

DEATH WRITES THE LAST EDITION

By Adeline McElfresh

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THE STORY: Joe Parker, well-loved editor of the *Midvale Express*, has been found stabbed to death, sports writer Clem Evans, and ex-newspaperman Dave Elson are determined to solve the murder. A threatening, unsigned letter is found among Joe's papers. Pat discovers that it was written on his own typewriter.

FOOTPRINTS

"WELL, I'll be—" Dave Elson stared down at the typewritten line, too astonished to say anything else. He looked at Clem, who was standing beside him, and Clem shook his head, bewildered.

Pat stood up. She still looked a little frightened, for she knew this discovery opened up new possibilities. Who would have used Joe Parker's own typewriter for such a note?

"Here, one of you try it," she urged.

Clem, a grim expression on his face, slid into the chair. He tried out all sorts of combinations, but still it was there. The "I" struck the paper a bit lower than the other letters, giving the typed copy a ragged appearance.

"Now what?" Pat asked abruptly. Dave walked over to the window and stared out into the wind-swept night, while the others waited in expectant silence. For a long minute he stood there, then he whirled on his heel.

"Aunt Sarah!" he yelled. "Oh, Aunt Sarah!"

"Do you think she might know?" A thread of fear crept into Pat's voice even though she tried to suppress it.

"She can at least tell us who has been here lately," Dave answered shortly. "Clem," he turned to the other man, "call the police. Blair should be in on this."

"Right, Dave," Evans hurried out of the room, colliding with Mrs. Harrington at the door.

"What in the world, Davey?"

The housekeeper was drying her hands on her voluminous apron. She looked from Dave to Pat and Mary Evans, and back to Dave again.

"What is it?" she repeated.

Dave told her, even showed her the paper on which they had typed the incriminating letters.

"Well, glory be!" she breathed. "Don't that beat all!"

"Do you have any suspicions, Aunt Sarah?" Pat asked her when she saw Dave hesitate.

"That's what we'd like to know now," Mrs. Harrington frowned down at the old typewriter. She shook her head slowly, almost hopelessly.

SAM BLAIR swore at the biting wind as he went out to his car. He hated these night calls, especially in such vile weather, but his desk sergeant had told him that Clem Evans had called from Parker's house. There was something about new evidence, but the sergeant was vague about that.

Probably Evans had not told him. Sam Blair drove slowly, for the streets were just slick enough to make driving difficult. If he speeded up too much, he might not be able to stop if he had to, and he had no intention of careening into some unfortunate pedestrian. He had passed several of them with their heads bent against the wind in such a way that he knew they could not keep a wary eye on the traffic. Confound such a night anyhow!

The Parker house was across town a good ten minutes' drive from where Blair lived, and the officer had a chance to repeat to himself for the nth time all he had been able to find out—which was practically nothing, he admitted grudgingly.

How, he asked himself, could he find the killer when the knife didn't have a fingerprint on it? When Joe Parker had no enemies? When—He yawned. He could almost hear the desk sergeant saying, "It's a grand life if you don't weaken," as he always did when things went wrong. He held his watch up as he passed a street light.

"Eight forty-five," he said aloud. "That's not bad. I may get home yet in time for the 10 o'clock news."

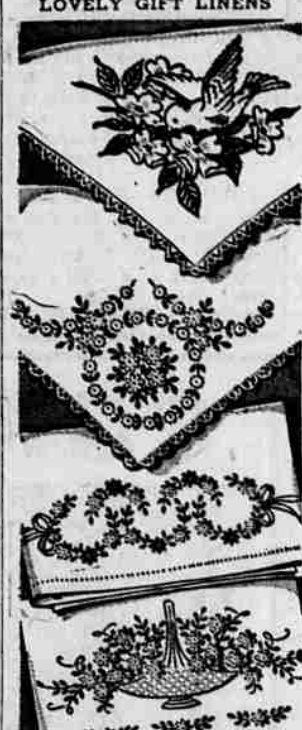
THE Parker house loomed up ahead of him, big and safe and secure. Only it hadn't been that at all for Joe Parker. It had been—The car skidded as he

turned into the side street. He switched off the motor and the lights and let it roll to a stop. The wind tore at his coat as he started around the house to the front door.

Snow was falling again, great soft flakes that nestled contentedly against the earlier blanket of white. Blair dodged the wildly swaying sprig of a japonica bush that seemed like an ordinary wild shrub now that it was stripped of its leaves and bright flowers. He started up the steps at the end of the porch—and stopped in his tracks.

He found only footprints—but

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24 Quantity 42 Engage for service

25 Male children 43 Through

26 Like 44 Scandinavian coin

27 Truth 45 Hand doubled up

28 Within 46 Hand doubled up

29 Us 47 Hand doubled up

30 Exist 48 Hand doubled up

31 Him 49 Hand doubled up

32 Cooking 50 Unclothed utensil

33 Health resort 51 Repose

34 Toward 52 Pertaining to uina

35 It is used to hunt 53 At one time

36 Mountain 54 Meat dish (abbr.)

37 Left end 55 Associations

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