

HOUSE OF SHADOWS

by Ida R. Gleason

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BEGIN HERE TODAY
CLAIRE FOSDICK sets out to drive to the lonely mountain home left her by her eccentric uncle LYMAN FOSDICK. Claire is trying to decide whether to marry NICK BAUM, to whom she owes money, she also hopes to find a valuable and mysterious jewel owned by her uncle and believed to be hidden in the house.

Her car is wrecked by a log across the road. PAT MAGAN, an old friend, and BOB STEELE, young engineer, arrive on the scene and take Claire to the mountain home where Ed SPRATT and his sister, SUSIE, are the caretakers and DAN DALLAS is the hired man. A strange series of events begins. The watchdog is shot. Claire sees a curious arrow carved on the wall of a bedroom and follows it to the cupola. There the lamp in her hand is shattered by a noiseless bullet. Ed Spratt disappears. Bob starts for the village and is found seriously injured.

HANNAH, Claire's housekeeper, arrives. Pat, trying to solve the mystery, wanders into a deserted mine shaft where he is attacked by an unseen opponent and falls.

Claire goes again to investigate the root cellar. She hears a noise and, with a crowbar, digs into the wall. The opening leads to a passageway in which a man is lying. Suddenly the lamp is shot from her hand.

Pat arrives and they discover that the man in the passageway is Pat.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY
CHAPTER XI

AS though Claire's cry had brought him back from a very long distance, Pat's eyes fluttered open.

Susie ran to get water which he drank eagerly. In a short time he was able to get up the steps with Dan Dallas' strong arm to help.

As they came out into the open air, a sharp peal of thunder roared about them, and splashes of rain fell.

Once more in the shelter of the house, Pat rapidly recovered.

"You can't down an Irishman without a fight," he told Claire when he finished reciting all that had happened to him.

Dan Dallas had been listening closely. Now he leaned forward.

"Then this guy who pushed you down the shaft evidently followed to make sure you were dead. He must be the one who shot at Miss Fostick's lamp."

Pat jerked around in astonishment. "You were there, Claire?"

"I heard you tapping, Pat—the same sound that roused me up in Uncle Lyman's room that night. Later I heard it again in the library."

"But I was still in circulation that night you went up to the cupola," Pat reminded her.

"And so was Ed," added Dallas.

"But since that side of the house seems to be the one where the noise is always heard, there must be some connection between it and the cellar."

Susie glanced at Dan with a new expression in her eyes. Then she said, "I told Ed I kept hearing queer things at night, but he only laughed at me. Said I had notions."

"You sure that's what he said, Susie?" cried Dan Dallas. He suddenly rose from his chair and stalked over to her.

"Why Dan—" she began with a coquettish giggle. "Why, Dan, how rough you are all of a sudden!"

FOR answer Dallas stretched out his hand, showing her the official badge he held. "Yes, Susie, maybe I am rough. That's my business. When your brother found that someone had been chipping at the stone foundation of the house—you know you found it when your clothes blew off the line—he got the law to step in. Figured things had got out of his control. Now you'd better come across with what you know, or—"

A blinding flash of lightning crackled through the room, followed almost simultaneously by a deafening crash of thunder. Then, from outside, came another terrific, tearing noise. Everyone rushed to the window, just as the great twin-topped pine tree swayed violently once or twice, then toppled to the ground with a roar like a titanic shriek of despair.

For a stunned second no one moved or spoke.

Then a voice broke in from the doorway. "There! I saw him coming in the library window!" Bob Steele swayed weakly and clutched the door for support.

"Bob!" Pat ran to his side and eased him into a chair.

Dan Dallas did not wait, but snatched his gun from his pocket and ran along the hall and threw open the library door. The rest followed. The room was empty, but the window was wide open, letting in a blast of wind-driven rain which had created havoc in the usually immaculate room.

SUSIE gave one look at the place, then collapsed into the nearest chair. "Oh, what would Lyman say if he could see it now!" she sobbed. "His own room that he loved. And I promised always to keep it as it was."

Dan had succeeded in getting the window closed. Now he and Pat rushed into the hall to search for the intruder. Claire walked over to Susie and laid a firm hand on her shoulder.

"Susie, tell me, why did Uncle Lyman want this room kept so? He must have known that something it would be changed."

"He said if it was and I disobeyed him, he'd find a way to punish me. That's why he always left me home."

"But why shouldn't he leave you home, Susie?" Claire's grip on the woman's shoulder tightened.

For a minute Susie did not answer. Then she suddenly broke down. "I was his wife—his common law wife, I guess you'd call it. We—we weren't never married." She wiped her tears and looked up defiantly at Claire.

THE clanging of the doorbell interrupted.

Claire ran to the door, just as Nick Baum came hurrying toward her.

"Claire, dear, are you all right? What's happened? I was delayed in the village, so I decided to come back here for the night. The tree!"

He held both her hands tenderly as she explained, apparently oblivious to anyone else in the room on account of his anxiety for her. Dallas and Pat had returned from their search, and Pat halted in the doorway at the ardent scene before him. The girl turned, with a slight tinge of embarrassment in her manner, and made the necessary introductions.

"I didn't know you had company, Claire, or I wouldn't have intruded," Nick said coldly.

"Of course, Nick. I'd have felt badly if you hadn't," she answered. "Susie can get you something to eat."

As though glad to escape, the housekeeper started for the door. Dan Dallas went after wood, but when Hannah would have followed, Claire motioned her to a chair near the window.

"All of our friends seem to come here on account of accident, Nick. Mr. Magan and Mr. Steele were going along the road in their car the night I came and heard me almost wreck myself against a log that was across the road. They turned back and brought me here."

"And of course stayed on. How could any man tear himself away, Claire?" smiled Nick Baum easily.

"Righto," remarked Pat. His eyes swept the other man's face.

"Haven't I met you before, Mr. Baum?" He asked the question abruptly.

"Afraid not. Sorry," Nick Baum took out a cigarette and offered the package to Pat.

Just then a piercing scream came from the hallway, followed by the crash of a trayful of dishes. Everyone rushed to the door.

There stood Susie in the middle of the broken dishes, staring with blanched face at the emaciated figure of Ed, coming in from the porch outside. He towered to an uncanny height above her. His hair was matted with mud, as were his clothes, and across his forehead ran a wound which had been dressed with a white bandage, now as soiled and disreputable as the rest of him.

"You—you better be scared, Susie!" He pointed a thin, shaking finger at the cowering woman.

"The vengeance of Heaven is about to catch up with you and your wicked ways!"

(To Be Continued)

The quantity of water underneath the earth's surface is said to be more than one-third of the total volume of the oceanic waters. This underground water is composed of rivers and springs with no visible sources.

It is possible for sheep to go without water longer than camels. "Hara-kiri," the Japanese method of official suicide, is translated into "happy dispatch."

A dealer who sold unsavory meat was pilloried, and the rancid flesh burned in his face during Elizabethan times.

On Canadian farms are a total of 3,950,500 swine.

She's as Smart as Beautiful

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OUT OUR WAY

BY J. R. WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



MYRA NORTH, SPECIAL NURSE

BY THOMPSON AND COLL



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

BY HAROLD GRAY



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

BY BLOSSER



WASH TUBBS

BY CRANE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

BY MARTIN



Flapper Fannie Says



Stuck up girls are apt to lead a thorny existence.