

The Mazaroff Mystery

—By—
J. S. FLETCHER
Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS
(© by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)
W. N. U. Service

CHAPTER XI—Continued

"And you got out, how?" asked Maythorne.
"This evening, when we were about done up, for lack of fresh air—though to tell the truth, I'd long since broken the window!" replied Sheila, "we suddenly heard sounds outside the door. Then we heard the bolt withdrawn, and the key turned, and somebody outside ran away—the hall door banged. We immediately went out—the place was all in darkness and silence. We left the house and hurried off to find a cab—"

The door of Mrs. Elphinstone's bedroom opened and the nurse looked in on us.

"Mrs. Elphinstone wishes to see Mr. Elphinstone and Miss Merchison," she said.

A moment later, Maythorne, I, and the two policemen were alone. Maythorne rose from his chair, put his hands in his pockets, and looked inquiringly at Corkerdale.

"Well?" he said.
Corkerdale smiled—inscrutably—and nodded at the door through which Mr. Elphinstone and Sheila had just vanished.

"Don't believe that yarn!" he said, almost contemptuously. "Romance!"

I was on my legs at that—I dare say I turned on the detective in a fury.

"What the devil do you mean?" I demanded. "Are you questioning Miss Merchison's word?"

"I mean that however true the young lady's story may be—and I ain't questioning it," said Corkerdale, "I don't believe that the old lady, in there, isn't in this! She and the woman, Murdoch—put-up job between 'em! The kidnaping! a piece of bluff—to enable the other woman to get away. Of course, the other woman—Bownas came across her, and she tricked him into that alley, and did him in! Obvious! But—Mrs. Elphinstone's in it, and I'm not going out of this hotel, nor Manners, either, till we've done a bit of questioning. That's that—as they say nowadays."

I was still boiling with rage, but I looked at Maythorne, inwardly wondering that he was so calm. He had kept on nodding his head, while Corkerdale spoke, and he was evidently about to give him some meditated reply when a knock came at the outer door and a waiter looked in.

"Mr. Maythorne?" he inquired, glancing round the room. Then, as Maythorne moved towards him, he added: "Will you come to the telephone, sir?—name of Cottingley asking for you."

CHAPTER XII

The Boat Train

Maythorne hurried out of the room, leaving me, still indignant and glowering, alone with the policemen. Presently Corkerdale, who had been whispering to Manners, turned to me.

"It's all very well, and I've no doubt very natural, for you to be a bit huffy, Mr. Holt," he said, half protestingly, half apologetically. "You're sweet on the young lady, as anybody with half an eye can see, and—"

"Leave the young lady's name out of the question, if you please!" I exclaimed. "And mine, too!"

"But difficult to leave her out, isn't it?" he retorted, smiling. "After what we've just heard! I don't disbelieve her tale—not I!—though I'm more than a bit surprised that a young woman of her intelligence—clever girl!—should let herself be trapped in that fashion. Trapped she was, no doubt!—but I don't believe her mother was trapped!"

"What?" I exclaimed. "Why, you've just heard—"

"I've just heard what we've all just heard," he interrupted. "My opinion is that it was all a put-up job between Mrs. Elphinstone and this woman Murdoch, and that Miss Merchison's been taken in by both. I think that Mrs. Elphinstone went willingly to that house and stood the detention there—she wanted for nothing. You heard!—so that her daughter, who was beginning to know too much and to get dangerous, should be kept safe and quiet while the Murdoch woman got right away! And I'll lay all I'm worth to a penny piece that Murdoch knocked that chap Bownas on the head in that back alley, and that by now she's—somewhere!"

"You don't think that Mrs. Elphinstone knew anything about Bownas?" I said. "Good Lord, according to you—"

"According to me, sir, Murdoch murdered Mazaroff, and Mrs. Elphinstone's well aware of it," he said, determinedly. "There's what the lawyers call prima facie evidence of that, anyhow, and Manners here agrees with me! And we're not going out of this hotel until that doctor comes back, and then we're going to see if Mrs. Elphinstone isn't fit to be questioned. And if she isn't—just yet—then we're going to stay on the premises till she is! So there!"

Before I could say anything the outer door opened and Maythorne stuck half his face inside the room.

"Holt!" he said.
I went to him; he drew me into the corridor and closed the door.

