

The White Cockatoo

by Mignon G. Eberhart

SYNOPSIS: Just as Jim Sundeen was hoping for light upon the mystery of two murders, and two attempts upon his own life, another guest in the series Little French hotel, Tally, comes to claim her share of her father's great fortune, Sundeen and David Lorn, the detective, believe now Sundeen learns that it apparently was his father who pulled the trigger, and permitted the murderer to escape in the dark. He meets Lorn for a talk.

Chapter 30 SUNDEAN'S SEARCH

LORN did not turn up until after lunch, and he came straight to me. The police, he said, were very busy, and things didn't look any too bright for me.

"There's one thing that may help you, however," he said. "And that's the gun. They are tracing it, and, while it's rather slow work, still it may prove to have had no connection with you."

"I said hotly, 'I never saw that gun before. Which reminds me, I haven't any gun with me, and I need one.'

"Need one?" murmured Lorn, looking morosely at me.

"Of course I need one," I said impatiently. "But I don't plan to shoot anybody with it, so you needn't look like that. Surely you've got more than one and can loan me one."

He finally admitted that he'd got two small automatics, and if I would do nothing rash with it he might be persuaded to lend me one. I was grimly amused at his using the word rash, which seemed altogether too mild in connection with the violence which occasioned it.

"Have the police traced the policeman yet?" I asked.

"Not that I know of," said Lorn. "They've sent to the Paris laboratories. I did discover, however, that no car had been found."

"I had Miss Tally show me as nearly as she could the spot where she left her abductor's car, and it's quite close to the hotel, and it's possible, of course, that if her abductor was in conspiracy with Lovschlem he used Lovschlem's car. But there's no way we can make sure."

"Either that or the abductor went back to his car and drove away, and the murdered man was not her abductor—and thus, then, his death was not necessarily connected in any way with Miss Tally."

"Possibly," said Lorn.

I wished momentarily I could get out of my head Mrs. Byng's unexpected story of the lights going out and Sue and said:

"The man in the courtyard may have been the priest?"

"Ah—" said Lorn. He was looking at the blank white paving at his feet, but his voice had a kind of "now-you're-getting-warm" feeling about it.

"What's your opinion of his taking the trouble to arrange a false alibi?" I asked.

"Well," said Lorn cautiously, "it's not an argument for his innocence."

"He says he wished to keep entirely clear of the whole affair; it seems he dreaded any connection with it on account of his position. A mere matter of discretion, according to him."

"Oh," said Lorn, giving me a quick look. "So you taxed him with it. Do you think it was wise to let him know your suspicions?"

"I could not fathom the look in Grethe's green eyes; I was not particularly taken with Mrs. Byng, although I felt a little sorry for her. But at that moment I heartily admired them all. It took courage to sit quietly there in the musty parlor so near the lounge where Marcel had died, with the gloom and silence and secrecy of the old hotel enclosing them.

Father Robert was sitting near the bar (in a room which always managed to look particularly bare and cold with its garish old calendars and desolate bars) reading his perpetual newspaper. And as I turned toward the stairway Marianne passed me with a whisk of her white apron, on her way kitchenward.

The coast then was clear.

Most of the afternoon I spent in the gloomy upper reaches of the old hotel. The north wing I did not immediately approach, for it had no third floor, as did the rest of the hotel; I knew the bedroom floor fairly well already, and on the ground floor there were merely storerooms which I had been examining.

But, then, the whole place had been searched—how thoroughly I did not know. Certainly searching the great dark rambling place for clues was very like searching for a needle in a haystack.

It was by no means a pleasant afternoon, for I was gradually convinced that I was surreptitiously accompanied in my search, although I do not know to this day who accompanied me except that it must have been one of two people.

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Sundeen, Monday, discovers five ghostly little finger prints.

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"I could only place me in danger," I said. "And that in the last three days, has been nothing unusual. Besides," I added maliciously, "I shall have my revolver."

"Not," said Lorn, suddenly firm, "if you're going to use it. Besides, it's only two days and three nights. This is the third day."

"You think that if we push this matter about the priest too far before we can actually prove he is the murderer?"

"If he is the murderer—" interpolated Lorn gently.

"—he's apt to take the—er—swiftest way to get what he wants."

"Yes," said Lorn quietly. "And having killed twice, the murderer isn't going to be too careful not to kill again. Of course, though, I'm not saying it was the priest—or rather, if you are right so far, the man who poses as a priest. I'm not even saying that the same person killed both men, although it is a probability."

"But the time—" I said impatiently.

"Not so much time has elapsed, Sundeen. It seems long, of course, but it's really been very short."

"If Miss Tally were only out of it—" I said thoughtfully.

"Not so much time has elapsed, Sundeen. It seems long, of course, but it's really been very short."

MANY AFTER LEVENS' PLACE WITH STATE

SALLEM, May 10—(AP)—Numerous applications have been received for the position of assistant attorney general which was held by the late William S. Levens. It was announced at the statehouse.

The attorney-general's office stated that no appointment would be made for some time with a possibility existing that no successor would be named, the work being taken over by present deputies.

Broken windows glazed by Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

12 WASHINGTON CITIES SAVE SUN

SEATTLE, May 10—(AP)—Twelve cities of Washington state awoke according to daylight saving time today, including Olympia, the capital, in which Gov. Clarence D. Martin promised to regulate his departments on daylight time.

Olympia, Hoquiam and Bellingham were the latest to join the daylight saving parade, Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, Aberdeen, Everett, Wenatchee, Port Angeles, Port Townsend, Yakima and Bremerton had already declared for the earlier time, and several others were to start it very soon, putting virtually the whole state on daylight time.

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S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



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'PUSSYFOOT' ON TOUR OF STATE

PORTLAND, May 10—(AP)—William E. (Pussyfoot) Johnson, international champion "Prohibition Salesman" is in Portland for a tour of Oregon in a campaign against repeal of the 18th amendment.

He opened the battle against rum at McMinnville last night and will conclude the campaign in eastern Oregon May 20.

Regardless of the return of beer, Johnson said, the wets are "yelling their heads off more fiercely than before" for the return of whiskey.

If they win that further advance he declared, "they will start a movement for the consumption of red ink or carbolic acid."

In other words he declared "They want something that will make a sheep spit in a bulldog's face."

Fender and body repairing. Prices right. Brill Sheet Metal Works.

THE FAMILY ALBUM—BELL TROUBLE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Hardy, But Hungry

By EDWIN ALGER



BOUND TO WIN—The Hunt Begins

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—Poor Max

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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