

HOUSE OF SHADOWS

by Ida R. Gleason © 1936 NEA Service, Inc.

BEGIN HERE TODAY
CLAIRE FOSDICK acts out alone on a summer evening to drive to the mountain house to her uncle and aunt, LYMAN FOSDICK.
Claire's parents are dead and she has learned that most of the fortune she thought was secure is gone. She owes money to her father's friend, NICK BAI, who wants to marry her, but Claire cannot quite bring herself to say "yes."
The trip to the mountains is for two purposes: (1) to think out her problems, and (2) to search for a mysterious jewel belonging to her uncle and supposed to be hidden in the house.
Off the main highway Claire's car crashes into a log across the road.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER II

WHEN Claire regained her senses she was lying on the ground with a coat for a pillow. A young man was bending over her, an anxious frown on his face. For a minute she stared confusedly, then a smile of recognition touched her lips.

"Pat Magan?"
He grinned. "Sure, the very same. And what do you think you're trying to do to yourself, anyway?"

"How is she, Pat?" asked another young man coming out of the darkness.

"Guess she was just knocked out for a minute," Pat told him. Then, with a wave of his hand at the newcomers, "Claire, this is my side-kick, Bob Steele, a mining engineer, with a good job—believe it or not. He's spending his vacation in the Rockies."

Claire smiled and held out her hand rather shyly. "How about your car, Mr. Steele?"

He shook his head. "Pretty badly damaged. Front axle busted and a lot of minor casualties. Someone had closed the road with that log."

Claire turned startled eyes on Pat. "Closed the road? You mean the log was put there?"

"Sure. Probably repairing or something. But Bob and I are on the loose, and we'll be tickled to death to trundle you any place you want to go. Feel able to make it over to our car?" He helped her to her feet. After a minute she was able to walk unaided, and got into their car to wait until they could move the wreck out of the road.

When finally they came back she had decided to tell them why she was going to the house in the mountains.

CLAIRE pointed out the road and then told them about her quest, even to the part about the mysterious hidden jewel.

For a minute neither of the young men answered. Then Bob Steele said slowly, "We had planned to spend most of our vacation in the city, Miss Fosdick, but if Pat's willing I'd like to help you look over the house in the mountains. Maybe some of my technical knowledge would come in handy."

"Count me in, too, Claire," Pat agreed.

The rest of the trip was spent in making plans. Claire told them about her eccentric Uncle Lyman, his fondness for jewels, and how he had given the fantastic name to his house in the mountains.

"And you mean to tell me that no dame ever waited him up the church aisle and snatched his name and fortune?" asked Pat incredulously. "A bachelor with money enough to drift around the world buying jewels!"

"Susie Spratt was his housekeeper for years and she never spoke of any woman. No. He never married," Claire answered.

When they came to the end of the trip both young men agreed that Lyman Fosdick had indeed named his house well.

In the uncertain light of a half moon the building loomed gloomily against the dark background of the mountain. Of imposing height, it was a perfect example of the flamboyant mansions of an earlier period—narrow railed porches, and many bulging bay windows. At the right side of the second story rose a round cupola which seemed to melt into the shadow of a huge pine tree with twin tops that grew close to that side of the house. In fact the gloomy aspect of the place was largely due to this mighty giant of the forest.

"It's really two trees grown together, and a marvelous specimen, as you will see by daylight," Claire said, pointing toward the tree.

"But it must cut off lots of light from the house," remarked Bob Steele.

CLAIRE nodded. "Yes, it's the house of long shadows, you know. Drive up to the porch and let me out. I'll get the Spratts while you take the car around to the barn."

She twisted the iron knob of the doorbell. The faint sound of the bell ringing could be heard in the stillness, then footsteps. Presently the door opened a crack and a sharp-nosed man peered out.

"Oh you, Claire?" His voice had an odd croaking sound. "You didn't come up by yourself?"

"No, Eb. But I was alone when I started," answered Claire. "My car's down at the bottom of the hill, smashed up. Someone put a big log across the road where it cuts off from the main highway and I hit it. Two men coming along heard me and brought me on up here. I happened to know one of them."