"Message from Cottingley," he said

in a whisper. "He's been carrying on a close investigation of steamship offices this last forty-eight hours, working like a nigger. And at last he's hit on something! This afternoon a woman, closely answering to the description I gave him of Alison Murdoch, booked two passages for New Zealand at the New Zealand Shipping company offices in Cockspur street, by their ship the Rimertaka, which leaves Southampton early tomorrow morning. The boat train is the ten o'clock tonight from Waterloo. Cottingley's down there—he's got a couple of detectives with him from the Yard: to save time he went there and told what he'd discovered. We'll get down there at once—the immediate question is—shall we tell those fellows inside? What do you think?"

"Corkerdale's just declared that he won't leave this hotel till he's questioned Mrs. Elphinstone," I replied. "He's going to wait for the doctor's return."

"Then come on!" he said. "It's now about nine-twenty—we shall be at Waterloo in plenty of time. Gad!—I shouldn't wonder if Cottingley's struck the trail at last!—I told you what a sharp chap he is."

We ran down to the entrance hall; outside there were two or three taxicabs standing about: Maythorne made for the first.

"We'd better pull up a little short of Waterloo," he remarked as we got in. "Stop in York road—by the hotel there," he added to the driver. "You see, Holt," he went on as we moved off southward, "if this woman is Murdoch, she'll know you, from having seen you at the Woodcock; she may know me, though I don't remember her. So we must move warily: if she's attempting a total clear-out, the least thing will put her off. But—she booked two passages, this woman of whom Cottingley's heard; now, for whom can the other be?"

"Can she have had an accomplice?"—if this woman really is Murdoch?" I suggested.

"She's had accomplices here in London, in that Harrow road affair, without doubt," he answered. "May be the brother she spoke of to Mrs. Elphinstone and Miss Merchison. But as to an accomplice in the Mazaroff business—now! If she had—"

He paused there and remained silent so long that at last I asked him what he was thinking about.

"I was thinking this," he answered slowly. "This!—that if this woman Murdoch really murdered Mazaroff and had an accomplice, and if Murdoch is the woman who booked two passages for New Zealand this afternoon, and if—[it's all if, you see!—if the second passage is for the accomplice, why, then, we're probably going to have a very astounding surprise and revelation! But as I say, it's all if.]"

We got out of the cab at the corner of York road and walked quickly toward the big station. Before we were half way up the incline we met Cottingley. He was lounging along with his hands in his trousers pockets and a cigarette hanging loosely from the corner of his queer mouth, and he looked as phlegmatic and unconcerned as ever.

"Thought you'd come this way," he said as we passed. "You're in good time—twenty-five minutes yet. I should say she—[they, I mean—] don't turn up till the last thing. And all's ready. The only thing is, if this woman is the woman we think—Murdoch—who can recognize her, positively?"

"Mr. Holt can," answered Maythorne.
Cottingley regarded me with speculative eyes—I fear I was not of any great account in his opinion.

"Knows her?" he asked.
"I know her!" I answered.
Without another word he turned on his heel toward the front of the station.

"What'll be done is this," he said, walking between us. "The Southampton train leaves Number Four platform ten o'clock precisely. I've got two thoroughly dependable men from the Yard—had to go there and tell 'em everything, of course, if I meant to do any good—and they and I'll be on the platform. She'll not know us. Now then, is there any fear of her knowing either of you?"

"The strong presumption," replied Maythorne, "is that she'll know us both."

"Very well," said Cottingley. "Then, this is what we do. I've already, with the detectives, given the tip to the railway authorities—that there may be an important arrest, d'ye see? Now, I'm going to post you two just within the barrier, where you can't be seen. You'll keep there till the passengers begin coming through for the train. I shall be close by—the detectives'll be a yard or two further on, in touch with me; there'll also be two or three railway police about, in case there's any bother. Now if Mr. Holt there recognizes this Murdoch woman, he'll signal to me by lifting his hat the instant she passes him—and you can leave the rest. The only other thing is that if we make the arrest, I've arranged with the station people that the detectives are to hurry her off to a little office on the platform—you follow."

"All clear!" said Maythorne. "We've got you, Cottingley."

We passed into the big brilliantly lighted station. Even at that late hour of the evening it was crowded. Cottingley moved swiftly ahead of us through the groups, passed us through a barrier with a whispered word to

the man in charge, and, suddenly twisting to his left, ushered us behind a high wooden partition, a few yards away from the gate where tickets were punched. There was a dark cavernous recess there; he signed us to step in.

