

• SERIAL STORY

'I AM A MURDERER'

BY MORRIS MARKEY

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THIS STORY: This is the story of the "perfect crime"—the murder of Col. Wesley Hope Merriwether in the library of his long island estate—and of the events leading up to it. We have met the wealthy, mysterious Colonel at a party following a polo game; also his attractive daughter Cynthia; and his impoverished, halfhearted suitor Henry Preston, a polo-playing friend and others of the Merriwethers' set.

MR. VAUGHAN DUNBAR CHAPTER V

ONE or two couples drifted out toward the dancing, and several of the older people came through the French windows to smile and say good evening. Mitchell Grace came in, also, and waited until the polite remarks reached a pause before he bent over the Colonel.

"Mr. Vaughan Dunbar is calling," he said. "I am not acquainted with him. He says that he brings a letter of introduction. The name is unfamiliar," said Colonel Merriwether quietly. He looked at Mitchell Grace, and touched his cigar to his lips for a moment.

"He is a gentleman of some presence," said Grace, "and he tells me that he is acquainted with William Stewart."

Cynthia heard him. "Bill Stewart?" she said with quick delight. "What about Bill Stewart?"

"The gentleman who is calling knows him." "Well, for heaven's sake show the man in. Right, Colonel? We can't have a pal of Bill's hanging around the back door, can we?"

"You may ask him to come in, Mitchell," the Colonel said. Cynthia started to follow Grace, paused, and waited at the side of her father's desk.

Vaughan Dunbar stood for a moment in the doorway. Then, hardly glancing at the others in the room, he moved with precise, measured strides to Colonel Merriwether. He bowed stiffly from the waist. "I am afraid I chose an awkward moment for my visit," he said.

"We are pleased to have you, Mr. Dunbar," Colonel Merriwether said. He rose, and extended his hand. "Tell me about Bill Stewart," Cynthia said. She smiled eagerly, and held out her own hand. "Is he well? Is he simply starving to death? I'm Cynthia Merriwether."

Dunbar smiled gravely at her. "He sent a note to you," he said, and drew an envelope from his pocket. "I hope it gives me a good character."

She tore the envelope open and immediately began to read aloud. "Cynthia, you glamorous girl. Here is Vaughan Dunbar, who has carefully corrected my manners from Addis Ababa to Zagreb. Be kind to him. He is not quite the stuffed shirt he looks like..."

"Oh!" Cynthia touched her fingers to her lips in mock embarrassment. "I shouldn't have read that aloud—or should I?"

Dunbar chuckled. "Praise from Sir Hubert," he said, "is praise indeed." Cynthia peered at him. "I think I see now what Bill meant," she said gloomily. And even the Colonel permitted the wisp of a smile to flicker on his calm face.

CYNTHIA turned her eyes back to the page. "He may look like a Mayfair moocher, but he knows more about the inside of Europe than any man I ever saw—except when I looked in the mirror just now. He'll tell you what trifling news there is of me. And he'll probably also tell you that you are grand, beautiful, desirable, a great pal, blessed with that certain thing, and also a little touched in the head. Which are my sentiments. Love, Bill."

She let out a heavy sigh—the color had blushed in her cheeks—and folded the letter. The smile even more warmly upon Vaughan Dunbar, and said, "Well, Mr. Dunbar, any friend of Bill Stewart's is entitled to the best we've got to offer."

The Colonel said, "Perhaps Mr. Dunbar would like to become acquainted with our friends here," and Cynthia began the dull ritual of introductions. When the routine was accomplished, she stood before Vaughan Dunbar, and looked at him, and gave orders.

"All right, let's go," she said. "We will find a quiet place and you will tell me the very last bit of news about Bill."

The friendship between Cynthia Merriwether and William Stewart, journalist, was in many ways unusual thing, and in all ways whatsoever an enviable one. He was a man of 50, perhaps a trifle more. He had been, in happier times, full slave to a daughter whom he adored with an awesome adoration—and that daughter had been the bosom companion of Cynthia.

The Stewarts had lived, in a manner of speaking, upon the fringes of Gull Point. Those being the days when it was the chief fad of the rich to seek the company of the intelligent. Those being the days when articulate folk, from reporters to new novelists and even drama critics, were the prize guests of yachting parties and fetes Champetres, and the gossip columnist more to be desired at the dinner table than a shuke of royal blood.

WILLIAM STEWART—no, Bill Stewart—had muffled his cynicism in behalf of his daughter's momentary amusement and her hopes for the future.

And thereby he had beckoned disaster.

For the daughter had been taken into The Hunt. And hostesses of divers sorts had provided horses for her to ride. And one fine day such a horse had faltered at a barrier, and had fallen, and the daughter of Bill Stewart was gone.

Cynthia nursed Bill Stewart for certain months thereafter: nursed his heart and the fibers of his soul, which was genuinely a courageous soul, however bitterly wounded now—and nursed as well the despair which bent over him and tried valiantly to make a drunkard of him.

So they were friends. And so, restored by her at the last, he had thrown himself back into furious work.

"How is he?" Cynthia asked Vaughan Dunbar. "How is my darling old Bill? Just talk about him. Please do!"

