

The Mystery of the Silver Dagger

By Randall Parrish

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MYSTERY.

Synopsis.—In a New York jewelry store Philip Severn, United States consular agent, notices a small box which attracts him. He purchases it. Later he discovers in a secret compartment a writing giving a clue to a revolutionary movement in this country seeking to overthrow the Chilean government. The writing mentions a rendezvous, and Severn decides to investigate. Finding the place mentioned in the writing apparently deserted, Severn visits a saloon in the vicinity. A woman in the place is met by a man, seemingly by appointment. And Severn, his suspicions aroused, follows them. They go to the designated meeting place, an abandoned iron foundry. At the rendezvous Severn is accepted as one of the conspirators and admitted. He meets a stranger who addresses him as Harry Daly. The incident plays into Severn's hands and he accepts it. His new acquaintance is a notorious thief, "Gentleman George" Harris. Concealed, Severn hears the girl he had followed address the conspirators. She urges them to hasten the work of the revolution. The girl discloses Severn listening. She accepts his explanation of his presence and makes an appointment to meet him next day. He tells her his name is Daly. Harris informs him of a scheme he has to secure a sum amounting to \$1,000,000, the revolutionary fund, and offers to "assist" with him. Severn accepts the proposition. Severn learns it was his new friend and a "Captain Alva" who had lost the box which started him on the trail. Harris tells him the woman is Marie Gessler. He arranges to meet Severn next day at Tom Costigan's saloon. Leaving the building, Severn finds the body of Captain Alva, stabbed to death with a hatpin dagger. He remembers having seen it, or one like it, in Marie Gessler's hat. Severn is forced to believe she is the slayer.

CHAPTER VII—Continued

There was no outward sign of any surveillance as I turned into the block; indeed, except for a grocery truck before one of the houses, and an organ-grinder at the farther corner, entertaining a group of children, the street was entirely deserted. Mustering my courage, and with a feeling of deep excitement, I advanced up the steps of the house numbered 247, and, finding refuge in the outer vestibule, rang the bell. I heard no distant tinkles, but within a moment or two the door opened a crack, held in that position by a chain, and the face of a middle-aged woman peered out at me.

"Well, what is it?" she snapped, in no encouraging tone.

"I should like to see Miss Conrad," I began apologetically. "I have an appointment with her."

"Not here yer ain't, young man, for there ain't nobody by that name in this house."

"Are you sure? This is 247, is it not? That was the number given me. She was to be here at two o'clock."

"This yere is 247 all right. I ain't denyin' that," the voice more acid than ever, "but there ain't no Miss Conrad yere; so that's all there is about it."

"But there must be."

"Must be nuthin'. I guess I know. I've been yere seventeen years, an' ther never was nobody of that name

sent me on this wild goose chase so that she might laugh over my simplicity. But was this true? If so, how was I to account for the strange coincidence that both she and Harris had named the same number, and street? It could not have occurred merely through chance. Something must have happened in the meanwhile to overthrow all her plans, and to cause this rabid housekeeper to even deny her very existence. And I held the key of explanation—the murder of Alva.

Beyond all doubt here was both cause and effect. The girl had intended to either see me herself, or by proxy in the form of this mysterious Miss Conrad. But what had since occurred had compelled a sudden change in plans, a necessity for concealing her escape. There was no way in which she could notify me, but she might very easily have telephoned to her landlady. And, if the place was what I suspected it to be, she might have every confidence that her secret would be guarded.

I glanced up at the front of the house, searching the windows, but without results. The curtains were closely drawn to keep out the sun, and the place appeared forlorn and deserted. At the delicatessen shop on the corner I gained a gleam of light, but merely enough to strengthen my former judgment. The keeper, a flax-haired Swede, was loquacious enough, but had only been in business there a few weeks.

"247 Le Compte, you say. Yes, she takes roomers; some are men, and some are women. They come in here and buy, but I never ask the names; it was all cash, so why should I care? Sometimes I hear them call names—sure; but never Conrad. The woman what keeps the house? Wait and I tell you; it is on the books; ah! you read as she wrote it for me—Mrs. Augusta Waldron; maybe a widow? What you think? Bah, she never like anything I have to sell. I care nothing for trade with her—a cat this Mrs. Augusta Waldron."

I left him with the familiar sound of the name ringing in my ears—the whole thing was traveling in a circle, and the circle was growing continually more compact. Blindly, I was stumbling up against it here and there most unexpectedly. Augusta Waldron, beyond doubt, was Ivan Waldron's wife. No wonder her house was designated the meeting place for those people.

I returned to the hotel. Only as I stood before the door did I realize that the newsboys were calling out, "Extra! All about the murder!" I felt that my face was white, and that by hand shook, yet I hastily bought copies of half a dozen sheets, shoving them into my pockets.