"Remember!" he said. "If it's the woman we want—up with your hat! But—be sure!"

He swung on his heel, moved off into the light of the big lamps above the platform, and, pulling out his cigarette case, began to smoke, loafing idly about. A few yards away two solidly built men, who, from their outward appearance might have been highly respectable citizens going home late to their suburban residences after a day's business in the city, stood; loafing, too. But as they chatted together, I saw that their eyes were not long away from Cottingley, nor from the barrier, nor from the gloomy recess in which Maythorne and I waited.

That waiting was about as big a trial of my nerves as I had gone through—since I heard the last shots fired in Flanders. Folk came streaming in upon the platform; porters went by with piles of luggage; there were all the scenes and sounds, hurrys and bustlings, incidental to the departure of a big express bound for a great shipping center. But what we waited for—I with straining eyes and throbbing nerves—was long in coming. Across the broad expanse of station,



A Woman Was Just Coming Through the Barrier—A Tall, Slim Woman, of Erect, Easy Carriage.

above some far-distant platform, hung a clock—I could not avoid an occasional glance at it. Never, surely, had the hands of a clock moved more slowly! Twenty minutes to ten. Fifteen minutes to ten. Ten minutes to ten. Five—four—three . . .
"Holt!" whispered Maythorne. "Sharp, now! Is this she?"
A woman was just coming through the barrier—a tall, slim woman, of erect, easy carriage. By her side was another woman, slighter in height, of fuller figure, and heavily veiled. I could not see her face, but the face of the taller woman was that which I had seen two or three times in the big kitchen at the Woodcock. A second later she and her companion, each carrying a substantial-sized valise, had passed the ticket puncher and come full into the light. I had no doubt then, and my hand went up to the brim of my hat as if a machine had moved it.

"Come on!" said Maythorne. "Now for it! But—[who's the other?]"

The two women were being hurried into a third-class compartment by an already impatient guard as the two detectives, some railway policemen, Cottingley, and Maythorne and I closed round them. One of the detectives laid a hand on the taller woman's arm . . .

It was the first time in my life that I had ever seen an arrest, and I was amazed at the quickness, the dexterity, the absence of fun, in it. We had the two women into the little office close by, and the door locked, and the blinds drawn, before I had realized what was happening—as the key turned in the door I heard the whistle of the guard and the shriek of the engine as the ten o'clock sped out to time. And then I turned . . . to answer a question.

"That's Alison Murdoch—yes!" I said. "Yes—without doubt!"

The senior detective turned to the

other woman. She was leaning against a table; her breath was coming in short, sharp gasps; her whole frame trembled.

"Take off that veil!" snapped the detective. "Come on, now!"
We stood staring intently as the woman lifted a hand and diverted herself of the thick veiling that had completely obscured her features. It fell aside—and it was from Maythorne, usually so cool and collected, that the first excited exclamation broke:

"Good G—d! Mrs. Musgrave!"
Mrs. Musgrave burst into tears and turned on Alison Murdoch, who stood close by, grim and defiant.

"You said it would be all right!" she wailed reproachfully. "You swore to me that we were safe, this way! You said and said again that there wasn't the least chance of 'em catching us—"

"Hold your tongue, you fool!" snapped Alison Murdoch.

I stood by, sick, wondering, while Cottingley, under the detectives' supervision, unlocked the women's valises and turned out their contents. There was money there in a surprising quantity—bank notes that had been Mazaroff's, of course—and there were diamonds, and Mazaroff's personal properties. And in Alison Murdoch's valise there was a gold hunter watch, within which was an inscription to the effect that it was a present to James Bownas from his colleagues . . .

"There's always something that these people forget," remarked Maythorne, when, a quarter of an hour later, he and I were driving back to Short's hotel. "Or, rather, always some absolutely idiotic mistake they make. If Alison Murdoch hadn't thrown that will into the Elphinstone's library, it would have been hard to get at the real truth about Mazaroff, and if she hadn't been so covetous and grasping that she couldn't refrain from carrying off that poor chap Bownas' presentation watch, we should probably never have convicted her of murdering him. However—there they both are! But . . . Mrs. Musgrave!"

"Which of them shot Mazaroff?" I asked.

