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## The Clinic Murder Mystery Who Killed Dr. Brown?

Earl Brown, a Surgeon who Has Discovered How to Bleach Black Skin White, Has Been Murdered in His Private Experimental Laboratory. Police Continue their Search for the Killer.

By EDWARD LAWSON

### WHAT HAS HAPPENED—

Dr. Earl Brown, noted colored plastic surgeon, is found dead in a little clinic in the east of his private hospital in Washington, D.C., where he has been conducting experiments alone for several months, about 25 miles from the rest of the world. His two assistants, Mrs. Louis and Hardy, have been on detached vacation trips, and the housekeeper, a young woman named Dorothy Brandon, is the only other authorized person in the house where the murder is committed. The two assistants are expected to return in a few days.

According to Miss Brandon's story, she was upstairs in the house about six o'clock on the morning after having prepared an early breakfast for the doctor, when she heard two voices from the kitchen and rushed downstairs in time to see a young Negro man out of the front door.

She cannot distinguish the features of the man, but believes that he is white. Immediately she runs to the doctor's laboratory, where she finds Brown crawling through the door, two wounds in his chest and blood flowing from his mouth. His strength is completely exhausted, and, thinking he tries to give the woman some medicine. But the words are indistinguishable, and the only one which she is able to understand is a name. That name is "Hardy."

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY—

### CHAPTER III

#### Doctor Hardy

"Hardy!" Inspector Frazier exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," the woman said. "I'm sure that was the word. It was the only thing that I could understand."

The inspector grunted. "Didn't you say," he snapped, "that the doctor had an assistant named Hardy?"

"Yes," the woman replied. "But Hardy was one of the doctor's best friends. They were all pals together, Dr. Brown and Dr. Louis and Dr. Hardy."

"That's all right," the inspector cut in. "Now suppose you tell us the rest of the story. What happened afterwards?"

"Dr. Brown fell to the floor, exhausted. But it was no use. I could see that he was already dead. I must have lost my head after that—all I remember is that I ran to the front door and screamed for help. Then the policeman came in, and he called you right away. That's really all I know, sir."

"I see," Frazier was eyeing the woman narrowly. She was trembling a bit under his gaze, and a curious silence fell upon the living room. The scene which the woman had pictured oppressed us all. But Frazier's matter-of-fact voice broke the spell.

"Miss Brandon," he said sharply, watching her intently. "I want you to tell me how that smudge of green paint happens to be on your dress?"

The woman started, then looked down at the hem of her dress. I followed her gaze. Sure enough, there was a green smudge clearly visible there, a tiny square of what seemed to be fresh green paint.

"Oh," the woman said, "I must have gotten that on my dress when I ran to the front door. You remember I told you I have been having the house fixed up a little while everyone was away. Well, yesterday I had the front door and the gate painted, and in my hurry this morning I forgot to watch out for it."

"I see," said the inspector. He puffed meditatively on his cigar for a moment.

"Miss Brandon," he went on after a moment's thought, "do you happen to know of anyone who hated Dr.

Brown—for any reason at all. Did he have any enemies or rivals?"

The woman shook her head. "No, sir," she said. "I don't know of a single person who actually hated him. He was always very friendly with those around him, but he never mingled very much with people in general. I'm sure he didn't have any enemies."

"Have you ever heard him quarreling with anyone?"

The woman hesitated, and Frazier seized cat-like upon her hesitation. "Come on—tell us what you heard," he commanded.

"It wasn't really anything," the woman said reluctantly. "It happened just about two months ago, just before Dr. Louis and Dr. Hardy left on their vacations. I went to the clinic door to leave the doctor's dinner, and Dr. Brown and Dr. Hardy seemed to be arguing about something. They both seemed to be very angry."

"Were any threats being made?" the inspector asked.

"Well, sir, to tell the truth," the woman said "they both seemed to be threatening each other. Of course, I didn't listen to their conversation, and the door was closed so that I couldn't have heard very much had I wanted to, but I did hear a few words in Dr. Hardy's voice. I don't remember them very well, but it seems to me that he said in a loud voice—I'm not threatening you, Brown, but you know that this is wrong. If you don't cut it out, I'll take the whole thing to—and that, sir, was all I remember actually hearing."

"Do you remember what day it was that you heard that?" the inspector inquired.

The woman pondered. "I'm pretty sure it was on Monday, the fourth of January," she said finally. "It was right after New Year's, and it was the day that Dr. Louis left for his vacation. I went to Petersburg, Va., that day to visit a brother who was ill, and when I returned, Dr. Hardy was gone also."

"Then, as soon as you came back, Dr. Brown went into his clinic and began his mysterious work, is that it?"

"Yes, sir, as soon as I had returned. He gave me very special instructions that day, and seemed to fear that he would be interrupted. I promised to intercept all calls and to tend to his business until his associates returned. Then he went back into his laboratory, and not until tonight did I see him again."

The inspector nodded thoughtfully.

"Well," he said, "that'll be all for the time being, Miss Brandon. Just one more thing—do you happen to know who was Dr. Brown's attorney?"

"Yes, sir, Norman Harris, in the Lewis Building."

"All right, then, and that will do. You'd better stay nearby, though, Miss Brandon. We may need you again. You understand that you're a material witness in this case, and that you mustn't leave the house without permission?"

