture to him now. Hayward ?"

"You sided in with Vilas Hayward?" "Yes." "Did you think he was in the

right?" I-I didn't know for sure." "Then why did you take the stand

you did?"

His answer called me from my pre-"You didn't like the elder Hayward, He spoke it softly, hesitantly; yet where a wise man would hide a leaf, my room just now. The noise we

"Because, Inspector Freeman," he thing with wisdom. Because Vilas to choose a better place. But it is hands are buried in flour. There is Hayward is going to marry my daugnter, Josephine."

After dinner I met Inspector Free man in the hall. He called me to one side. Perhaps he was a little more intent, a little more nervous and quick of motion than in the afternoon.

"I'm in need of your help," he told

"And I'm ready to give it."

"Look in the kitchen and see where master, did it ever occur to you that Ahmad Das is, and what he is doing." I obeyed, on a plausible excuse. Ahmad Das was polishing the silver.

I came back to report. "The coast is clear, then," the in-"Yet you knew of this influence, come with me and search Ahmad's The fact that Southley let his guest rooms. I can trust you, I think, when I say that I haven't any further ques-"It seemed to me that they were tion but that the Hindu is the murderer."

"Then you must have discovered

"No; but he was the one man who went out of the house with Hayward -the one man in striking range. 1 don't believe the Southleys were im-And he told him what he was doing plicated; and knowing you as I do by reputation, it is absurd to think that you were. That leaves Ahmad. We know that he hated him, so we have a motive. But the Hindu's a funny duck, isn't he?

"Did you ever see a man cross the room with such a funny, catlike "I didn't like his attitude with my stride? He walks as if he had cush-

We mounted to the third flight; mightily when I was him in action. It was impossible to imagine a more complete search.

"If there's murder, there's bound to be blood," he said. "Nothing is so con-"Never. Of course I don't know vincing to a court as a garment with blood on it. He's been kept pretty The detective and I looked at him busy since the murder, and I don't believe he'd have time to dispose of all "And what do you mean by that his things. That's the chance I'm

seen this contingency. The detective | ches of dark brown stain. "Because we went to different searched swiftly for twenty minutes;

one place you haven't searched at

all," I told him.

ment. "That drawer full of linen." pointed to a drawer in the dresser.

put it in such an obvoius place as able of such exultation. His eyes acthat. Even Ahmad Das wouldn't be that much of a fool."

Perhaps, Inspector Freeman, you haven never heard of M. Dupin?" Inspector Freeman stopped to con- get him now. "I'll wring a confession though the night had fallen, the darksider.

"His name has slipped my mind," he confessed.

"M. Dupin was a very famous detective-a Frenchman. A very great faint sound I had heard had been in could detect the shadows that were American wrote about him long ago."

"Oh, you mean a story-book detec tive," Freeman scorned. "I'm glad to say I've never wasted my time reading such truck. None of 'em were ever practical. Practical men are the go nowadays. The time they

"Yet sometimes their theories came out right. Mr. Dupin would have been the first to tell you that for ed. the very reason that you would think that drawer too obvious a place for a man to hide a garment, it would be the very place an astute criminal would hide it. He would know in adand therefore it would be a good of a stolen letter, hidden among a "Then the criminal didn't know it had "The elder Hayward and I were the packet of other letters, in plain sight."

> Of course I knew that as a whole the highest type of official detective. and rejoined me in the library. If he had been, I would never have asked the question about Dupin; and I would not have had the cold courage wrinkles were flickering between his

"Then there was a later detective

wise man would hide a pebble." "And his friend, if he had any sense, would have said to bury it six feet under the ground and smooth off

occupation. It rang in the quiet room the beach. Then the detective asked I felt that way when I was going to And the answer was-in the forest, I heard in the corridor seemed to bear don't say that Ahmad Das would have it out. But it isn't Ahmad. I stole said simply, "I couldn't do any other chosen this drawer if he had time out and took a look at him. His certainly the most likely place in this no one in the servant's quarters but a

among the garments. And I'm afraid out the rowboat. Robin, I believe you the color came to my face. Evidently call him." my theories were to go unsupported by fact.

pebble on the beach," the detective to me that the waters had already exulted.

Then I looked twice at a newly laundered shirt that I had picked up and laid down before. It struck me as being an unusually heavy garment. Some inspiration made me unpin it. Double Bar frame. Good tires. In-And folded within it was found an quire E. E. Pyne, Springfield News other shirt, covered with great splot- office.

