

The White Cockatoo

by Mignon G. Eberhart

SYNOPSIS: Jim Sunden has befriended Sue Tally, who escapes on a boat by taking refuge in Sunden's room. But she will not permit him to search for the abductor and when she goes for the key to her room, she runs away. Sunden stumbles over a murdered man in the corridor of the hotel. Lovschlem and his wife try to persuade him not to report the murder to the French police. Then, while the police are coming, Sunden goes into the court and is shot at the times. His assailant escapes. As the police arrive, Sunden returns with the information that he found her key in her door. She cannot say whether or not the murdered man was her pursuer. The police question Sunden.

Chapter 11 SUNDEAN EXPLAINS

MADAME GRETHE'S green eyes were very bright and knowing during the commissaire's brief questions, but they looked a bit knowing when I began to tell of the man who had shot at me in the courtyard. She looked for the first time at a loss, and Lovschlem, who had let her do most of the talking thus far, suddenly became possessed of an active tongue.

"But you are mistaken, Mr. Sunden!" he cried. "The wind deceived you. There could have been no one in the courtyard."

"Hell, don't I know when I've been shot at?" I took the flashlight out of my pocket and showed them how it was shattered. "The wind cannot do this. There was someone in the court not fifteen minutes ago. He had a revolver and shot at me twice on the stairway—that's when he got the flashlight—and three times in the courtyard."

The young officer turned to the pompous commissaire de police, there was an excited sputtering of French, the older man gave a quick order which sent one of the men in the background hurrying away, and Madame Grethe sent me a most unpleasant look from her green eyes.

"Where is Father Robert," she said to Marcel in French.

"He went away, just after the gentleman went downstairs. I remained alone with him."

"He went away?" Her narrow eyebrows were straight and her eyes wary. She broke into rapid French, telling, as near as I could make out, that she had sent one for the priest.

Following her example, Lovschlem plunged into the stream of conversation, and Sue and I were momentarily forgotten. She was standing quite near me, and I said in an undertone:

"What are they saying?"

She gave me a startled look.

"Oh—you do not understand them—Lovschlem is saying that he does not know the man, that he was killed outside, away from the hotel, and brought here and left to throw suspicion from the murderer. They are considering it."

"But you and your shattered flashlight are troubling the younger man; he says the murderer must be here in the hotel. Lovschlem says you were frightened by the wind and dropped it. He says no one could have got into the hotel. The commissaire—that is, the older one—says in case you are telling the truth they will discover him."

"What do they say of the dagger?"

She did not reply at once; it was strange that where I had felt a kind of friendliness about her, now I felt as distinctly a withdrawal.

"They say nothing of the dagger," said Sue warily, her eyes on Madame Grethe, as if to be sure she was not overheard.

I followed them into the corridor. Lovschlem stepped back to let me pass, and I caught a flicker of Madame Grethe's eyes.

"Approach near, monsieur," said the young officer. "Now." He motioned the others back, and we were all crowded into the corridor, but the full light fell on the murdered man. "Now, monsieur. Is this the way you found him? Was he like this exactly? No passport? Nothing in his pockets? Was there no weapon?"

There was no weapon. The dagger I had forced Madame Grethe to drop there on the dead man's chest, the dagger I had so carefully refrained from touching myself in order not to leave fingerprints, was certainly not there. Had not been there evidently when the police came upon the scene. Had it been there on my return from the courtyard? I could not recall more than glancing at the body.

Who then had taken it? The priest? Marcel? Sue Tally? Was that why I had felt so definitely her sudden withdrawal from the subject of the dagger? And if so, was it because her own frightened hand had snatched that thing and plunged it? Because she knew its grim significance? Because she knew its urgent importance as a clue?

It was an inconceivably ugly thought, but it was not one that could easily be thrust aside. And it was one that, naturally, had its own influence upon what was to come.

I straightened up.

"Of course there was a weapon," I said. "It was a small steel dagger. Lovschlem, here, withdrew it to look at it, and we discovered that it was the sword from the clock in there on the mantel. We left it on the dead man. Someone has taken it."

"THE clock in your room there!" cried the young officer without waiting to translate to the older one.

"Yes."

"And you know nothing of it?"

"Nothing. Except that it was here on the dead man's body when we went down into the courtyard, and now it is not here."

He turned then, and French cracked between himself and his superior while the others listened anxiously.

"Who was with the body while you were gone?"

"The porter and the priest."

"Where is the priest?"

