ENEMY'S KISS

by Evelyn M. Winch

SYNOPSIS: A telegram, supposedly from her father, has sent Alison Rede scurrying to meet him at a house in the country. He is not there, and Alison sees a horrible person from whom she runs in terror. She runs into a much less horrible person, however, who helps her search the house. They find nothing. Alison thinks it very queer that her father, about to re-marry, should take such a shabby house anyway.

Chapter Six

DOUBT

"BUT all the doors were locked!" Alison said.

"True," replied the stranger. "But he may have left by the pantry window while we were down in the cellar."

Alison smiled.

"You know, you're an extraordinarily comforting person!"

"Good! Then let's assume that little Herbert's gone. What about getting ourselves some coffee?"

"I'll go and see if I can find some," agreed Alison.

"Come on, then."

Her shaken self-respect was still sore. She looked at him and said quickly: "You needn't come. I'm all right now, honestly."

"I know you are but I'd rather."

She gave way meekly, a little surprised at yielding, for she was by no means a meek person; but there was a note of authority in his voice which was not easily defied. A search of the kitchen yielded one small crust of stale bread which had been sampled and rejected by mice, an assortment of empty gin bottles and a strong smell of cheese. The oil-stove was empty and the only kettle had a large hole in the bottom.

"Nothing doing." His laughter had a happy, friendly ring to it but now he drew no answering smile from her, for Alison was looking at the big white clock upon the wall.

"It's past twelve. . . ."

"I shouldn't worry," he argued. "Your father's probably hung up on the road."

"He'd have let me know." Alison was positive on that point.

"How could he? These country telegraph offices shut early."

"He could have telephoned."

He admitted that by his silence. After a moment's thought said: "Look here, where does your father live—I mean as a rule? Couldn't we get through to him?"

They went into the drawing room, where a telephone stood on a wide kneehole desk. Alison, dialing O, thought that she had never seen quite such uninteresting furniture as there was in this house. Even this piece, quite good in shape, with its double row of deep drawers, was spoilt by being made in a cheap imitation of old oak.

THERE was no ringing tone. She pressed down the rest and tried once more; a dead line.

"It's not working." She put down the receiver slowly, staring at the young man with wide and troubled eyes.

"Him." He looked again at her anxious face and suggested: "He may have wired to put you off, you know, or tell you that he couldn't get here and the post office couldn't have delivered the message. . . ."

"That's true!" She seized on the stray hope.

"Your father's probably peacefully asleep by now, thinking you've had his wire," he said, as they went back down the kitchen passage.

"I hadn't thought of that," she admitted. And with a smile, "You know you are truly a comforting person!"

"My job!"

"What do you do then?" She was curious to know; she could not quite place him. But he did not seem to hear and before she could repeat the question he said: "By the way, it might be a sound idea to tell me your name."

"Rede. Alison Rede."

"Mine's Guy—Westurn." There was a pause between the two words as if he had hesitated to tell her and she looked at him with sudden curiosity.

"Do you live down here?"

"Why?"

"I only wondered," explained Alison, "whether I could telephone from your house."

"I haven't one. I'm only staying the night at Warley." He spoke absently as though he was puzzling over a problem.

"Warley? But—" she stopped. He had certainly said quite distinctly that he had come out for a stroll but Warley was at least six miles away and on a pouring wet night—

HE HAD looked at her sharply and must have guessed her thought, for he said, "I like walking in the rain."

"Six miles!"

"I know. I wasn't thinking. I—I walked farther than I meant." Catching the sudden doubt in the girl's eyes he added: "I wanted to look at this house—I'm an architect, you see, and there's some idea of buying the site so—I thought I'd take a look at it—"

"By lantern light?" Alison thrust shrewdly.

"You don't believe me?"

"I'm afraid I don't!"

"Then how's this—" He was watching her with a rather queer, intent look now. "I came down to burgle this house—"

"You're a burglar?"

"Professionally; though I vary it occasionally with a little murder and writing anonymous letters, or blackmail—"

"I don't believe it!" His voice, his clear eyes, his honest, blunt, large features made it absurd.

"You don't? You know, you're hard to please!" He gave a broad, engaging grin. "I give you your choice of two perfectly good stories and you won't accept either!"

"What are you really?"