"Yes, sir," the young woman, tired and pallid, retired to the end of the living room and sank into a sofa. Frazier chewed his cigar for a



I could see that he was already dead.

moment, deep in thought. Finally he beckoned to one of his men.

"Jimmie," he said, "I want you to dig up Mr. Norman Harris, the attorney, and find out what papers or will Dr. Brown left behind. If he did leave any papers, tell Harris to bring them here right away. If he doesn't want to go to the trouble, tell him what's happened or get him over here some way. Meanwhile, tell him that if there is a will or other important papers that might have some bearing on this case, he's to call me up and give me the meat of them over the phone, then to rush them here. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," the detective said, and hastened to the telephone in the hall to begin his task.

### CHAPTER IV

#### The Murdered Doctor

The inspector delved into his inside pocket and brought forth a small black notebook. He scratched his head as he fingered its pages. "January fourth, eh?" he muttered. "So Hardy and Brown had a little spat on January fourth."

"Did you know something about that already?" I asked.

"Well," the inspector replied. "A little."

"But how?"

"Dr. Hardy came in to see me on the fourth."

"To see you?" I repeated, and the inspector nodded.

"You see," he said, "I'd come across him once before in connection with some police work, and he said he wanted advice from an authority on something that wasn't criminal in one sense, but that was in another. He wouldn't let me know a single detail of the case, but simply said that it would probably be a dirty mess if it was aired, and wanted to know whether he'd be open to a blackmail charge if he used the threat of police action to stop it. I told him he could use that course, and if it didn't work, he could call

on me. He wrote down his telephone number in my book here—you see—and the next day, I called him to see how things had turned out. He said then that everything was all right and that a little threatening had done the job. You see, he must have gone directly from my office that morning and quarreled with Dr. Brown."

"Then," I cried suddenly seeing the light, "Hardy and Dr. Brown were at odds over some matter; they quarreled, made up, then quarreled again—and Brown called Hardy's name when he was dying—?"

"Whoa!" grinned Frazier. "Keep those theories to yourself a little while yet. Let's go back and look over the set-up now, before things are all messed up."

We passed into the hall again and crossed into the part of the house which was fitted up as a private hospital. I looked around and saw that it contained the usual waiting rooms, consultations rooms, an X-ray chamber, a laboratory and an operating-room. All were rather small in size, but the fittings were of the finest materials and makes. We found Jones and Hale, our two companions from headquarters, scrutinizing every square inch of the place, while a blue-clad patrolman looked on curiously. The two detectives grunted a negative to Frazier's inquiry concerning the finding of negatives or fingerprints.

We went through these rooms quickly and came to a tall, heavy door leading into the added portion of the building. It was open, and just outside of it lay the figure of an athletic man, his dark eyes open, staring, his mouth and his breast smeared with blood. He was a handsome, clean-shaven man of about middle-age, and, but for the stained white laboratory coat which he wore, might more easily have been a clerk or a young professor than the doctor and scientist which he was.

Frazier knelt to examine him carefully, and after a long minute he arose. "Looks like Brown, all right," he said. "I've only seen him a few times, but I remember those features."

"Yep," I put in, "that looks like him, all right."

"You knew him?" he asked.

"I interviewed him once or twice on medical subjects. He was quite a big shot in medical circles, you know."

"I'll say he was," the inspector answered drily. "But now let's see what's beyond here."

We stepped over the dead body without disturbing it, and found ourselves in a tiny apartment which seemed to consist of a small operating room, a laboratory, one or two sick-rooms, and a bedroom with rumpled clothing lying about. Except for the bedroom, everything was scrupulously neat and clean.

"Now look around," Frazier told me, "and see if you can tell me what's wrong with this place."

I looked, but then I shook my head. "I don't see a thing unusual—" I began, but suddenly I stopped. "Why?" I exclaimed. "Windows! There isn't a single window in these back rooms. All the light is furnished by electricity!"

"Nor," Frazier went on, "is there another door except the one we just came through. Now what do you suppose a man could do for weeks at a time back here in these windowless rooms?"

"Gee," I said, "I'm sure I couldn't guess. Maybe he was experimenting with something that would be harmed with light."

Frazier shook his head doubtfully. "No," he said, "there's plenty of light here. It's almost as bright as day, in fact, with those powerful ceiling lamps."

I shook my head. "It's got me stumped," I said.

"Let's go back out there," Frazier suggested, and we passed back into the rooms where the two detectives were still engaged in their minute survey.

"You fellows be careful not to change the position of anything yet," the inspector ordered, "but be sure that you don't overlook anything. If you run across any clue of importance, I'll be up in the front of the house. Let me know, right away."

We walked through the hallway again and back into the living room. "Why not send out a radio alarm for Dr. Hardy," I suggested. "It seems almost evident that he's the man you want."

"Don't be too fast, Eddie," Frazier grinned. "He and Dr. Louis are duo here at any minute this morning, according to the housekeeper. I have an idea that we'll see them soon. No use rousing the whole countryside about this thing yet a while."

I went into the forward part of the hall to call what I knew of the story in to my paper, and found a policeman just leaving it.

"I got the dope from Harris by telephone," he reported to the inspector. "He lives near his office, and as soon as I told him what had happened, he rushed right down there and looked over the papers Dr. Brown had left with him. He just phoned and said that he'll bring them right over as soon as he gets them straightened out. He gave me the

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