"Ah!" he replied, knowingly. "That's a stiff 'un, Holt! But—Mrs. Musgrave knows, and Mrs. Musgrave will tell! She'll not face it out like the other."

We hurried upstairs as soon as we reached Short's hotel—to find Corkerdale and Manners talking to the doctor and Sheila in an alcove that opened off the corridor. Corkerdale was evidently still indiscreet; the doctor looked somewhat annoyed and Sheila was obviously angry.

"—you must see, doctor, that it's a question of duty," Corkerdale was saying as we came upon them. "I want some explanation from Mrs. Elphinstone—"

"There's no need now, Corkerdale," interrupted Maythorne, laying his hand on the detective's shoulder. "It's all over! We've got 'em!—they're safe under lock and key."

Sheila uttered a sharp cry of surprise, and Corkerdale turned quickly on Maythorne.

"Got 'em?" he exclaimed. "Who's got 'em?"

"Well, if you want to know, my clerk, Cottingley—smartest man in Europe at your game!—he got 'em. With the help of your own people, to be sure. But the kudus is Cottingley's," replied Maythorne. "Top-hole capture!"

"And who'd he capture?" demanded Corkerdale, almost incredulously. "Who?"

Maythorne glanced at Sheila.

"Well," he replied, "there's no secret about it now. Two women! Alison Murdoch and Mrs. Musgrave. And there's no doubt about it, either—they had property belonging to Mazaroff and property belonging to Bownas on them—actually on them!"

Corkerdale turned to Manners, who, at the mention of Mrs. Musgrave's name, had opened his mouth and his eyes to their widest extent.

"Oh, well!" said Corkerdale. "In that case, of course, I think we needn't wait to see Mrs. Elphinstone!"

It was some days before I myself saw Mrs. Elphinstone. At last I was admitted to see her. We exchanged a few conventional remarks about her state of health. Then she sat for some time in silence, steadily staring at me—staring so steadily that I began to feel desperately uncomfortable. Suddenly she spoke.

"I suppose," she said, "I suppose that you and Sheila will become engaged—eventually?"

I thought, then, that I had better speak.
"The fact is, ma'am," I replied, "the fact—er—is—that Sheila and I are engaged already!"

[THE END.]

Criticism of Feminine Dress a Generation Ago

"Dress," said a health article in a woman's magazine of 1901, "is a stumbling block in the way of a healthy existence for the society woman. My lady must assist by long hours of standing to be fitted. The weight of the dress often drags one down so that only the strongest can carry about the heavy materials."

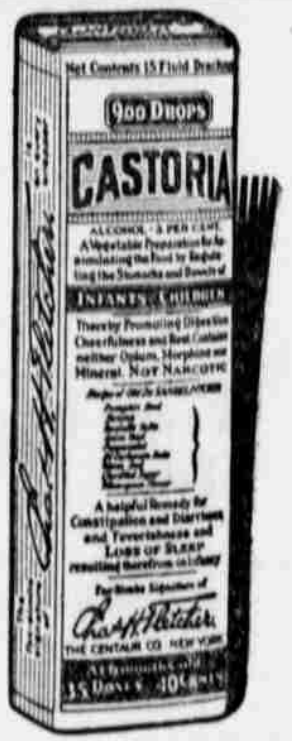
"The low bodices which have become more common are a greater menace to health than almost anything. Women who wear low-necked gowns in the evening should not wear heavy, high-necked undergarments, for the contrast between their protection in the day and that of the evening is very great and they more readily take cold. The neck and shoulders should be bathed freely with cold water and with alcohol and water. . . . The hips should not measure over

twelve inches more than the waist or five inches more than the chest without corsets. The chest expansion of the society woman will probably be one inch; it should be nearly three."—Brenda Ueland in the Saturday Evening Post.

No Identical Chapters
No two chapters of the Bible are exactly alike, as so many people suppose. There is very little difference, however, between the thirty-seventh chapter of Isaiah and the nineteenth chapter of II Kings. Other portions of the Bible are duplicated also, but there are no two entire chapters that are the same.—Pathfinder Magazine.

Moles dig swiftly with their spade like feet; one has been known to tunnel more than 200 feet in a night.

When BABIES are upset



Baby ills and ailments seem twice as serious at night. A sudden cry may mean colic. Or a sudden attack of diarrhea—a condition it is always important to check quickly. How would you meet this emergency—tonight? Have you a bottle of Castoria ready? There is nothing that can take the place of this harmless but effective remedy for children; nothing that acts quite the same, or has quite the same comforting effect on them.