"Seriously? I told you—I am an architect. I'm staying down at Warley for the night and strayed up here because I—happened to be thinking rather deeply. How's that?"

"All right!" She laughed. "I must believe you! But what are we going to do about it? I mean, we can't stay here all night, can we?"

"I'm not going to leave you here alone," he objected.

"I'm not staying. I'm going to find the nearest house and get on the telephone."

"At past midnight? You'll never get anyone to wake up. Beside, we're miles up on the Downs here."

"Well, I'll walk into Warley then."

"Six miles at midnight in that?" He pointed to the window where the rain was beating steadily. "You'd end up with pneumonia."

"I shouldn't. Anyway, I'd rather—" She could not put into words that deep, uncomfortable conviction that something must be far wrong.

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"It's not working," Alison said.

Alison discovers something new about the hairless man Monday.

RENEWAL OF ALL DRIVING PERMITS IS REQUIREMENT

Every motor vehicle operator in Oregon should have a new driver's license in his wallet by June 30, for after that date the secretary of state has promised an active campaign to eliminate unlicensed drivers from the streets and highways, according to the Oregon State Motor association.

All operators' permits, regardless of how recently they were issued, expire on June 30 as a result of legislative action taken in March, 1933. Even those carrying 1936 as expiration date must be renewed now. Renewals and new licenses are expected to total 425,000, each carrying a fee of $1.

The secretary of state's enforcement campaign will be in the interests of both safety and revenue to the state, the motor association pointed out.

With a few exceptions, no person previously licensed in Oregon will be required to take an examination for a renewal. The new permit may be obtained by filling out accurately one of the renewal application blanks already distributed to various agencies throughout the state.

Persons required to take the examination include applicants who the secretary of state believes might not be qualified to hold an operator's license. According to law, any person over the age of 70 years, or any person who has never been licensed as an operator in Oregon must make application directly to an authorized examiner of operators and chauffeurs. A new motor vehicle operator's manual will be issued.

A schedule, showing where an examiner can be located, may be obtained from any chief of police, county sheriff, member of the state police, or by writing to the secretary of state at Salem. Traveling examiners will cover 60 cities and towns throughout the state.

Pursuant to a law passed by the last legislature, persons may make application for operators' and chauffeurs' permits without going to the inconvenience and expense of having their signature acknowledged by a notary public or other person authorized to administer oaths.

All new licenses will be effective for two years. They will carry June 30, 1937, as expiration date.

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TRAFFIC DEATHS EXCEED REGISTRY

SALEM, Ore.—(UP)—The traffic death rate has been increasing faster than motor vehicle registrations, disproving the claim that more cars on the road are to blame for the accident toll, according to the operators' division of Secretary of State Snell's office.

"As long as we are having accidents we are having violations of the rules of safety," a statement by the motor vehicle division said. "Far too many motorists believe that killing is a part of motoring and there is nothing to do but watch it grow. Violations of the rules of safety are without any supporting reason. They simply represent someone's blunder."

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MINE MACHINERY GOES TO ALASKA

NEW YORK (UP)—This spring's gold mining rush to Alaska, already under way, will be a rush of machines rather than of men, according to the National Machine Builders' association. Great quantities of heavy mining equipment capable of working much low grade ore that only mechanical precision in methods of extraction makes usable, now are being shipped on orders prompted by the current price of $35 an ounce for gold. These machines make it possible to work with profit old claims and mines heretofore disregarded.

Giant dredges, drills and other mining equipment are being taken to Alaska by steamer, placed in airplanes and flown into the interior, and today a man can cover ground in two hours that would have taken six months in the old days. Thus, more gold territory is being opened up. In addition, ground which has been worked over can be worked over again with the new machines, since the high price of gold and the remarkable methods of mechanical extraction of the metal justify it.

University Bans Knitting

BOSTON (UP)—There'll be no more "knitting one, pearling one" in Boston University's class rooms. After the professors complained that the knitting students distracted attention from their lectures, a notice was posted reading: "Absolutely no knitting will be permitted in class rooms."

Repairs Bicycles in Bed

WILSON, N. C. (UP)—Although his back is paralyzed and he has been bed-ridden for eight years, Eddie Williams, 25, is happy—and busy. A large board on his bed serves as a work bench. There he repairs bicycles, makes toys, and does "little odd jobs" for the neighbors.

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