



TIGER TRAIL

by Edison Marshall Illustrations by PAUL FREEMAN

WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE

Dr. Long is visiting Southley Downs, to which he is conducted by Ahmad Das, an Oriental. There he meets Mr. Southley, whom a detective friend, Alexander Pierce, had told him to watch, and his son Ernest Southley. Mr. Hayward and his son Vilas, and then Josephine Southley, whom he had seen faint on the train. Josephine tells him the story of Southley Downs 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 in the hall of Southley Downs. This frightens the elder Hayward, who also sees it. Ernest begins to feel that Ahmad Das is perpetrating some devilry.

The elder Hayward is later found dead, his neck broken as if by a giant's blow.

The coroner and police arrive in order to investigate.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY.

Sam's other errands he had done with dispatch.

"And where did you pick up the rowboat?" I asked. "You went over in Mr. Southley's duck canoe."

The question drew a long and detailed explanation. The motor craft, it seemed, had been procured by the coroner, and was to be used to convey the body. The duck canoe was not large enough to bring any supplies, so Mr. Southley had ordered Sam to procure a large, well-made rowboat to go back and forth in.

At first he had despaired of finding any, until the old man who had steered on the way back to the house encountered him and offered his own boat and services for hire. He was a quaint old character that lived by the river at the edge of the city, and he had heard of Sam's inquiries. But he insisted that he be carried along to handle his own boat. The reason was rather obvious. The old man was evidently in need of the few extra dollars that his own services would bring.

"And what's the old fellow's name?"

"Robin—and he talked like a cockney."

Southley and I were with the inspector—and my named turned out to be Freeman—when he examined the body. He made no comment. Since I had given up all hope of a greater detective coming to our aid, I turned over all the clues I had gathered to him. He was entirely scornful.

"Like as not you and young Southley spoiled a whole lot more clues than you found, by tramping around the body."

"We were careful about that, inspector," I assured him.

"I don't mean to infer your motives weren't the best," he went on with a world of tact, "but amateur aid doesn't help any, as a rule. The hat is evidently the property of the murdered man. The cuff-link—"

He examined the cuffs of the silken shirt that Hayward wore. "It's his cuff, too," he said shortly. "Broken off when he fell."

There was nothing more to be said on this point. The link in the left sleeve was the mate of the broken link we had found.

He heard our story, and we walked down with him to show him where the body had lain. He listened very attentively to our theory—that Hayward had attempted to flee from his enemy.

"It's a queer case," he told us then. "I don't know of any like it. As you say, he must have used something as heavy as a sledgehammer, and yet not hard like a sledgehammer. Anything very hard would have broken the skull into pieces, at the speed that it must have come. Those queer scratches are funny, too. But at least we've got the murderer pretty well sewed up. If he's in this house he can't get away—because already guards are watching the shores of the swamp. If he's on the highlands yonder, he can't get off them either, except into the water where my men will see him."

Soon after this the body was carried down to the boat. The negroes seemed all to have disappeared when the moment came, but Ahmad, inscrutable as ever, and the bewhiskered old man that we called Robin, came to our aid. The inquest was to be held three days later, after the detectives had time to make their investigations.

"There's room for me, I hope?" I asked.

"Yes—"

"It will be necessary for me to leave this place and go back to my practice in Tampa."

Because I hadn't forgotten my promise of departure. Besides, there was no further reason for me to stay. Alexander Pierce had failed to come. I had just been a guest, a spectator, from the first, and Josephine had seen to it that I had been no more. The renouncement in the den told me that I had had that all too plainly. I couldn't deny to myself how much I would have liked to stay, to see the affair to its end, perhaps to behold the curse lifted from the old man's house, and to watch the shadows depart from those sad eyes. Never before had the thought of being of service been so dear to me. But the stand the girl had taken in the den was impossible to disregard.

"I don't see why you can't go, Long, if you want," the inspector said. "You were just a guest here—though I will say that you came at a propitious time—and, besides, both of the Southleys vouch for you. Vilas says you're innocent, and they say that you were in the library

when the crime was committed. Of course, you must tell us where we can get you on a moment's notice."

I told them and asked them to wait until I got my bag. It was all packed and ready. And as I came down from my room I met Josephine in the hall.

She started back at the sight of me. I couldn't read the look that leaped to her face, except that it was a hurt look, almost a look of pleading. It was a surprise to me. Evidently she felt that she would miss whatever support I had been in these last nights of trial.

"You're going after all," she said. She didn't put it as a question. She spoke as if it were some unbelievable circumstance.

"Of course I'm going. I'm afraid I do not surpass as a detective. Besides—I've got to get back to my practice. Probably a hundred little fevered hands stretching to me—"

But her eyes arrested me and stopped the flow of my silly words. "Perhaps you have forgotten—but we promised frankness. The first night at Southley Downs?"

"I had forgotten. Forgive me. And how long ago it was?"

"And how much has happened since?"

"How much—and this is the end." I stretched out my hand and she gave me hers. I had always wondered at that hand. It was so yielding, seemingly so tender. But I dropped it quickly, wondering at the tremor on her lips.

"Good-by, Miss Southley."

"May I walk with you down to the boat?"

"If you wish. But you remember—what is in the boat?"

"I'm past all horror of that." She led the way out of the great door and down the path. What a slight, slim creature she was! "And I suppose there is nothing—that I can tell you—that would make you stay?"

