

True Stories
Achievement
Stories

Portland Advocate

Clean Fiction
Human Interest
Features

W. B. ZIE Co., 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago,
Foreign Advertising Representatives

ILLUSTRATED FEATURE SECTION—December 21, 1929

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Feature Editor

The Mystery of the Lost Beauty A TRUE UNSOLVED NEGRO MURDER CASE

By J. P. MOORE

NOT CONCLUSIVELY proven to be a murder, nevertheless there is justification for incorporating in this series of mysteries the extraordinary disappearance of Margaret Fagan. No case in the series so richly challenges the imagination, so completely baffles logic and reason and leaves the reader with a feeling of irritating be-

wilderment.

Margaret Fagan could not have so suddenly, so completely disappeared. Yet she did! And the case has withstood solving for fifteen years.

Chronologically, this is the story:

Margaret Gladys Fagan was born in Norfolk, Virginia, on February 2, 1890. She attended the city schools, grew to be a fine looking

young woman and was considered to be quite a "catch" when she was sixteen.

Margaret was five feet tall and weighed around 120 pounds. Her hair was black and abundant, her eyes black and steady, her color was light brown, her figure fairish in its ample proportions, and her health excellent.

In 1908 when Margaret was eighteen years old, her father, Richard T. Fagan, died, leaving Mrs. Fagan with one hundred dollars from an insurance policy and the full responsibility for their one child's future, who had already shown signs of being a little wild about her choice of companions.

In the latter part of the same year, Mrs. Fagan opened what was known then as a "cook shop"—a fifth-rate eating place. Peculiar as it may seem, she chose a side street in the most undesirable section of the city. In her new location she was surrounded by vice of all kinds.

However, the woman was after making a living. She was herself an upright, clean living person, so she went about introducing her liver-and-onions, hoghead and homemade pies with a clear conscience. She did a good business.

Margaret, who had left school two years previously, came into the little shop to assist her mother, business picked up some more and Mrs. Fagan began to consider herself a very fortunate woman indeed.

In this new environment, Margaret came to know a number of characters of the underworld. Among them were a man and woman who were known to the police only as Jack and Tessie, respectively. The fellow Jack seems to have taken a particular liking to Margaret, for he began dropping into the little shop without the woman Tessie.

In spite of the fact that her mother advised against it, Margaret returned this man's attention and was several times seen walking with him on Queen street. In the meantime, it was stated about that the woman Tessie was "mad."

On March 4, 1909, Tessie approached Margaret on Church street, and

beat her severely, running only when someone shouted the approach of the police.

This incident seems to have taught Margaret a lesson for thereafter she kept strictly within her own sphere of friends, helping her mother in the shop with apparently no further concern in its patrons.

Shortly after this unfortunate incident, Margaret married a man by the name of Harry Thomas, who had been one of her classmates at school. To this union there was born a child, which died in its infancy.

In 1910, she divorced Thomas, alleging non-support and infidelity, and went back to helping her mother in the shop. She remained with her mother from then until Mrs. Fagan's death in 1911.

Without a doubt this loss weighed heavily on Margaret. She tried to run the shop alone for a few months, tired of it, and decided to embark on another matrimonial enterprise

with Olden Smith, who was a long-shoreman and had long been a suit-or for her hand.

Her second marriage lasted exactly six months. At the end of that time, Smith packed his things and left Margaret one night after they had retired. It was later said of him that his wife had repeatedly shown signs of being demented. He is said to have told friends that she would often get up in the middle of the night and pray fervently for the heavenly safety of her dead baby and her dead mother. It was also said of her that she lapsed into crying spells, and that at such times she ignored the ordinary duties of a housewife, such as cooking, cleaning and laundering, for days at the time.

This information may or may not be accurate. Certain there is nothing in Margaret's subsequent life to point out that she was losing her mind. She rented a room in a re-

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The house where Miss Fagan lived.



Mrs. Brant, Miss Fagan's last known friend. Mrs. Brant was then Mattie Hendrickson.

The Stormy Career of Jack Johnson - - No. 8

Text by ROLFE DELLON
Drawn by FRED B. WATSON



Jack's next quest located him in Denver, Colo. Here he became a member of a boxing show consisting of several masters of the fist science. This organization was managed and controlled by Tom Sharkey, one of the ring's greatest fighters.



The boxing show then travelled about Colorado entertaining various communities. A battle was arranged between Jack and one, Mexican Pete, who had gained fame through knocking out Tom Sharkey. Jack won this in 20 rounds.



The boxing show, however, soon failed financially, consequently a great share of the hardship fell upon Jack. Jack was delegated as cook to prepare food for the entire aggregation. Moreover, he had the burden of engineering the finances.



Moreover, the first of Jack's marital difficulties arose while in this enterprise. His first wife, to whom he was exceedingly devoted, left him. This misfortune affected Jack considerably and his unhappiness became manifest in his work.