

The Secret of Mohawk Pond

By Natalie Sumner Lincoln

SYNOPSIS: Murder and mystery—how a young man, who had been shot, was found in a canoe on Mohawk Pond. The mystery is solved by a young woman who had been in the room at the time of the murder.

ness slid down on the floor with a decided bang. Peggy caught her breath. She had not touched that side of the desk. Who, then, was fumbling about?

A match glowed close at hand, held by Obadiah and Chase brought a candle from a stand near the staircase.

She found her torch under some papers. Snatching it up, she played it on the far corners of the room. No one, except themselves, was there. She must have been mistaken, she thought.

"I must send for an electrician and see what is wrong with the circuit. The lights have been very annoying lately, and sometimes do not come on again for hours."

"Perhaps only water is needed in the batteries," suggested Obadiah. "Would you care if I looked?"

"Oh, will you?" said Peggy, grateful for the offer.

"Will you bring some candles, Mr. Chase?" asked Peggy and showed Obadiah down the cellar stairs, her torch lighting the way. Chase followed with some candles and pie plates he found in the kitchen, for holders.

The botanist placed his manufactured candleabra at the most convenient angles as Obadiah knelt and examined the lighting system.

Chapter 14

THE MILK IN THE COCONUT

RAIN—intermittent rain. For four days it had kept up incessantly. Her only communication with the outside world had been by telephone and brief interviews with Obadiah Evans, and Aquilla Chase. The little botanist had been a constant caller and Peggy was glad for had it not been for his almost daily visits she would have become a mental wreck from loneliness and sheer nervousness combined.



"It's milk in a coconut shell," ejaculated Obadiah as Peggy stared at it.

Their game of double dummy bridge was interrupted by a knock on the door and Peggy rushed to admit Obadiah who left his rubber raincoat on the veranda and wiped his rubber boots before entering.

He nodded a greeting to Chase and shook hands with Peggy.

"I was over to Litchfield this afternoon" he said. "The going was most like swimming in a sea of mud. Sheriff Beach told me about the autopsy. Ed Stanton died as the result of the pistol shot—the doctors found the bullet—"

Peggy heard no more; the room was whirling around and the friendly faces grew dim and then faded out.

"Take another sip" coaxed Obadiah as he held a glass of wine to her lips. Soon Peggy opened her eyes and looked about.

"I'm sorry I gave you such a turn" began the farmer. "I didn't know—I thought—"

"That I should have known I killed Mr. Stanton. I suppose I did realize it, Mr. Evans, back in my mind but I couldn't help praying that the autopsy would show he died from some disease."

"Don't worry one bit about it," Obadiah urged. "A lawyer friend explained to me there is what they call excusable homicide—where you kill in defense of one's family or property. That will be your defense. Jim's gone to New York to engage a bang-up criminal lawyer for you. Mr. Williams is in Europe."

At that, the color returned to Peggy's cheeks. So that explained his absence and he had gone to aid her.

"Now Miss Prescott, I guess you better be going and let you get some sleep," Obadiah said, bowing awkwardly as he made for the door, muttering to Chase who followed.

Chase paused as Peggy called his name.

"Don't forget your promise to take me to Sundown's camp," she admonished.

The room was suddenly plunged in darkness.

"The electricity has been doing that off and on" she explained. "Stand still; I'll get a light."

She groped her way to her uncle's desk and her hands sought the electric torch; knocking over several silver ornaments. A picture frame containing her father's like-

Five, ten minutes passed and he was about to give up when he eyed the wires leading to the electric generator that were partly concealed from view.

"Hold your light steady, Miss Prescott. Ah, here's where the trouble lies. Two of the wires are loose."

His strong fingers fastened them, almost as securely as a wrench.

He was wiping the grime from his hands when he observed Peggy regarding some object on the floor with curious eyes.

"What's that?" she asked, noticing his glance.

Obadiah reached down and picked up the bowl filled with a white substance.

"It's milk," he said finally. "Milk in a coconut shell."

"So it is" ejaculated Peggy. "Now what is that doing here?"

"For the cat" hazarded Chase. "Horrors, no," Peggy cast a worried look about. "I have an antipathy for cats—and Julia knows it and wouldn't have one on the floor."

"The milk's fresh," Obadiah observed as he put the shell back on the floor.

Taking a candle, he strode around the cellar looking in the corners. Suddenly he stopped.

The small high window toward which he faced opened on the ground underneath the veranda overlooking Mohawk Pond. Obadiah's bump of location was abnormal.

Slowly he wheeled around and faced the direction of Mohawk Lane, and the spot where he had tripped and fallen, Tuesday night. From there he had looked directly at a lighted window in the basement of Yew Lodge—a window with a cream-colored Holland shade, instead of a window he was confronted by a padlocked and bolted door.

