

The Wrong Murderer

By HUGH CLEVELY

SYNOPSIS: *Elsa Little does not believe Terence Mahony killed her uncle Vincent, and has persuaded Ambrose Lawson to help her kidnap Terence before the police get him and run him out of the country. But Lawson, the ostensibly worthy head of a vicious kidnapping and dope gang, plans to keep the rendezvous with Elsa, kill Terence and kidnap Elsa. Now Lawson, who had engaged Lawson to spirit away his sword, Ruth Fraser, is upbraiding Lawson because so far Terence has been able to keep Lawson at bay.*

Chapter 44 STRUGGLE

"ARE you threatening me?" Lawson asked in a cold, quiet tone. "Do you think that is wise? I have my own ways of dealing with people who threaten me, you know."

It was quite the wrong thing to say, and Lawson realized it almost as soon as he had spoken. He ought to have called Lee-Ramsden down, reassured him, and then dealt with him swiftly and unexpectedly.

There was no hope of that now. Lawson's tone of cool contempt had added fuel to Lee-Ramsden's rage, destroying any hope of even a temporary reconciliation. The old man's face became suffused with a flush of violent rage; that little vein, which betrayed his temper, was beating strongly in his forehead.

"Deal with me, will you," he said thickly. "You'll deal with me, you bound. I'll damned soon deal with you."

His eyes had become slightly bloodshot. For a moment he gazed round the room wildly, as if seeking something. His glance encountered a bronze statuette standing on a small table. He sprang forward, snatched it up in his right hand, and buried himself at Lawson.

The statuette came down in a vicious blow aimed at Lawson's head, and it was only Lawson's swiftness which saved him.

He dodged quickly, sprang out of range, and then, as the old man lumbered after him, sprang forward to meet him, snatching at the wrist of the hand that held the statuette.

For a few seconds the two men struggled at close quarters, Lawson trying to push the old man over and pin him down in an arm-chair, the old man striving vainly to brain Lawson with the statuette.

Actually the struggle should have been quite unequal, for Lawson was by far the younger and immeasurably the stronger of the two, but rage lent the old man strength, and, try as he could, Lawson could not master him.

A sudden spasm of fierce impatience seized on Lawson; he felt he must end this struggle quickly. Shifting his grip, he released Lee-Ramsden's wrist, clutched at the statuette, snatched it out of the old man's hand, and brought it crashing down on his head.

That ended the struggle all right. The old man's body suddenly went limp; he staggered back a pace, and then fell crashing to the floor. Lawson, breathing heavily, was left standing in the middle of the room.

Lee-Ramsden lay quite still. The flush had faded from his face, and his complexion had taken on a curious grey tinge. From the left side of his head ran a small trickle of blood.

"Oh, damn!" said Lawson. He threw the statuette down, stepped quickly across the room, poured out a glass of brandy, and bent over the old man. But one moment's inspection showed him that brandy could do no good at all. Lee-Ramsden was dead.

Lawson rose slowly to his feet. All his impatience and anger had left him; his mind was cool and alert to deal with this new situation which had arisen.

The chances were that his house was being watched by some of Mahony's friends; Lee-Ramsden would have been seen arriving; and it would be impossible to explain Lee-Ramsden's death.

Lawson frowned, and meditatively slipped from the glass of brandy which he was holding in his hand. Lee-Ramsden's car was outside the house; his hat and overcoat were in the hall. He slipped his brandy again and nodded slightly. He knew what he was going to do.

He finished the brandy and rang the bell for the butler. The man entered and stood waiting; he betrayed no astonishment whatever at the sight of that still body lying on the floor.

"I've got a job for you," said Lawson curtly. "Mr. Lee-Ramsden's hat and coat are in the hall. Put them on, and then make your way quickly

out to his car and drive away. If anybody's watching, I want them to think it's Lee-Ramsden driving away.

"Go on driving about until you're quite certain you're not being followed, and then abandon the car in a quiet place, and bring the hat and overcoat back here in a parcel."

"Very good, sir," replied the man, and left the room.

That was that, thought Lawson; if Lee-Ramsden had been seen entering his house, he would also be seen driving away from it. So far as the body was concerned, that could remain in the house for the time being till a convenient opportunity occurred to dispose of it.

In a corner of the room stood a big cupboard containing unimportant books and papers. Lawson cleared them out, piled them in another corner of the room, thrust the body into the cupboard and locked the cupboard door.

FATTY BASSETT was very worried. Things were happening which he did not understand in the slightest. He sat frowning, staring at the fire-place, and occasionally drinking beer from a large tankard. Barney Flynn, who was with him, noticed his preoccupied air.

"What's the trouble with you, this evening, Fatty?" he inquired.

Fatty shook his head. Ordinarily he was not a communicative person, but on this occasion he felt the need to confide in someone.

"It's the guv'nor," he answered. "I'm thinkin' he's gone off 'is rocker. But you know wot 'e's like; it's no use arguin' with 'im."

"And what's he after doin' now?" asked the Irishman.

"'E's made an appointment to meet Miss Little in a lonely 'ouse in Clapham in an hour's time. 'E told me 'isself 'e reckoned there was a trap in it—that that Bloke Lawson was layin' for 'im with some dirty scheme. An' 'e's gorn off on 'is own, and when I asks wot I was to do abart guardin' 'im, or settin' an ambush to catch Mr. Ruddy Lawson, 'e says, 'do nothin'."

"What's that yere sayin'? You mean he's gone off to that house where he expects to find a trap, an' there's nobody from our side gone with him at all?"

"That's what I mean," answered Fatty grimly. "I tried to talk it out of 'im, but 'e wouldn't listen. Don't worry about me, Fatty, 'e says, 'I know wot I'm up to, an' orf 'e went."