Freeman leaped toward me and took the garment in his hands. Just of perspiration from his lean face. for an instant he examined it. "Good the murder, he said. Just at twilight the hill in flight. "It's no use," he said. "No clews Lord!" he exclaimed. "You've found he had walked near it, and had noit after all. Do you know what those ticed a queer discoloration on the

"No

"They're blood. It's convincing ments of flesh. "Where?" He turned in amaze- proof. And it's Ahmad's shirt, too." Swiftly he compared the laundry I mark on it with the mark of the other garments in the drawer. I didn't "I glanced into it. He wouldn't dream that this austere man was cap-

> tually seemed to glisten; and a high color suffered his lean, dark face. I thought of a hound hot upon the trail. We didn't waste any more time "It's the final proof!" he cried. We'll

out of him." Then both of us drew up sharply. "Ahmad is coming into his room.

the corridor. selves. We'didn't know what frenzy hands. And then, at the same instant, of desperation we would have to face both of us saw another shadow if Ahmad saw us with that condemn- Some one was standing perfectly ing evidence in our hands. A long still on the hillside. Of course we ness. moment dragged away.

. Then Freeman stole to the door. He looked up and down the corridor. "Must have been a rat,," he exclaim-

"Rather a noisy rat."

"Maybe the wind. But we'd better get out of here. He'll come back any

I started to pin the dinner shirt vance that you wouldn't look there, into even folds, just as I had found it. "M. Dupin did the same with the place. He proved it with the story envelope of the letter," I explained

been found.' "I do believe you've got the mak-He spoke falteringly, in the hesitant work out in life," Freeman comment- ings of a detective!" Freeman told me with a little amazement.

Then we crept down the stairs. He he spoke the truth. But it had begun took the shirt into the room that to dawn on me that Freeman was not had been given to him for his use;

"I've got a hunch," he said. His face was clouded. Little

eyes. I waited for him to explain. "I've got an idea that some one' -a little, fat Catholic priest," I went been following me this last three on. "He asked his friend where a minutes. I'm not an imaginative man, Long, but I've had that hunch before. I never believed it; but once I woke as an egg over one eye where a billy had hit me-and knew that it had "His friend told him to hide it on been been so. It's a queer thing; yet colored man or two, and that long-I went to the drawer and hunted legged whiskered bird that brought

There was no answer worth making "I guess Ahmad Das didn't hide his steal over the marshes. It seemed So we sat and watched the darkness begun to recede. The flood had been

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rain; now it was done, and the river was quickly falling.

the sole result of the ten inches of

The Florida darkness is always worth watching. It comes so gently, so like a dark mist that the wn blows up. The color of the water changed and deepened. The shadow that were the jungle grew black Again we heard the sounds of wild life that the storm of the previous night had stilled.

We smoked cigars and talked. And after while one of the colored men came to tell us of a discovery.

A flat rock jutted from the hillside about fifty yards from the scene of stone. It was evidently clotted blood. he thought, and what looked like frag-

"You don't mean-human flesh?" Freeman asked.

His eyes narrowed, ever so slightly. It was evident that the colored man was terrified almost beyond the power of speech.

"Yes, suh. I couldn't tell fo' sho' But it was some kind of flesh, suh."

We hastened down the footpath. Alness was nothing of the intensity of the night before. I was able to discern the outline of his figure as he whispered. For I was sure that the walked ten paces in front of me. I, the stables and garages, and the near-Both of us instinctively braced our er of the cottages of the colored farm-

ouldn't see plain. He was possibly fifty feet distant; and if we had not possessed such an accurate knowledge of the geography of the hill he might have easily been mistaken for a shrub or stump. He was doing that which all hunters learn to do, standing perfectly still to avoid detection. He was trusting to the shadows to obscure

We both stopped on the trail.

"Who's there?" the detective demanded. The shadow did not waver. "Who's there? Answer, or I'll shoot," Freeman insisted. He started across the turf toward him. And as a deer springs, the other sped down

There was something startling in the speed with which he ran. We flung out in pursuit, Freeman firing his pistol in the air. But even if he has wished, it would have been impossible, except by the blindest luck, for the detective to have hit the fugitive. A pistol is never accurate at long range; and few marksmen can shoot at all in the darkness. In an instant our quarry faded, slipped

away and melted in the shadows. (TO BE CONTINUED)

Son is Born-Mr. and Mrs. Chassie Neet of Wendling are the parents of a son born at the home of the former's father at Second and C street, here

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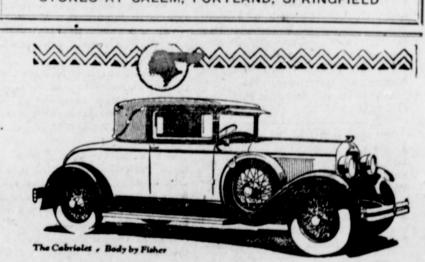
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