

The White Cockatoo

by Mignon G. Eberhart

SYNOPSIS: Jim Sweeney finds a murdered man in the corridor of his hotel in a little French town. The murderer might be Sue Tally, Lovschlem, the man known as Father Hubert—or some one else. But inconspicuously the French police believe the murderer is Sweeney and shadow him continuously. Sweeney counts very much to talk with Sue, but finds her always in the company of a newcomer, David Lorn.

Chapter 13

MYSTERIOUS MR. LORN

DAVID LORN arrived during the afternoon. Because I felt restless and tired of the enforced inactivity, I watched Lorn's entrance and registration and his subsequent progress through the lounge in Marcel's active convoy with more interest than I should have otherwise given him.

I had, of course, no premonition that he was to become such an active and important figure in the really hideous affair which, had we but known it, had only begun.

He was, however, not a man who would have commanded ordinarily any attention. He was medium tall, medium slender, his hair was medium brown, his face just a face, and his clothes ordinary traveling tweeds.

His chin was perhaps a little

...the affair—although I don't know just how I could have kept out of it—coming to Armeuse at all, for staying at the hotel, for having promised to meet Jack there, for being early at the place, for planning a holiday in Spain, and for a number of other equally irrelevant affairs, I roused at last to the fact that I was letting the silence make me nervous.

A walk in the wind would clear my head. It was as I turned from the north corridor into the main hall of the middle part of the hotel that I finally saw Sue Tally. She was standing in a sort of recess. The man Lorn was with her, and they were talking very low and so earnestly that they did not appear to see me at all. Yet, in spite of their being so unguarded as not to see my passing, I had an impression that they did not wish to be seen together. It was undoubtedly Sue; and her hair was as soft and bright and her face as sweet as I remembered it from the previous night.

I GOT to the lounge. In the lobby there were two policemen, again Madame Grethe was there, and Lovschlem, looking, somehow, smug. One of the policemen approached me and tapped my shoulder, and



Lorn was a "medium" sort of man.

smaller than his nose and forehead promised. And it seemed to me that his darkish eyes were rather guarded, seeing more than they appeared to see. Then he disappeared into the tiny lift, and I rose and strolled to the lobby and looked at the register.

Madame Lovschlem, imperturbable and rather nice-looking in a tight-fitting green gown with away-going gold hoops at her ears, was at the desk and watched me look at the register.

The cockatoo watched too, and I was as conscious of his knowing eyes as of Madame's, which were as wise.

The newcomer's name was below mine on the otherwise clean page. It was David Lorn, and the place of residence was New York, which told me exactly nothing except that, presumably, here was another American. It is strange, now that it is over, to think of that handful of Americans, synthetic and real, set down in the old hotel in Armeuse, all of us drawn into the mad and dreadful struggle that centered around Sue Tally and was until the very last so ruthless in its terrible advance and yet so grimly inexplicable.

My own part in it was sheer accident. So was Marcel's—poor little Marcel. Yet none of us could escape.

MADAME, I think, would have talked, but I had no wish to. My day's thought had come to very little except the bare conclusion that I could do nothing then but wait developments. I saw no one in the corridors. I heard no one as I went to my room. I knew that Mrs. Byng and the red-bearded priest and Marcel and the cook and the maid were about somewhere, but for all I saw of anyone but Marcel they might have been dead and buried. Even Lovschlem had inexplicably vanished.

I tried to sleep, there in my own room, but succeeded only in staring into the fire, which Marcel had thoughtfully kept going, and smoking innumerable cigarettes.

then suddenly another one was at my elbow and was gripping it rather firmly. They were saying something in French to me, and then Lovschlem undertook to interpret.

"What a misfortune! What a misfortune!" he said. "They wish—oh, most mistakenly—but they insist upon arresting monsieur. They are taking you away at once."

"There isn't enough evidence," I cried sharply. "You can't arrest me. This is absurd."

The police tightened their grip, and Lovschlem, rubbing his hands, said softly:

"Ah, what bad luck! You see, monsieur, there is new evidence against you."

My reception in a French jail was not at all what I might have expected. I was inclined to suspect that, it being at the hour when the Frenchman feels a need to repair to a cafe, the entire machinery necessary properly and formally to arrest a prisoner was not, for the moment, on hand. Owing to my hazy knowledge of French and to the unexpected turn the situation was so soon to take, I never did discover what the real and formal procedure constituted.

As it was, I was simply searched, fingerprinted, and led to a cold little room, locked in, and then through the grating asked politely to remain there, which seemed a redundancy. Lovschlem had blandly refused to tell me what the new evidence was, and while the gendarmes who arrested me did enough talking, the only word I was sure I understood was out, which is unmistakable.

I did manage to drag up the words for paper and ink from some faint schoolboy memory, both of which they brought me. Thus I spent my first hour in a French jail composing somewhat feverish telegrams to the United States consul in Paris, and to Jack.

The telegrams, however, were never sent.

David Lorn, tomorrow, takes an unexpected interest in proceedings.

meeting here of representatives from Presbyterian churches in northwest Oregon.

The Oregon Churchmen voted to encourage a change in the constitution of the church at large providing for a general assembly every two years instead of every year, and to reduce the aggregate delegation from 1,000 to 500.

The Rev. F. G. Scherer was elected moderator, succeeding the Rev. W. L. Killian. The Rev. Charles T. Hurd was elected state clerk-treasurer, and the Rev. H. Edgar was named permanent clerk for a three-year term. All are from Portland.

AIR PASSENGER BUSINESS GAINS

Air passenger business gained 32 per cent and mileage flown, nine per

cent, on the routes of the United Air Lines in the first quarter of 1933, as compared to the same period of last year. It was announced today by P. G. Johnson, president of the air transport firm.

Passengers for January, February and March totaled 16,855, as compared to 12,986 in the same months of 1932. Miles flown totaled 3,152,-

552, as compared to 2,869,282. The average passenger flight also gained in length. While air mail showed a decrease in common with other classes of mail, substantial gains were registered by air express which is handled by United Air Lines and its pick-up and delivery affiliate, the air express division of the railway, express agency.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—That's What You Think, Ferdinand!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



BOUND TO WIN—Poor Jonathan!

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—Heavy Dough

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



NO TRAVEL FUND FOR PRESBYTERY

PORTLAND, Ore., April 20.—(AP)—Unless unexpected financial aid becomes available the Oregon Presbytery will send no commissioners to the general assembly of the Presbyterian churches to be held in Columbus, Ohio, next month.

This decision was reached at a

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