

# GUNMAN'S BLUFF

BY *Edgar Wallace*  
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Margaret Laferre, engaged to be married to Luke Maddison, is with him when he encounters Gunner Haynes, an American crook, in a London hotel lobby. Danton Morell, a friend of Margaret's brother, Rex, is watching them, and wonders if Gunner recognizes him after seven years. That night Rex is found dead and by his side a note addressed to his sister saying that he had been ruined by taking Luke Maddison's advice. Morell tells Maddison later that Rex had cashed a check for £18,000 signed by Maddison.

Margaret does not know that her husband is a forger. Her love for Maddison turns to hate but she keeps her promise to marry him.

After the wedding Margaret asks that the wedding journey be postponed, and that Luke leave her for two days, claiming that she is going to have a nervous breakdown.

In the meantime, Luke finds that he is short a sum of money at the bank, and rings up his wife to ask her to let him draw it. He is amazed to be refused, and by Margaret saying she will keep it in revenge for his ruining her brother. Luke is unable to reply, and leaves her. He wanders to the Thames embankment, trying to guess what the trouble is.

Luke regains consciousness two weeks later in a hospital, with nothing to indicate his identity. He has a heavy beard and the hospital people call him Smith, a name which he decides to keep and see what happens. The nurse comes into his room with the announcement that a friend wishes to see him.

A messenger from Connors calls at the hospital, gives him \$25.00 and the address of a Mrs. Fraser, with whom he is to take rooms.

Margaret in the meantime has a telegram from Paris signed "Luke," which she doubts as genuine. Danton Morell calls on her to try to get some money. She tells him that she has given all the money back to her husband's firm, which is allowing her an allowance to live on. She believes that Luke has gone to his favorite resort in Spain and intends to join him there.

While Morell and Margaret are talking Gunner Haynes is announced. He admits that he is a jewel thief and just out of prison, but Luke had once tried to do him a favor and he wants to return it if possible. He asks if Danton Morell is a friend of hers, and also why her husband has left her.

Now go on with the story.

"I should be a little worse than impertinent. And yet, Mrs. Maddison, I have a very deep interest in your husband's affairs. I have many bad qualities, but disloyalty is not one of them. Your husband went out of his way to warn me, at a moment when he knew the police were coming to arrest me. If ever there is a white and wholesome man, that man is Luke Maddison. I ought not to have asked you the question and I could not very well expect a satisfactory answer. The only thing I am anxious to know is this: have you any idea where your husband is?"

"Do you wish to find him?" she challenged.

He shook his head.

"No, but I'd like to know exactly where he is. I have a very special reason for asking this. Is he in London?"

"No, he's in Spain at this moment, but I'm afraid I cannot give you the address."

"Mr. Morell—is he in Spain? Pardon me, Mrs. Maddison, but if I have a reason for asking you the one question, I have a doubly important reason for asking the other. Morell is the kind of man that no decent woman should know—"

She walked to the table and pressed the little onyx bell push. This time he smiled.

"That means you're going to turn me out, and I don't blame you. I'm afraid I've blundered this interview, which I intended should be very discreet and diplomatic. I particularly wished to know where Mr. Maddison was—"

"I have told you."

"As far as Danton Morell is concerned—" he began.

She pointed to the door.

"I am not prepared to discuss my friends—even with the criminal acquaintances of my husband," she said, and she heard him chuckling as he went down the stairs as though at a very good joke.

Margaret walked slowly along the asphalt path. As she did so she saw a car coming slowly along the tan on the other side of the road. It was an electric brougham containing two people: a beautiful looking girl, fashionably dressed; by her side, his face half hidden under a broad-brimmed Stetson hat, a bearded man of striking appearance. Ahead of her was walking a stout man, and by his side a rather pretty girl. As she overtook them she heard the stout man say:

"Take a look at that swell woman! That's Jean Gurlay, the biggest crook in London, my dear."

Those ahead of her she recognized as the Sparrow and his companion, and, not wishing to be seen by them,

sat down on a garden seat, her eyes following curiously the electric brougham. She saw the machine turn at the Marble Arch and come slowly along by the side of the curb, and she watched with a detached interest the girl and the bearded man, whose head was turned toward his companion. As they passed she heard the man say:

"This is all very mysterious. What does it mean?"

In an instant Lucy was on her feet, pale and shaking; she had recognized the voice of the bearded man. It was her husband.

In the interest of his new, strange life, Luke found it fairly easy to forget. The spirit of adventure was on him. Margaret belonged to a dim, almost unbelievable past. She was of the substance of dreams.

He went gaily to a rendezvous with a fair-haired girl on the following afternoon, and was delighted to find how springy was his step. He had hardly taken his place in front of the Guards Memorial when he saw an electric brougham approach and catching the girl's signal, stepped to the side of the road as the car stopped.

