

The DARK MIRROR

by Louis Joseph Vance
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Illustrated by Irwin Myers
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PRISCILLA.

Synopsis.—Vaguely conscious of a double personality, but without any idea of its meaning, the girl, Leonora, makes her accustomed way into the Street of Strange Faces. Thoroughly at home in the underworld of New York, Leonora takes her course to her appointed rendezvous. Mario joins her. Greatly in love and seeing the fine qualities which the girl really possesses, Mario seeks to turn her from the path of inevitable destruction. She promises to marry him, but quickly leaves him. At Estor's cafe, gathering place of criminals, Leonora meets her partner, "Red" Carmichael, and his associates, and is accused of betraying a fellow criminal to the police. She savagely defends herself. One of the gang says he has seen her on Fifth avenue, all dressed up.

IV. RISTORI'S—Continued.

"Better tell 'em, kid," Red conned uncessly. "You got to come clean—" "Like I—I have!" Once more the flames of rage leapt high. "I don't owe this gang anything, much less an account of everything I do. The shoe's on the other foot. You all know me, you all know I'm on the level. Most of you'd be up the river today if it wasn't for me—and you know that, too. How far do you think you'd get if my brains didn't work for you, tell you what to do and how to get away with it without the bulls tumbling? Who planned the raid on Elstein's hock shop? Did any of you get pinched for that? Who figured out how to get those bonds away from the Chemist? Trust's messenger? Was anybody lagged for that? . . . And because I take the trouble not to lead a couple guns right up to you tonight—and because the Nut saw somebody that looked like me all dolled up on Fifth avenue yesterday—or thinks he did—" "It was you, all right," Harry affirmed coolly.

Their glances met and clashed, the girl's hot with challenge and resentment, the man's cold with malice. For the first time she recognized in this creature an enemy. Then her super-excited intelligence, grappling with the problem of how to confute his implicit accusation, experienced a flash of memory followed by a lightninglike stroke of intuition.

"If you want to know who squealed," she suggested deliberately, "why don't you give Harry the office? Ask him what he does with all his time, where he gets the coin for all his swell clothes, who he talks to when he's bulging up to the bars of the big hotels. Ask him why the cops always look the other way when they see him coming, why he ain't never pinched—"

With an oath Harry thrust back his chair, which overturned with a crash, and jumped up, guilt stamped upon his countenance of sudden pallor, glinting fearfully in his furtive little eyes. But in the same instant the door—left negligently unlocked after the entrance of Leonora—was hastily opened and slammed. The first to identify the man who had slipped in and now stood fumbling with the key, English Addie cried out in shrill dismay: "Leo!" The company turned simultaneously and with confused cries and questions got to its feet.

Slight and under normal height, panting, sweating, haggard, his face livid, eyes terrified, hatless, and with clothing disheveled, Leo Biellini, alias Leo the Blood, sunk back against the door, one hand pressed to his side just below his laboring heart. The other, holding an automatic pistol, described a gesture of supplication. Red snapped over-shoulder a profane demand for silence. Leo's broken phrases became audible.

"Croaked a bull down the street . . . coming out of Benale's place, Corbin and Ennis tried to jump me . . . Corbin got it." He gesticulated meaningly with the pistol. "Ennis took after me . . . Looks like a frame-up . . . cops everywhere I turned . . ."

Red demanded furiously: "What in h—'d you come here for?" "No place else to go . . . covered, I tell you . . . Listen!" The Russian held up a hand and, bending an ear to the door, heard sounds below inaudible to the others. "There they come now! For God's sake, get me out of this!"

"Fire escape," Red indicated with a jerk of his head. Somebody thrust open the shutters of one window. The murderer pulled himself together, reeled across the room, and lurched out upon an iron platform grating. Immediately he disappeared.

Now the rumor was loud in the hall below, the shrill protestations of the waiters rising above yet dominated by the deeper voices of the police. After brief but violent altercation, heavy feet came pounding up the stairs. Then panic fastened upon the wits of all those in the private dining room

and stampeded them toward the fire escape. Primitively in their fright men fought with women for first place at the window. Stilled screams of pain and anger mingled with muttered blasphemies; but the noise of milling feet alone would have been enough to betray them. Not more than two had managed to fight out to the iron platform before the police were clamoring and hammering at the door. Leonora, thrust brutally to one side, saw the futility of trying to escape before the maddened men, and, resigned, stood clear of the crush, watching the panels of the door tremble under a storm of kicks and blows.