He sat across from her in a low wicker chair, in the pavilion which looked out upon the empty and unilluminated tennis courts. He was, plainly, a man accustomed to be at his ease in every sort of circumstance or situation. He was dark, and almost painfully well groomed, with deep brown eyes that seemed a trifle nearsighted behind their rimless spectacles.

His attitude of sureness and repose spoke eloquently of meetings with great names of the world, of interviews with those names—which manage the way in which

bewildered mortals will spend their tomorrows. "I should tell you, first of all, that Bill is immensely happy. He is in the thick of it, and doing a wonderful job—but you must read his dispatches, and so you know that already. There is not a correspondent with the Middle East Armies that could last a week if Bill were not there to guide him down the narrow way."

(To Be Continued)

Mileage of a war tire can be extended from 10,000 to 17,000 miles by reducing average speed from 40 miles an hour to 25 miles an hour.



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MIDWESTERN STATE

HORIZONTAL

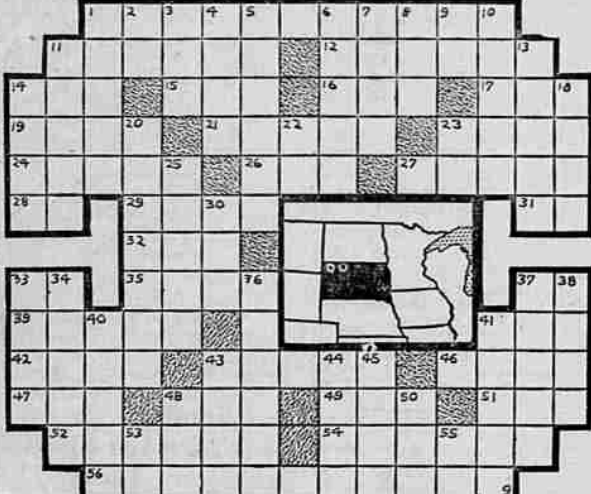
- 1 Depleted state.
- 11 South African corn meal.
- 12 Its capital is.
- 14 Sedan.
- 15 Cloth measure.
- 16 Arrive (abbr.).
- 17 Uncooked.
- 19 Wood sorrels.
- 21 Particle of fire.
- 23 Flower.
- 24 Mangles.
- 26 East (Fr.).
- 27 Fortified prison.
- 28 Any.
- 29 Modified plant.
- 31 French article.
- 32 Father.
- 33 Spanish (abbr.).
- 35 Let fall.
- 37 Street (abbr.).
- 39 Abatement (colloq.).
- 41 Roof finial.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

POLIA NEGRI STAR
ALEE ARIAN PALE
LEGAGAINSTION
LOADSSTOCTET
LIP SERE
AHAI POJEDO
DEAD UEDRAW
ONEN TRIUME
EMU ATITIME
CHASM SATIPALM
HASBOTOMSTEA
AREA FILMS TER
TEST FRIES URNS

VERTICAL

- 1 Seraglio.
- 2 Over all (abbr.).
- 3 Indian.
- 4 Sesame (pl.).
- 5 Aided.
- 6 Separated.
- 7 Church (Scott.).
- 8 Over (poet.).
- 9 Transpose (abbr.).
- 10 Pointed shaft.
- 11 Philippine rice.
- 13 Artist's frame.
- 14 State of profound insensibility.
- 18 Have been.
- 20 Dust (Scott.).
- 22 Like.
- 23 Universal language.
- 25 Steep descent.
- 30 Bustle.
- 33 Lath.
- 34 Flower part.
- 36 Mother or father.
- 37 Thin.
- 38 Duration.
- 40 Invigorating.
- 41 Roman magistrate.
- 43 Cariban Indian.
- 44 Go by.
- 45 Let it stand.
- 48 Every.
- 50 Greek letter.
- 53 Depart.
- 55 Size of shot.



THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



MORE THAN ELEVEN HUNDRED ITEMS USED BY THE ARMY AND NAVY ARE MADE WHOLLY OR IN PART OF WOOD! "HELP CONSERVE OUR FORESTS!"

KNUZKOTER

DURING THE MONTH OF JULY, YOU WILL BE MORE APT TO SEE NORTHERN LIGHTS IF YOU LIVED IN POINT BARROW, ALASKA, OR MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN.

"FITTING NAMES" DR. HOLLER IS A CHIROPRACTOR IN PHILADELPHIA... AND IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA, AL BARBER RUNS A BARBER SHOP, RALPH PAINTER, PAINTS SIGNS, AND SMART AND FINAL ARE WHOLESALE GROCERS.

ANSWER: Milwaukee, for there is continuous daylight at Point Barrow in July, and the northern lights are invisible.

NEXT: A sea fowl that cannot swim.



Out Our Way
By J. R. Williams

WHY MOTHERS GET GRAY



Red Ryder



Little Orphan Annie



Freckles and His Friends



Wash Tubbs



Boots and Her Buddies



Alley Oop



Our Boarding House
With Major Hoople



By Fred Harmon



By Harold Gray



By Blosser



By Crane



By Martin



By V. T. Hamlin