She was in excellent spirits.

"It's a great idea to let yourself be seen in a certain kind of car," she said. "You don't know what I mean? I'll bet you don't."

They crossed into Hyde Park, made a slow progress near the edge of the sidewalk, and he found himself enjoying the novel experience. She was very pretty, though older than he had thought.

"Do you see that fat man over there? That's the Sparrow. You want to keep away from him."

He started at the name.

"You mean Bird?" he stammered, and looked guiltily in the direction she indicated.

He saw Mr. Bird. He was walking with a very pretty girl, but the woman who was at that moment seating herself on one of the park benches he did not recognize.

As the brougham turned and came back on the other side of the road, she said suddenly:

"There will be another car waiting near the Cavalry barracks. I hope you can drive?"

"Another car?" he asked in astonishment.

She nodded.

"I want to try you out."

"All this is very mysterious," he said.

The car was waiting for them, a closed light car of English make. There was nobody in attendance, but without hesitation she stopped the brougham and gave the driver instructions.

"Here it is, get in."

Luke sank into the driver's seat and put his foot on the starter, and she came in after him, slamming the little door behind her.

"Grafton street," she said, in a business like tone. Pull up opposite the Rean Club."

"Now you understand," she said, dropping her voice and speaking rapidly. "I'm going in to see my husband. If he makes a fuss I shall expect you to help me. If he doesn't fuss, we'll drive quickly away for Albemarle street, make for Vauxhall Bridge and Tooting Common."

"Your husband?" he stammered.

She gave him one quick look of suspicion.

"That is what you tell the flatlie if there is a fuss."

What a flatlie was she did not explain, and was gone before he could ask her. He kept the engine running according to her instructions. She was gone some twenty minutes. Presently looking out, he saw her turn the corner from Bond street and walk with apparent unconcern toward him. As she stepped into the car, a man in his shirt-sleeves darted around the corner, flew at her and gripped her by the arm. She tried to wrench herself free, and before Luke realized what he was doing he had struck her assailant and sent him tumbling to the pavement.

"Drive!" she snapped, and mechanically Luke sent the machine leaping forward.

They crossed Oxford street, down St. James' street, through the park, and were over Vauxhall bridge before he realized what had happened.

"Why did that fellow grab you?" he asked.

"My husband—I had a row with him," she said calmly. And then:

"I knew Connors was wrong. If I hadn't had my wits about me and started that husband story, I'd have been half-way to Holloway!"

He saw her look at every policeman they passed, out of the corner of her eye, and his heart beat faster as they came to the edge of Tooting

Common, and at her command he stopped the car.

"We'll get out here," she said. "You can go by bus, I'll take a taxi. If Connors comes to night, tell him I've got the stuff."

She turned to go, but he caught her by the arm.

"What stuff?" he asked sternly.

And then he saw the flat case she carried under her leather coat.

"My God!" gasped Luke.

"You stole that?"

There was amusement in her fine eyes as she nodded.

"Of course I did, you poor stomp."

A taxicab was passing and she hailed it. Slowly his grip on her arm relaxed. He watched the taxi recede like a man in a dream, too stunned even to think. He could never remember that journey back to Lambeth. He had crossed Westminster Bridge when he saw a newsboy with a placard: Daring West End Robbery. He stood dead still, gazing at the contents bill, and then he felt in his pocket and dropped a penny from his trembling hand in the newsboy's palm.

He dared not look inside the newspaper until he was in a quiet street, then he read:

**DARING WEST END ROBBERY**  
Bearded Man and Pretty Girl Rob Taffanny's of £20,000 Diamond Necklace.

A daring robbery was committed this afternoon at Messrs. Taffanny's jewel shop in Bond street. At about 3:50 a well-dressed woman walked into the shop and asked to be shown some plain gold rings. Whilst the assistant's back was turned, she must have broken a glass case with a rubber-headed hammer. When he came back, he found not only the woman but a valuable diamond necklace had disappeared. He flew out into the street and overtook the woman as she was entering a motor car. He was immediately struck down by her companion, who is described as a man of great height, with a fair, well-trimmed beard, dressed in a gray tweed suit.

"That's me!" groaned Luke Maddison, and almost swooned.

For a quarter of an hour he sat and watched his tea growing cold, his mind vacillating between horror and amusement. He, Luke Maddison, was a thief, a gangster, an active member of an organization which had robbed Taffanny's! He knew Taffanny's rather well; he had bought Margaret's engagement ring over the very glass counter that had been smashed. He was helpless—the idea of going to the police and betraying his associates never occurred to him. There was only one thing to be done and that was to steal away at the first opportunity. He had written for his check book to be sent to Ronda, and it was a simple matter to reach Spain. Was it, though?