Fear was absent from her temper, but she was shaken by impotent exasperation and sad with regrets. This meant an end to everything, not alone to these associations which barely an hour since she herself had planned to forsake, but to all her hope of happiness with Mario. For she had not the remotest doubt but that she, with at least a majority of the others, would be arrested, jailed and, on the evidence of complicity in past exploits which the police spy, Harry the Nut, would be able to lay before the district attorney, sentenced to a term of years in one or another of the state penitentiaries.

And long before she had served out her term Mario would forget her; or, even if he did not, would never, never by any chance, make a woman with a criminal record his wife.

And this was what came of indulging her keen delight in excitement and adventure.

If only she had listened to Mario in time . . .

Seconds dragged like minutes, and the door still held. She began to catch at straws of hope: only three now remained in the room, Charlie the Coke—already with one foot across the sill, whimpering and mouthing curses because of inability to crowd into the press upon the fire escape—Red, and herself.

The hammering on the door stopped. She wondered why. Charlie contrived to jam his terror-racked body out through the window. Red caught Leonora by a shoulder, roughly enough if in a rare impulse of chivalry, and tried to thrust her out after Charlie. But the crush on the platform was still too dense. She heard a dull crash and, swinging round, saw the door, its lock shattered by the impact of a brawny shoulder, slam back against the wall. The policeman who had broken it in stumbled and sprawled full length upon the floor. The plain-clothes man, Ennis, leaped in over his prostrate body. Her ears were deaf.

II. THE PORTRAIT

Beside the mirror, a tall pier glass, stood a heavy studio easel holding a full-length canvas, an unfinished portrait of herself in the Zingara dress she had once worn at a costume dance. Begun long ago, on a day when a model faltered her, and carried out inconspicuously, "when she felt in the mood," the painting now neared completion; a little more work on draperies and background and it would be ready for exhibition. Inspecting it critically, with fault-finding eyes, she saw that her work was good, almost as good as her father's. The figure on the canvas lived; its striking pose was instinct with almost insolent vitality; the face was aglow with zest in life, the eyes seemed transiently arrested in an instant of gay impudence altogether charming.

Her troubled gaze turned back to the mirror's faithful presentation of a slender, lusciously gowned young woman, the finished product of a fashionable upbringing, a little proud, reserved, thoughtful, exquisite . . . Priscilla Maine.

But the girl on the canvas was Leonora. And in her self both lived. But which was which? Which false, which true? Was the life she knew, the life of Park avenue and Fifth, of teas, dinners, theaters, dances—relieved only by these days in the studio, her happiest, when she was painting—was this life reality or illusion? And that dream life of which she caught only fugitive glimpses, fascinating, tantalizing, terrible, and related to nothing within the scope of her experience—was the dream life perhaps the life of fact?

She shook a head baffled, bewildered and faint with wondering.

The doorbell interrupted. She answered, finding as she had expected that the chauffeur was waiting to escort her to the town car which he was obliged to leave at the mouth of the alley. She was glad of his company, when she had put out the lights and locked the studio door, for the alley was indifferently illuminated and seemed rather grimly dealect at that hour. She knew a moment of sympathy with Aunt Esther's distrustful animosity toward "that dreadful studio life."

CHAPTER TWO The Antagonists.

I. PRISCILLA.

Rousing on an elbow, Priscilla Maine found herself awake, with a racing heart, a throat swollen with a strangled cry of horror, and a mind through whose painted muck the reflection of a woman's screams ran like a thread of purple light.

Yet here was only darkness, with silence absolute . . .

With a low gasp of relief that was half a sob of fright as well, she sprang up from the divan, stumbled to the wall, and after a moment's groping flooded the studio with milky radiance from an inverted dome. And in a passion of gratitude she embraced the reassurance inherent in the atmosphere of that richly furnished, spacious and silent studio, her father's workshop till his death and ever since her own.

It was true, then; she was safely restored to her own intimate environment, where nothing resembled even remotely that frowsy room where murders had been done. She had merely dreamed a dream, one more of those amazingly real dreams which she had learned to accept without protest as phenomena of slumber unavoidable, singularly harmless, and on the whole rather amusing.