Madame intervened.

"Probably in his room. Your men will find him."

The young officer whirled to Marcel, whose lack eyes were snapping. There was a rapid exchange of questions, and he turned back to me.

"The porter says he knows nothing of it. That he saw no one take the dagger; did not of a truth know that it was not here. But he says there was no light for perhaps ten minutes."

Sue had turned toward the door to my room. Suddenly she said: "It is there! The sword is on the clock again."

Everyone else looked at once, shot one look at Sue. It was a very brief look, but it was enough. I know suddenly that I was right. Sue herself had cleaned that dagger and replaced it.

A torrent of French broke out, and I watched the faces and strain ed my ears for words that I knew finally the young officer turned again to me.

"Monsieur will remain here, please, and hold himself at the disposition of the police. There will be investigation."

I said shortly that I understood. After all, they didn't mean to clap me into jail on suspicion, as I've been given to understand is the prerogative of the French police.

It was just as the young officer was detaching the tiny sword from the soldier's grasp and wrapping it carefully in a handkerchief that a commotion arose in the corridor.

It grew louder, the young officer and Marcel darted to the door to look and then stepped back, and the commotion resolved itself into several policemen, the dark little maid weeping, Father Robert, and a bundle of shawls topped by what appeared to be a large white cabbage in a stage of imminent dissolution.

"My God, do you intend to hold a court of inquiry here in my bedroom? Has a man no privacy in France? First a murder at my door, then an attack on my life, and now a—"

Will Marcel, tomorrow, tell what only he knows of this incredible tangle?

less will be held and all interested in the church's work as well as members are asked to be present.

Rummage Sale, April 18 and 19th, 419 East Main St. Right across street from Roxy Theater.

8x10 Photo for 75c. The Peasleys, opp Roxy Theater.

NEGROES' COUNSEL SCORES JURYMEN

DECATUR, Ala., April 18.—(AP)—Trial of eight negroes charged with

attacking two white women on a freight train near Scottsboro, Ala., were postponed indefinitely today by Judge James E. Horton, after he scored a purported criticism of Alabama jurymen in a published statement attributed to Samuel Liebowitz, chief of defense counsel.

This printed statement quoted Liebowitz as follows:

"If you ever saw those creatures: those bigots, whose mouths are sits in their faces, whose eyes 'pop out at you like frogs, whose chins drip tobacco juice, bewhiskered and filthy, you would not ask how they could do it."

This statement was purported to have been made in response to a question as to how the jury, trying

the negro, Heywood Patterson, found him guilty April 9.

ARREST TWO ANGLERS FOR LACK OF LICENSE

John Butler of Talent, was arrested on Little Butte creek Sunday, and Robert Smith of Rogue River was arrested on Evans creek, both charged

with angling without an angler's license. Sentence was deferred today in justice court until Thursday morning at ten o'clock. Justice of the Peace W. H. Coleman stated. State police made the arrests.

Don't extend credit to Mr. New Customer until you find out from the Southern Oregon Credit Bureau how he paid the other fellow.

One Life Enough Declares Darrow

CHICAGO, April 18.—(AP)—One life of 75 years is enough in the opinion of Clarence Darrow.

"I would not like to live my life again," he said when questioned about his 76th birthday anniversary today.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



THE MINUTE THAT SEEMS A YEAR

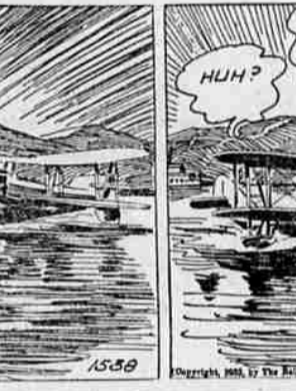
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



ON THE ONE OCCASION WHEN YOU FORGOT TO BRING A HANDKERCHIEF SOMEONE OSTENTATIALLY ASKS TO BORROW IT FOR A CARD TRICK

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Scarlet Ace Plays A Waiting Game!

By EDWIN ALGER



BOUND TO WIN—A Telegram From Hillsdale

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—And All For Nothing

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



Annual Meeting of Church in Phoenix

PHOENIX, April 18.—(AP).—Wednesday evening there will be a regular annual congregational meeting of the Presbyterian church with a covered dish supper at 8:30 in the church. Election of elders and trustees will be held and all interested in the church's work as well as members are asked to be present.

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There's No Guesswork in Tribune A. B. C. Circulation