For the protection of your wee one—for your own peace of mind—keep this old, reliable preparation

always on hand. But don't keep it just for emergencies; let it be an everyday aid. Its gentle influence will ease and soothe the infant who cannot sleep. Its mild regulation will help an older child whose tongue is coated because of sluggish bowels. All druggists have Castoria; the genuine bears Chas. H. Fletcher's signature on the wrapper.

Acknowledged as a protection against Skin Troubles

CLEANSING SOOTHING ANTISEPTIC

Cuticura SOAP

Price 25c. Proprietors: Foster Drug & Chemical Corporation, Malden, Mass.



Mark Hanna's Prophecy of Motor Car's Future

One Sunday in the summer of 1902 Mark Hanna rode back from Secretary Hay's house to his rooms at the Arlington with Daniel Hoyt Marvin and took this stranger into his confidence on the subject of motor cars. He saw the motor car revolutionizing commerce.

"It was just like reading," said Mr. Marvin, "one of those articles you see twenty times a year about what the motor car has done, but with everything put in the future tense. His only error was that he counted on a long war between the steam motor and the gasoline motor."

"He said that some one would put a motor on the market at prices suitable to small farmers and change the whole nature of life in the country. I did not believe a word of it, of course. This was my only encounter with Mr. Hanna, and I thought he was going into softening of the brain."—Thomas Beer in the Saturday Evening Post.

Saved by Long Glide

Jim Denny, a young Australian pilot, was put to a severe test, when, while flying at 3,000 feet, the propeller spun off his plane and smashed through a wing. Denny had left Streaky bay on the west coast of Australia with two passengers when the accident occurred. He glided for six miles in a moderate gale to a small field. Although the plane struck a fence, nobody was seriously injured.

German Accorded Honor

Dr. Ludwig Prandtl, professor at the University of Göttingen, Germany, and winner of the second Daniel Guggenheim gold medal for notable achievements in aeronautics, has been recognized as one of the world's most eminent authorities on aerodynamics. Orville Wright was the first holder of the medal.

Look a Lot and Spend Little

Blinks—There will be a lot of tired and disgusted clerks in this town by night.

Jinks—How do you know?

Blinks—My wife left early this morning with just \$2 to spend the day shopping.

Excellent Idea

Mistress—Thursday is my at home day.

New Cook—Good. It's mine, too. Perhaps we can arrange to receive together.

"The World Is Sick" FROM CONSTIPATION

Dr. Iles Laxative Tonic will relieve that tired, dragged-out feeling with many other ailments. CONSTIPATION is the cause of a large percentage of ailments, such as nervous diseases, stomach troubles, sciatica, neuritis, etc.

A ONE-DOLLAR BILL will bring you a WHOLE MONTH'S TREATMENT, SATISFACTION GUARANTEED or money back.

For your sake, do it NOW! DR. ILES RESEARCH LABORATORIES, Guaranty Building, HOLLYWOOD - CALIF.

IVY POISONING HANFORD'S Balsam of Myrrh

Passion Player Modern

Anni Rutz, the peasant girl of Oberammergau who takes the part of Mary in this year's Passion play, is distinctively a modern girl. She and her sisters make a point of getting German editions of fashion books of the outside world so that they may hold their own with American and other visitors. They make their own clothes and are capable girls in many ways, being skilled in all domestic matters.

Real Worry

"You say your wife is suffering from nervous prostration?"

"Yes, bad case, too."

"What caused that?"

"Worrying over the troubles of the kids."

"Huh! What kids? You haven't any children."

"Oh, the kids in the comic strips."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

He Returns

"Bill, I thought you were positive through with politics." "They asked me to get out the flapper vote."

Penalty of Lost Caste

In losing caste, an East Indian does not enter the caste beneath him; he becomes an outcast.

Don't Scratch

Here's the sure, quick, easy way to kill all mosquitoes indoors and keep 'em away outdoors!



Spray clean smelling

FLIT

The World's Largest Selling Insect Killer

Fit is sold only in this yellow can with the black band.



Kills Flies Mosquitoes Moths Bed Bugs Roaches Ants

because it stays in the air KILLS QUICKER

© 1920 Hobbie Inc.