With a gasp he realized that he had no passport! And without a passport it was impossible to reach Spain, of all countries, where every man and woman who passed the frontier were closely scrutinized. If he

had not dismissed his servant it would be easy to creep back to his flat one night, pack a bag, and fade away into a Continental limbo. But probably his solicitor had the key of the flat. A new hope awakened. Hulbert had an apartment in St. James' street. He was a bachelor and accessible.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

## THURSTON

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Weaver, A. W. Weaver and George Hays motored to Junction City last Tuesday and attended the funeral of Thurman Berry an old time friend.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown have moved into the Frank Taylor house. Mr. Brown is employed by the Hubbard Brothers logging company.

Mr. and Mrs. John Endicott, Miss Smith and Miss Goldia Starr attended the Bible school conference at Mabel last Sunday.

Frank Campbell spent last week at Elmira.

Mrs. Bert Weaver had some dental work done in Eugene Monday.

There will be an Easter program at the church, next Sunday morning, followed by a basket dinner. Every one is welcome.

A. W. Weaver and George Hays motored to Monmouth last Friday on business.

Mrs. Blanche Wise and son, Ralph Bonney, returned to Eugene last Saturday after visiting in Thurston for several days.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Harbit, from Dexter, visited their mother, Mrs. Beulah Harbit, last Sunday.

Clifford Weaver and Mrs. Mary McElroy, of Salem, spent the week end in Thurston.

Sim Endicott returned to Portland after visiting his parents here for several days.

The Lewis Lyceum players are putting on an entertainment at the hall on Wednesday evening. The proceeds are to be divided with the high school.

The high school had a general clean up day last Thursday.

The Thurston high school base ball team motored to Santa Clara last Friday and defeated the team there.

## "MONTANA MOON" IS LAVISH PRODUCTION

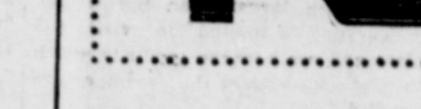
The Fox McDonald will present Joan Crawford today, Friday and Saturday in "Montana Moon" a musical romance of the west. The story is an original by Sylvia Thalberg and Frank Butler, and was directed by Malcolm S. Clair. Miss Crawford's supporting cast includes John Mack Brown; Dorothy Sebastian, Ricardo Cortez, Benny Rubin, Cliff Edwards, Karl Dane and Lloyd Ingraham.

Information is that this is one of the first pictures to be filmed without the use of artificial scenery, all the exterior scenes being taken on a cattle ranch in the San Jacinto Mountains, 200 miles north of Los Angeles. A large part of the extra cast was recruited from the cowboys employed on the ranch whose tricks in the way of riding unruly horses, lassoing cattle etc., are said to play an important part in the production.

The story concerns a New York debutante who visits her father's extensive holdings in Montana and falls in love with a cowboy. The conflict between their love and the disparity in their social positions forms the dramatic situation.

The Hotel Elite has taken over the Buss Cafe and will run a dining room in connection with the hotel rooms. They give special rates on board and room.

"Carmen" . . . a smart street shoe in black kid with a trimming of black sandstone calf, and a narrow "feminine" toe.



Here it is!

The Shoe You Admired

in the April "Ladies Home Journal"

Or maybe you saw it in "Woman's Home Companion" or "McCall's"! Our national ad on our famous \$3.98 style shoes for women appears in the May issue of these magazines, too, as well as "Holland's," "The Household," "Women's World," "People's Popular Monthly" and the April "Christian Herald." It doesn't matter where you saw the ad . . . you can see the shoes themselves, right now . . . at the store!

\$3.98

J.C. PENNEY CO.

## TODAY FRIDAY SATURDAY



## JOAN CRAWFORD

Here's the greatest show buy in Lane County.

The thrilling star in her most daring film—

PLUS

1—Lilting song hits by the writers of "Broadway Melody" and "Devil-May-Care!"

2—Band of 50 cowboys in real prairie chants and ballads!

3—An all-star cast!

JOHN MACK BROWN  
DOROTHY SEBASTIAN  
BENNY RUBIN  
CLIFF EDWARDS

## MONTANA MOON

ALSO: ALL TALKING PREVIEW THURSDAY



JEAN ARTHUR  
PAUL LUKAS  
Directed by William Wellman  
A production of the Director and Star of "MIDNIGHT"

## FOX McDONALD

"The Finest Sound in Town"

DARING ADORABLE JOAN IN A WESTERN SINGING TRIUMPH!

## JOAN CRAWFORD



## MONTANA MOON

ALSO: ALL TALKING PREVIEW THURSDAY

## SUNDAY BRINGS

One of the Greatest Epics of the Air Ever Filmed.

With the star of "Wings" By the Director of "Wings" And the Author of "War Birds"

Watch the Skies Saturday Noon

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