"And you let him go like that, all by himself?" said a voice just behind them.

Ruth Fraser had just entered the room and was standing, pale and indignant, looking at the two men.

"You let Terence go off by himself, knowing he was going into a trap?" she repeated.

Fatty had an uncomfortable air. Heidgeted uneasily in his seat.

"There was no stoppin' 'im," he protested. "'E told me particularly 'e didn't want any of 'is blokes mixed up in this, an' 'e didn't want to be followed. I tried to argue with 'im, but it was no good."

"Tell me exactly what happened—the whole story," said Ruth imperiously.

Fatty hesitated. He looked more uncomfortable than ever. It seemed that he did not know what to say.

"Well, Miss... it's a bit awkward like, because 'e particularly told me I wasn't to say nothing abart it to you," he blurted out.

"Oh, did he," said Ruth. "Then you can just forget that. You've already told me something about it, and you're going to tell me the rest. He's gone to meet Elsa Little, I think I heard you say."

Her expression was set and determined; it was evident that she meant to learn all Fatty knew. Had she been a man, Fatty would have had no hesitation in telling her to go straight to hell.

But he was unaccustomed to dealing with young society women; he did not know how to begin to argue with her. Also, in a way, he sympathized with her. He did not approve of Mahony chancing his life in order to see a beautiful young film star who was probably setting a trap for him.

Not that he disliked Elsa; he had admired her immensely in "The Silent Stranger." But he disapproved of Mahony getting mixed up with film actresses when he could have a real woman for the asking.

"Orf right," he said in a resigned tone. "But there'll be 'ell to pay when 'e finds out I've told yer. This was 'ow it was."

(Copyright 1936, Hugh Clevely)

Tomorrow, Ruth decides to plan for herself.

LOVING TRIBUTES TO FAMED SINGER

SAN DIEGO, Cal., Nov. 23.—(UP)—The ashes of Mme. Ernestine Schumann-Heink, beloved singer and "Mother of the A. E. F.," rested today beside those of her son, Hans, in a niche at Greenwood cemetery on the outskirts of San Diego.

As a lone bugler sounds taps Saturday, the flag draped casket of the famous opera and concert star was carried slowly into the crematory at Greenwood. As she had asked, her ashes were placed beside those of her fourth child, Hans, who died in San Diego in 1916.

Rites for Mme. Schumann-Heink Saturday were simple in keeping with a wish she had expressed before her death in Hollywood Tuesday night. She was 75.

Services were in charge of the Harry S. Nelson chapter, Disabled American Veterans. A harpist and cellist played pieces of the famous diva's favorite selections: Brahms' "Lullaby," Gounod's "Ave Maria," and "Silent Night."

Thirteen persons were killed and 53 injured in 41 grade crossing accidents in Oklahoma in the first half of this year.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



Opera Inspiration
A man of mystery throughout his life, a mass of legends and fables surround all historical material on Dr. John Faust, self-styled Magister Georgius Sabellius Faustus Junior. That such a man existed, however has been definitely proven.

Believed by his 16th century German contemporaries to have been in close league with the Devil, he was reputed a potent magician, credited with great supernatural powers. His death, or, as many would have it, his "carrying off by the Devil," occurred some time around 1525. It is believed by some authorities that

Faust died by assassination at the hands of an aroused village populace who feared his "evil eye."

Stories regarding Faust's life grew even more imaginative after his death. Within the space of a century, stories regarding him had become national legends.

First to seize upon the dramatic possibilities of the Faust legends was Christopher Marlowe, who based his famous "Faustus" on it, produced in 1594. Other writers were quick to follow. "The Tragical History of D. Faustus as it hath been acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Nottingham his servants," by Thomas

Bushall, was first published in 1604. Goethe's famous poetic tragedy, "Faust," gives probably the best known interpretation of the Faust legends.

With the popularity of operas, composers turned to the character of Faust for inspiration. No less than 11 have been composed on this subject. Charles Francois Gounod's being the most famous. Others include "Damnation de Faust," by Berlioz; "Faust," by a French composer, Beaucour, and one written by a woman composer, Angelique Bertin.

THE MITTEN GAME

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



S MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Plot Thickens!

By HAL FORREST



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Suspicion

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—The Lost Is Found

By SOL HESS



PRESS LAST HOPE OF CIVILIZATION

SEN. NORRIS HELD BOON TO FARMER

LEXINGTON, Va., Nov. 23.—(AP)—Dr. Percival R. Cole, vice-chancellor of the University of Sydney, Australia, told the Southern Interscholastic Press association here Saturday that the "preservation of all the best elements of civilization" depended upon the power of the democratic press.

"At the present time," the Australian educator said, "in a number of European countries the sword is definitely stronger than the pen. There the press is not permitted to speak for peace, nor even to publish facts that are considered to be adverse to militarist policies."

Among the 300 species of cactus plants owned by Mrs. L. H. Davis of Lindsborg, Kans., is one from Judea, Palestine, reputedly of the variety from which Christ's crown of thorns was made.

McCook, Neb., Nov. 23.—(UP)—Senator George W. Norris, Neb., has been selected by the American Farm Bureau Federation as the greatest contributor to the cause of American agriculture. It was learned today.

Norris was notified of his selection in a telegram from Edward O'Neal, Chicago, federation president. Norris said he would be unable to attend a meeting of the federation in Pasadena, Cal., to receive the award.

Grant Pioneer Passes
BAKER, Ore., Nov. 23.—(AP)—Mrs. Emma Baseltine, resident of Baker county for 70 years, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lynn McCullough, in Corvallis this morning, according to information received here. She was taken to Corvallis in September by another daughter, Mrs. N. D. Clifford of Baker.