

# The White Cockatoo

by Mignon G. Eberhart

Chapter 47

**SUE'S HIDING PLACE**

I FLUNG myself toward her, and grasped her arm, and wrenched the pistol from her hand.

"You are ill-fitted for this," I said. "I know what your purpose is here, of course. I suppose they promised you a lot of money to impersonate Miss Tally later on."

She looked at me sullenly. She said with a touch of defiant triumph: "I've seen you, too, when you didn't know it. I followed you all over the hotel yesterday afternoon, and you didn't know it. But you nearly caught me there at the door of 34."

It was this girl, then, not the priest. I shoved the letter I still held crumpled in one hand into my pocket and said:

"What have they done with Miss Tally?"

"Don't you wish you knew?" she said with more spirit than she'd yet displayed.

"Yes," I said truthfully. "Tell me, was it Lovschlem who killed Stravsky and Marcel and the priest?"

Her eyes shone with hate, and she was all at once powerful and vital. She said: "If it was Lovschlem, I'll kill him, and he knows it."

and that girl talked and talked, and I was tired, and you heard me take a long breath and—

I cut into her swift, confused explanations.

"Come with me."

"Oh, no—not to the White Salon. They'll kill me, too."

"No, I'm not taking you there. Just to a room down the hall. Come. You'll be safe."

I took her to Mrs. Byng's room. When Mrs. Byng opened the door, I simply thrust the girl inside. I said:

"I can't explain. Keep this girl here. Don't let her call anyone. Do you know how to shoot?"

"Mrs. Byng was superb. She lifted her nose, gave a delighted sniff, and said:

"Give me the gun."

I ran through the corridors, hoping at every turn for the sight of a gendarme. There was none.

Then I was at the door of the White Salon. I laid a cautious hand on the knob, and holding my revolver before me tried to peer into the darkness of the room.

There was no sound, and it was entirely black.

I went to the fireplace. My eyes were becoming accustomed to the dark, but I longed for some kind of light. I could see no closet.



I wrenched the pistol from her hand.

I said slowly: "So it was Stravsky. He was your connection—"

"Don't speak of him," she cried. "He was a man. Lovschlem's a jellyfish."

"Look here," I said, feeling rather as if I had unleashed a revengeful panther. "Tell me where they've got Miss Tally, and I'll—if I can—I'll help you out of this."

"You may be right," she said finally, giving me a black look. "But I don't know. They promised me a lot of money."

"What good will money do you?—Stravsky—can't be brought back."

It was not as brutal as I thought it might be. She was fully aware that life was still to be lived, and that money was not a bad thing. She said again:

"They promised me a lot of money."

"Sue," I whispered in the silence.

"Sue."

There was a little rustle from inside the wall about the height of my head.

I bent over and rolled up the fire screen. The space seemed very large. I ducked under the mantel breast.

I groped into the darkness, met cold wall—and a ledge. And my groping hand suddenly encountered two feet bound together at the ankles.

It was Sue.

She said, when I removed the gag, that she wasn't hurt, but she clung to me, and I could feel her heart beating, and her breath.

All at once I realized that we must get out of the ill-omened room. I took her cautiously into my room next door. I put her in a chair—she was trembling with cold and with the reaction of released terror.

I took my heavy flannel dressing gown and put it around Sue, and I took her wholly into my arms and held her, and I kissed her and kissed her and was never so happy in my life.

I DARED not wait. I dared not tempt her with the necessary care.

"What's your name?"

"Elsie." I think she was rather accustomed to being beaten in life's struggles, for she said it dully.

"Tell me at once where they've got Miss Tally. Hurry up."

Probably I had strengthened what must have been a growing distrust of the Lovschlems. Which fact gave a curious sidelight on her life. She said, watching me:

"She's in the White Salon, I suppose. I was there. Grethe and Lovschlem pushed me, made me hide—that night."

Elsie said, "Lovschlem"; Lovschlem, then, was not the man in the courtyard. I said:

"What do you mean? Quick."

She hesitated. "In the fireplace. It's just an old cupboard above the ledge. I was there this morning when you found the priest."

"What! Did you know the body was there?"

"Not! Not! I swear it!" Her words burst out in a rapid flood. "I was in the north wing, and I heard you and Sue Tally coming, and I hid in the White Salon. First I was going to get behind a curtain—that's when I dropped my handkerchief. But you

SHE told me briefly how the Lovschlems had been there in the corridor beside her room. She'd gone to turn on the light, and Lovschlem had simply clapped his fat hand over her mouth and lifted her into the corridor and some woman flashed inside the room and Grethe whispered sharply that if Sue screamed, the woman who'd gone into Sue's room would kill Sundean.

"I have the token," I said rapidly. "It was hidden in the priest's room."

"You have—?" She paused. "But how did you know what it was? It can't be—you don't know."

She watched me unroll the small thin paper. I held it toward her, and she gave a little gasp.

"Why—you—?" It was a sort of gasp. "Kiss—this is the token—but it is not my half. It is my brother's half."

"Then your brother—"

"The priest—was my brother. The priest was Francis!"

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The white cockatoo, tomorrow, contributes toward a solution.

**Boy Drowns When Raft Overturns**

PORTLAND, Ore., May 30.—(AP)—Albert Weideman, 18, drowned in Mast Lake here today when a raft upon which he and three other boys were riding capsized about 60 feet from shore.

Pender and body repairing. Prices right. Brill Sheet Metal Works. Phone 542. We'll haul away your refuse. City Sanitary Service.

**WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT**

SWEETENS THE BREATH

## DALLES PLUMBER IS STATE LEADER

SALEM, May 30.—(AP)—John Milne of The Dalles was inaugurated

as president of the Oregon State Association of Master Plumbers at the closing banquet at their convention here.

Some 200 delegates chose Portland as the convention city next year and favored Eugene for the 1935 convention site.

National President E. B. Kletne of Cincinnati predicted that within ten years master plumbers would be recognized on the same par with engineers and be granted degrees on a similar basis. He declared master plumbers were responsible for bringing about the high state of sanitation which prevailed in the world, and especially in this country.

Don't throw away your old tires. Let Mac and Ted fix them. 32 No. Front St.

era" reached Maupin Monday bound for the reforestation camps on the Mount Hood national forest. The men, all from Chicago, arrived in seven sleeping cars. Five baggage cars carried their equipment and supplies.

The C. C. C. contingent was given preliminary training at Fort Sheridan. They will be divided into two forest camps, with 141 men at Bear

## TREE TROOPERS TO MOUNT HOOD

THE DALLES, Ore., May 30.—(AP)—Ten officers and 284 "tree troop-

Springs and 143 at Bonney Crossing. Fifty men and six officers arrived last week to prepare the camps for the larger contingents.

DINE AND DANCE at BONNEY GRILLE, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays & Sunday afternoon and evening. Reservations for private parties Monday, Wednesday & Friday, Route 1, Box 85, Gold Hill.

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By C. M. PAYNE



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