"Where does this lead?" he asked laying his hands heavily on the door—it did not even quiver, much less shake under his sturdy push.

"That door?" Peggy looked up from contemplating the coconut. "I haven't the faintest idea—it's the one door in the house to which I have no key."

Obadiah studied the door and his brow was knit in thought.

Peggy urged him to break the lock and investigate the interior but he suggested that she wait until he could bring a locksmith on Monday. Then Obadiah and Chase left.

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What is the secret of the padlocked room? It is revealed in tomorrow's installment.

TURKEY PRODUCTION INCREASING FASTER THAN DEMAND, VIEW

Hyman H. Cohen, market editor of the Portland Journal, reviewed the present turkey situation Sunday, as follows:

Word is being passed in the turkey industry that unless a higher price be secured for these favored holiday birds that many will be compelled to get out of the business. This is a brutal way of looking at the matter but there is half truth in the statement. The turkey industry is showing wide expansion and is expected to show still greater growth during the next year. Of course, weather conditions will be a big influence. Some seasons the turkey crop cannot be held up, other seasons the production is at top notch. Turkeys are not only a highly seasonal product at this period but the crop is affected more by weather conditions than any other product of the farm. The facts are simply these: With the greatly increased production of turkeys, marketing interests must find methods of increasing the demand and sales. There appears no really good reason at this time why Americans should not consume turkeys in volume on other occasions than holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years.

During the last few years and especially the present season, there have been better marketing methods for turkeys. Not only has the grading of turkeys been greatly improved, and more or less uniform, but the big distributing interests have secured the best prices available. With a big increase in turkey production promised for 1930 producers should try to have their birds ready for market at an earlier date than has been the case for recent years. This year was better in that regard than other seasons but this appears due more to proper weather conditions than any real betterment in the industry itself.

GOLD HILL I. O. O. F. HAS THANKSGIVING DAY BALL

GOLD HILL, Ore., Dec. 3.—(Special.) — A public dance was given in the I. O. O. F. hall at Gold Hill Thanksgiving night. A large crowd of Gold Hill people attended as well as a number from other towns in the valley. The proceeds of each dance in the I. O. O. F. hall are given to the financing of the Christmas tree which will be featured this year as usual by the Odd Fellows lodge. Another dance will be given Saturday evening, December 7th.

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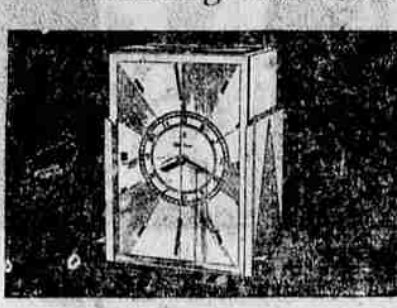
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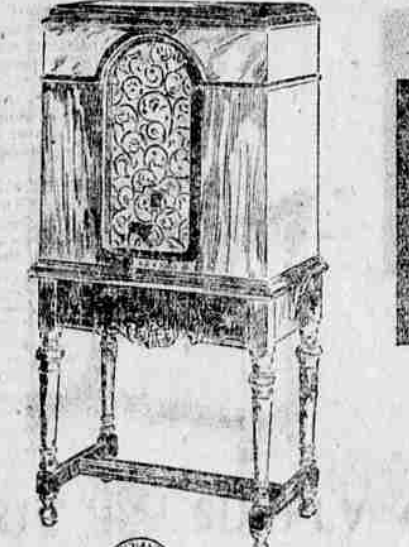
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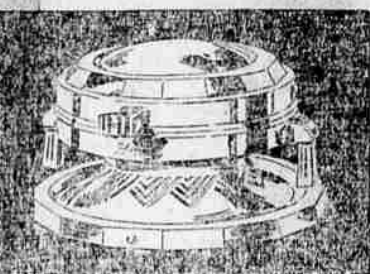
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HOWLETT HOTEL HAS OLD FASHIONED FEAST

EAGLE POINT, Ore., Dec. 3.—(Special.) At the Sunnyside Hotel Thanksgiving day nearly one hundred people enjoyed the bountiful turkey dinner served as only Mrs. R. E. Howlett knows how. People from all over the county assembled at noon and were shown into the old-fashioned dining room where tables arranged under the load of good things to eat and where every one felt that this was a regular old-fashioned Thanksgiving dinner served in pioneer style.

SCHOOL FUNDS RECEIVED EAGLE POINT DISTRICT

EAGLE POINT, Ore., Dec. 3.—(Special.) Checks totaling \$4,542.25 have been received by the school clerk, Edith Weidman, as part of Eagle Point's share in the distribution of school funds made following the payment of taxes, including \$442.25 received from the elementary school fund, state free-school fund \$175.88, county school fund \$454.12, county high school fund \$741.89, and special school taxes \$2,726.96.

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