"I don't believe I know."

"Think a minute."

Vilas' face darkened ever so slightly.

"I don't believe I care to have you question the manners of my dead father?"

"It is a fair question."

"In spite of the difference in their ages, Southley and my father were old friends. They were very free with each other in all things."

"And did your father say anything of an insulting nature that the doctor might want to avenge?"

"He called him a 'pup,' I think, as well as other things."

"You say you went to bed at midnight. When did you learn of your father's murder?"

"After the levee broke—when the others came back to the house and told me."

"The sound of the breaking levee awakened you?"

"Yes."

Freeman called on me next. I told my story, as far as it concerned the finding of the body. I corroborated most of Vilas's testimony.

"How much time were you alone after the scene in the den and the time of the murder?" he asked.

"A few minutes after a midnight walk with Ernest—between a few minutes before one o'clock and immediately after."

"How did you spend your time?"

"I was undressing for bed."

"And then what did you do?"

I told him of our stalk through the halls. He seemed particularly interested, but also somewhat scornful.

"It isn't the purpose of the State to chase down ghosts," he said. "I think the less thought and said about that matter the better. You all were under a nervous strain, and I've heard the testimony of people in that condition before. It usually isn't worth the paper it's written on. I want to know if you had any time to yourself between the scene in the den and the murder."

"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 were willing; they glowed darkly."

"But we're not willing to forget it," the detective replied. "The matter of motive for this murder is probably the most important feature in identifying the criminal. If we have a motive, we have something to work on. I believe that your father took your part in that discussion."

"That is true."

"And Southley did also."

Vilas hesitated—just an instant. "Yes, he supported me."

"I believe his daughter sided in with you, too."

"I would hardly say that."

"At least she offered no explanation why Dr. Long attacked you. Isn't that true?"

"It is."

"How did Dr. Long take this combined stand against him?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"It seems to me I am perfectly clear. Did he become angry?"

"I won't venture to say. It was plainly the greatest shock to him when Miss Southley took the attitude she did. I suppose my father gave him the greatest cause for anger."

"Why?"

"My father took the most determined stand against him, insisting on an apology or else a departure from the house."

"And what right did he have to insist that any of Southley's guests be told to go? What was his explanation for this breach of hospitality?" The doctor was Southley's guest, not your father's. Why did your father feel he had a right to insist, in the terms he did, that Southley expel the doctor from his house?"

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Takes Place of Eggs in Cakes
A dessert-spoonful of vinegar added to a cup of milk will answer the same purpose as two eggs in cake making. Prepared cake flour should be used in this, as in all cake recipes, to insure lightness and uniform success.

When Baking Peppers
To keep peppers whole when baking, place them in buttered muffin tins, and when ready for serving, remove with the aid of two large spoons.

Saves Time in Sewing
Let the children thread a package of needles on the loose ends of your spool of thread and fasten the thread under the notch in the spool. Then you will have a dozen threaded needles to use when sewing.

A Spring Onion Tip
It is said that a cup of strong coffee will remove the odor of onions from the breath.

Longer Life for Stockings
Remember that perspiration wears out more stockings than laundering them—so it is economy to wash hosiery after each wearing.

Combating Troublesome Ants
A heavy chalk mark drawn a finger's distance from your sugar box and around containers for bread and cake will keep the ants away.

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Hints for the Home
by Nancy Hart

So much beauty can be given to rooms through the use of attractive slip covers that it seems we should try our hands at making a set for the summer home.

Printed linen, chintz, cretonnes in quaint floral patterns are ideal for the purpose, and need not be expensive, so long as coloring and design are good.

Lay material over chairs or sofa tuck well into corners, crease and pin according to the outlines of the furniture. Cut from the pattern you have molded, allowing a half-inch for seams. Fold seams and pin together so they fit snugly. Remove cover, haste and stitch with a "welt seam" on the right side, allowing a six-inch opening at each side in back so the cover can be slipped on and off.

Eggs With Macaroni
A substantial luncheon dish. A half cup milk, a tablespoon butter or margarine, a half cup canned mushrooms, a cup cold boiled macaroni, two eggs, a half teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Heat milk in a double boiler, add the butter or margarine, mushrooms, cut fine and macaroni, then the eggs, well beaten. Stir for ten minutes and serve.

When Children Become Finicky
When Sonny and Sister become tired of eggs, prunes, spinach or carrots—four of their most wholesome foods—try preparing them in the form of a fancy gelatin dessert or salad. Use fruit flavors for dessert combinations, and lemon-flavored gelatin for salads. Mold in fancy shapes, and see how welcome they are.

Saves in the End
In preserving according to new methods the use of pectin may be specified in recipes. Although these new recipes require more sugar (either beet or cane) the yield in finished jellies and jams is much greater, and the cooking time many minutes less.

Saving Doesn't Mean Being "Tight"

Nor does saving mean niggardliness about money matters. Saving simply means that you are buying success on the time payment plan. It simply means that you are planning intelligently to get the things you want, when you want them and as you want them.

That answers the question of "Why save, after all?" But here are further answers to that question. A cash reserve gives you greater resourcefulness. It gives you the advantage of being able to purchase wisely. The opportunity to make valuable strategic moves in business—in making investments. The feeling of greater confidence—in everything you do—that puts new power into your efforts.

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