So at least they seemed till this night when, for the first time, stark tragedy had stalked unbidden and unheralded, rending with ruthless hands the flimsy texture of illusion and rendering the dream more fact to her than this awakening more true, and so much the more terrible.

Pressing palms to temples that throbbled and burned intolerably with their content of thoughts a-craw with fright and horror, she made her way to the bathroom and bathed her face with cold water, then with cologne till, in the sensory reaction of stimulated flesh and nerves, she began to feel measurably more calm and self-possessed, more Priscilla Maine than "Leonora."

A twittering telephone recalled her to the studio. Receiver to ear, she said: "Yes? Who is it?" and heard the agitated cries of the elderly kinswoman whom she called aunt and with whom she had her home.

"Priscilla! Where have you been all evening? I've been half frantic . . . Why didn't you let me know?"

"I haven't been anywhere, dear—only asleep, here in the studio. Please don't be cross, Aunt Esther; I didn't go to do it, honest I didn't!" Mrs. Morey left in the middle of the afternoon—she had a tea on, or something—and about half after five I stopped painting and thought I'd lie down and rest a little before going home."

"Do hurry, I'll send Arthur with the car at once."

"Please."

She donned hat and cloak before a mirror in whose insusceptible depths she saw, set in her own hat and individual coiffure, the face of the girl whom in her dreams she knew as Leonora; and yet it was likewise the face of Priscilla Maine. Vainly with importunate eyes she questioned that counterfeit of two countenances. How could this thing be? Was she one woman waking and another when she slept? Was there in her a dual personality such as reading had taught her to accept as a psychological possibility? Did two natures struggle within her, one prevailing in her hours of slumber, and not always even then?

That train of speculation she was afraid to pursue too far . . .

If Aunt Esther only guessed how infinitely more dreadful that other life which Priscilla knew in dreams . . . But no one guessed. Instinctive reticence, jealousy of her privacy, reluctance to be thought different, and fear of having her sanity questioned as she herself too often questioned it, had guarded the girl's secret and kept it inviolate.

She had long since made up her mind she must never marry while this dream life continued to exert its occult influence upon her. To risk transmitting to her children a mental taint or lesion was unthinkable.

Now of a sudden she remembered the man Mario (or was he merely a shadow?) and in a poignant turn of reminiscence recalled his luminous and compelling eyes, the potent magnetism of his presence, and felt anew the pressure of his lips on hers.

On hers? Or Leonora's?

She cringed low in the corner of the seat, as if fearful lest curious eyes detect the waves of color that burned her cheeks. For in the memory of that kiss



"Priscilla Maine."

she found a sweetness ineffably precious. And in the knowledge that his love was dedicated to that other self, Priscilla suffered the first bitter pang of that torment which spares not body, mind or soul, and which is jealousy.

But how should she be jealous of Leonora, if Leonora were herself?

Was it to be her fate to love one shape of dream and hate another?

III. PHILIP FOSDICK.

About three in the morning, finding she could not sleep, she slipped into a dressing gown, and went to her desk, where for two hours she wrote steadily, setting forth in minute detail, as memory served, every item, incident and circumstance of her dream. Thus she found temporary distraction and ease of mind. Unaware of weariness till she had written the last word, immediately that was penned she found herself heavy with drowsiness so urgent it would hardly wait for her head to find its pillow.

Toward noon she awoke and rang for her maid. A pleasant languor tempted to indolence. She adored breakfasting in bed, and did so today with a relish, somehow sharpened by a mischievous sense of playing truant, of cheating life's inordinate demands.

Recollection of the dream recurred tardily and slushily, like the images that reluctantly take shape on an underexposed photographic film, and when sharpest and most definite seemed pale and unimportant in that warm flood of sunlight which bathed her bed chamber, as little worthy of consideration as a wraith of nightmare. But it served to pique her curiosity and, when she had bathed, she took back to bed what she had written in the night and read it with care and toward the close, something like resuscitation of those emotions which she had known during the dream itself as well as after waking up. In the end she was aware of an imperative need for enlightenment. The thing had grown too serious, was figuring too largely in her life; if its influence was not to prove altogether ill, she must have comprehension of its nature to give her heart courage.