"A log across the road?" Eb's voice sounded genuinely surprised. "I was down that way myself just afore supper and there wa'n't no log."

"Well, there certainly was one when I got there," Claire replied with conviction.

Before Eb could express any further opinion, his sister, Susie, came hurrying down the stairway, her plump figure wrapped in a dressing gown. Innumerable curl-papers wagged about her round face that still retained traces of a one-time babyish beauty.

"Claire!" She threw her arms about the girl and kissed her. "Have you had your supper? Eb, stir up the kitchen fire quick. Claire'll want something hot after her drive."

Footsteps sounded outside and Eb went to open the door. He admitted the strangers with a sour look. After Claire had presented the newcomers and explained again about the accident, she dispatched the Spratts kitchenward to prepare supper. Then she looked rather curiously at the young men. Bob Steele was handsomer than she had thought, while Pat Magan was—well, still just Pat.

"I'm sure glad to see you again, Claire," he was saying. "Golly, you're looking wonderful."

"You haven't forgotten you've kissed the Blarney Stone have you, Pat?" laughed Claire.

"Pat always gets a little groggy when he's excited about something, Miss Fosdick," Bob Steele explained.

The girl turned away with a laugh. "I'm Claire to you, too, Bob. And now while we're waiting, let's go into the library. That was the room Uncle Lyman loved best. Everything has been kept just as it was when he was alive."

SHE led the way down the hall, and opened a door. "Ha, there might be a clew or two right here!" exclaimed Pat. Then he added, "Say, I don't think your car cares much for us, Claire."

Claire smiled. "Oh, Eb's all right. He's that way with Susie and Dan, too."

"Who's Dan?" asked Pat.

"Dan Dallas, the extra man Eb hired to work here. What are you staring at, Pat?"

"I was wondering why that stone block with the broken arrow carved on it wasn't the same color as the rest of this gingerbread stuff on this fireplace. It's lighter."

"It's been there as long as I can remember," Claire told them.

Susie, fully dressed now, but still wearing her crown of curl-papers, bustled in carrying a big tray. "Ham and eggs, rolls and coffee, Claire," she announced as she drew a small table up before the fireplace. "Want Eb should lay a fire in here? My, you'll freeze with that window open that way. Land sakes, Dan!" Her voice sounded surprised. "What ever do you want?"

In the doorway stood a man about 40 years old, carrying a black mongrel dog. The man's forehead bore a wide scar that twisted one eyebrow into a perpetual droop, but the eyes that looked out from under it were unusually keen and piercing.

"Trigger's dead, Susie," the man said, looking at her steadily. "I just found him out in those aspens back to the doghouse."

"Dead?" cried Claire. "Why, he barked when we came in."

"He's been shot. See?" The man patted the shaggy hair above the dog's eyes and pointed to a bullet hole.

"But—who would do such a thing?" Claire exclaimed. "And why didn't we hear the shot?"

(To Be Continued)

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OUT OUR WAY



BY J. R. WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE



MYRA NORTH, SPECIAL NURSE



BY THOMPSON AND COLL



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



BY HAROLD GRAY



Work Started on Telephone Lines

MALIN, Ore.—Work was started this week by Columbia Utilities company on two miles of new telephone line, which will serve patrons north of Merrill. The line is to be extended to the Crater Lake International turkey farm, and is the first to be built in that locality.

DORRIS ITEMS

DORRIS, Calif.—A community picnic was held on Sunday, July 5, at Orr's lake, following a union service of all the churches represented in the valley. This service was held at the Community hall, Macdonald. Rev. Marion Horn of Dorris was the speaker.

After the service approximately 50 people attended the picnic enjoying swimming and boating. The basket lunch was served at 2 o'clock and a good time was had by all.

Early Sunday morning, fire broke out at the home of Owen Edwards, just outside the city limits. The house was completely destroyed, but everything of Edwards' was saved. A daughter, Mrs. Ausburn, lost everything she had.

Flapper Fannie Says

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FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS



BY CRANE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



BY MARTIN