In all the world she knew but one person in whom she could conceive it possible to repose such confidences . . . She took the telephone from the bedside stand.

Merely to hear that low-pitched, agreeable voice with its ineradicable tinge of humor was comforting. Her clouded countenance was lighted up by a smile of gratitude—and of affection, too.

"Philip, dear! Do you know I haven't seen you for ages?"

"That's brazen blague, Priscilla. It's your own fault; you will insist on drenching the springtime of your life with turpentine and varnish, overlooking the most important things entirely."

"What do you consider the most important thing in life? Yourself?"

"No; you. And next to you, letting me make love to you."

"Philip, I have dreams. The strangest dreams."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

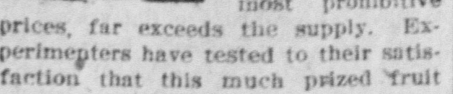
If you want to attract a woman's attention to any particular thing just put it in front of a mirror.

The Kitchen Cabinet

(Ed. 1920, Western Newspaper Union.)
"Wear a smile on your face,
Keep a laugh in your heart,
Let your lips bubble over with song;
'Twill lighten your load
As you travel life's road
And help other travelers along."

THE AVOCADO OR ALLIGATOR PEAR.

For many years the avocado has been brought to this country from Mexico, and in limited number has been in the markets of late from north to south. Even now the demand for the fruit at almost prohibitive prices, far exceeds the supply. Experimenters have tested to their satisfaction that this much prized fruit can be produced commercially in a wide area of territory and they are busy developing an industry that gives much promise. The avocado belongs to the laurel family and is a native of tropical and semi-tropical America. The tree is large and spreading, its leathery leaves of a spicy taste and odor. The bay tree, whose leaves are used largely for seasoning, belongs to the laurel family. The fruit of the avocado varies in shape from round to pear-shaped, with color from green to deep purple, weighing from a few ounces up to five pounds. It contains a large single seed around which is a thick creamy yellow and green-colored flesh, of delightful nutty flavor. The thick-skinned fruit is more often shipped, as it carries well. It has been said of the avocado that it is in a class by itself. It is a natural combination of food-fruit and oil. It averages 684 calories, or heat units per pound, more than twice the maximum calories of the best fresh fruits. Its fuel value corresponds to 75 per cent of that of cereals. Its chief value however is in its fat content, which in some cases is as high as 28 to 30 per cent. The only fruit comparable to it is the olive and that is a processed fruit. The increase in population, making land too valuable merely for producing meat, makes the production of such a substitute worthy of consideration.



In Mexico a salad of the pear is used as follows: Cut the fruit in dice after peeling and add to two parts of the fruit one part of Bermuda onion, chopped fine, and a small sweet pepper. Prepare two hours before serving. Season with salt, pepper and vinegar.

In Santiago.—Peel the fruit, remove the seed and cut in cubes. Mix with mayonnaise, sprinkle with the yolk of hard cooked egg put through a sieve. Such a salad should constitute a meal, with the fat of the fruit, in the dressing and in the yolk of the egg.

Havana Paste.—Take the meat of three avocados, add three tomatoes, half a green pepper cut into fine shreds. Crush and pound this mass to a paste. Add a little onion juice. Line juice and salt. Mix thoroughly and serve at once.

Avocado au Natural.—Remove the skin and slice the fruit. Serve on a plate garnished with celery hearts, tomato or sweet red peppers. To be eaten with a fork with or without salt and pepper, as preferred.

If you'd make life worth livin'
Try these big things worth whilin':
They're three 'G' sum 'em up ag'in.
Just love an' work an' smile.

A DAY OF SAUCES.

A sauce as an accompaniment to a dish is as essential as the ordinary seasoning of salt and pepper to make a dish appetizing. A very ordinary dish with a piquant and appropriate sauce has made many a chef and hotel famous. Certain foods need certain sauces. A lamb roast with mint sauce, pork roast with apple sauce, turkey with cranberry, are always associated. Veal without a snappy tomato sauce, or one of onion, is usually flat and tasteless. Botted mutton is improved by a caper sauce and currant jelly—with a roast. With venison a spiced grape jelly is especially appropriate, and wild duck needs a tart jelly or a salad of sliced oranges. Wild rice is excellent and most appropriate to serve with wild duck. Fish, too, of any kind is always better served with a sauce. Oyster sauce is one which may be used with any kind. Bechamel and brown sauce are good fish sauces. Lemon and egg sauces are good with some kinds of fish. Wild fowl is especially good with:

Ripe Olive Sauce.—Melt four table-spoonfuls of butter in a saucepan, add one sliced onion and cook until slightly brown. Remove the onion and stir the butter until brown. Add five and one-half tablespoonfuls of flour, a teaspoonful of salt, one-fourth of a tea-spoonful of pepper, and stir to a smooth paste. Add two cupfuls of brown stock gradually and continue browning, stirring constantly. Cur the meat from a dozen ripe olives, cover with boiling water and cook seven minutes. Drain and add the sauce.

Neelie Maxwell.

SHE TELLS HOW SHE KEEPS HUSBAND WELL AND STRONG

He Works on Railroad, Exposed to Weather. Never Has Cold.

WAS OFTEN SICK, BUT NOT ANY MORE

"My family uses Hypo-Cod and I know what it will do. Our two children have been built up to find robust health with it. I have been strengthened wonderfully with it myself and my husband keeps in splendid health ever since he built himself up with it. Before he started using this tonic he was always having coughs and colds. He works outdoors and is exposed to wet, changeable weather, and really it seemed natural that he should be half-sick about all the time. He got to looking so bad, however, last winter that we were afraid he was going to have the 'flu,' and so he took Hypo-Cod. It built him up so strong and well and knocked out the cough and cold he had so completely that he never has such troubles any more. He looks better and feels better than in a long time, he says, and it surely did build him up quick," declared Mrs. Mary Freeman, 1834 Florida Ave., Washington, D. C.

No man can do his work well if half sick. No man can ward off disease if his system is weakened and rundown. Therefore every wise wife and every mother should watch the men folks. It is as important that they be healthy and work smoothly all the year round as it is for any piece of machinery to be watched, oiled up occasionally and otherwise cared for.

Earle's Hypo-Cod is a more modern and powerful combination of well-known medicinal elements. It does its work a little quicker. It agrees with a weak stomach better and is easier to take. It is not a cure. It is a tonic. Build yourself up with it just at this season of the year and feel better, work better and keep the whole family feeling that way. Read the formula on a bottle tonight at your drugstore. Take home a bottle.

Earle's Hypo-Cod is sold by all good druggists.—Adv.

One Explanation.
Jud Tunkins says the reason so many of us are afraid of work is that we are too bashful to get acquainted.

WOMEN NEED SWAMP-ROOT

Thousands of women have kidney and bladder trouble and never suspect it. Women's complaints often prove to be nothing else but kidney trouble, or the result of kidney or bladder disease.

If the kidneys are not in a healthy condition, they may cause the other organs to become diseased.

Pain in the back, headache, loss of ambition, nervousness, are often times symptoms of kidney trouble.

Don't delay starting treatment. Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, a physician's prescription, obtained at any drug store, may be just the remedy needed to overcome such conditions.

Get a medium or large size bottle immediately from any drug store.

However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.—Adv.

No Time to Lose.
"This marked-down fish is, I suppose, all right for immediate cooking!"
"Yes, but run home."

He doubts nothing who knows nothing.—Portuguese proverb.

AN OPEN LETTER TO WOMEN

Mrs. Little Tells How She Suffered and How Finally Cured

Philadelphia, Pa.—"I was not able to do my housework and had to lie down most of the time and felt bad in my left side. My monthly periods were irregular, sometimes five or seven months apart and when they did appear would last for two weeks and were very painful. I was sick for about a year and a half and doctored but without any improvement.

A neighbor recommended Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to me, and the second day after I started taking it I began to feel better and I kept on taking it for seven months. Now I keep house and perform all my household duties. You can use these facts as you please and I will recommend Vegetable Compound to everyone who suffers as I did."—Mrs. J. S. LITTLE, 3455 Livingston St., Philadelphia, Pa.

How much harder the daily tasks of a woman become when she suffers from such distressing symptoms and weakness as did Mrs. Little. No woman should allow herself to get into such a condition because such troubles may be speedily overcome by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, which for more than forty years has been restoring American women to health.

A Bad Cough
If neglected, often leads to serious trouble. Safeguard your health, relieve your distress and soothe your irritated throat by taking

PISO'S