The reports were mostly alike, exceedingly brief and unsatisfactory, except that they conveyed the impression that thus far the police possessed no real clue as to the perpetrator of the crime. No one connected with the meeting the night before was mentioned in any article, nor was any suspicion of such a meeting mentioned. I read the last line with a distinct feeling of relief, dropping the paper on the floor.

They had discovered no clue, nothing whatever to work upon. The interior of the car had yielded no evidence of its former occupant, the only reference being to mud on the floor. Outside all footprints had been obliterated by the falling rain. No one in the neighborhood had heard a sound, or witnessed any movement. The whole affair was shrouded in mystery.

What, under these conditions, was my duty? What could I either do, or say, to clarify this tragedy, and bring the guilty to justice? I sat there for an hour thinking and smoking, endeavoring to answer these queries. I could study out no clear way to any confession, which would not directly involve myself in the toils of the police, or else implicate Marie Gessler, so as to make any defense on her part almost impossible. No doubt she was guilty, yet I could not drive myself to openly charge her with the crime. There must be some extenuating circumstances, some unknown cause, which had led to the act. I could not forget her face, her manner, the clear, womanly look of her eye—she was no murderer, and it was not in my heart to denounce her as such. Besides, if I took this responsibility it would only serve to shield other crimes of more importance than the violent death of this Chilean revolutionary—the murder perhaps of many innocent victims, and the destruction of much valuable property. For Alva's death would hardly stop the plotting already on foot. The money was still here in New York ready to be used; the propagandists at Washington would never permit it to long lie idle. They would find somewhere another leader, and I alone seemed to be in a position to balk their hellish purpose. Perhaps it was even by their orders that Alva had thus been put out of the way. He had acted too slowly, and suspicion might have been aroused as to his real purpose. On every side I was assailed with doubts.

Yet, even if I held silent, I knew not in which direction to turn. I had apparently lost all touch with the girl. She had fallen me completely—either by accident, or design. Her appointment with me had served to reveal only one fact which might prove of importance—247 Le Compte street was undoubtedly a link in the chain of the conspiracy; it was the home of Ivan Waldron. Once I told this discovery to Harris the way might be opened to closer investigation. But what had become of Harris? It was already approaching six o'clock, and the man had not telephoned me. Surely he must be aware by this time of the murder of Alva; the uselessness of seeking longer to find him alive. Was he also endeavoring to avoid me? Was his purpose deceit? or had some suspicion arisen in his mind as to my really being Harry Daly?

Aroused by this possibility, and unable to remain quiet longer, I slipped a revolver from the depths of my bag into a coat pocket, and departed again



"They Tell Me You're Hunting Parker."

for Costigan's, determined to learn the truth. I approached the same bartender with whom I had spoken in the morning, and he must have recalled me at once, for, without answering my question he turned and called out to a heavily set, red-faced fellow at the lower end of the bar.

"Dan, here is that guy who was asking for Parker. He ain't heard nuthin' from him."

The other came forward, elbowing his way roughly through the crowd, and looked me searchingly in the face. "I'm Costigan," he said shortly. "They tell me you're hunting Parker. Did you have an appointment with him?"

"Yes; he was to meet me here this morning. Then I left a telephone number, but he hasn't called me."

"He ain't been back; that's the reason. Come along with me; I want a private word with you."

I followed him rather doubtfully, although his words and actions appeared friendly enough in a gruff way. He led the way to a closed door at the end of the bar, which, when opened, disclosed a small business office, containing merely a desk and two chairs. To his rather gruff invitation to sit down, I accepted one of these, chewing at the cigar between my teeth, and endeavoring to appear quite at ease. Costigan, after securing the door, seated himself at the desk, turning his swivel chair about so as to face me, his freckled hands on his knees.

"George told me about you this morning," he began. "At least I suppose you're the lad; your name Daly?"

I nodded, greatly relieved, but unwilling to trust my voice. The man did not know me; had no suspicion. "Glad ter meet yer," and Costigan filled a pipe, and touched a match to the tobacco without removing his steady gaze from my face. "We never had no dealings together, but if yer tied up with George, it's quite likely we will have. He an' I have been partners for a long while. He's a h-l of a good guy."

"We just ran into each other accidentally," I explained, feeling that he expected me to say something. "Got onto the trail of the same boodle. He told you, I suppose?"

"No, he didn't. Just said he'd run onto you, and that you were liable to turn a trick together. George don't stop yer; that ain't his style."

"But he spoke about me?"

"Well, yes, in a way. But it wa'n't no more than I told yer. He had to go out afore you got 'round, so he said you was comin', an' for me to be decent to yer whenever yer blowed in."

"How long was he to be gone?"

"You must have faith in me, in spite of all."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

BLACK AND WHITE

ONE GLANCE WILL COOL YOU

Pronounced Colors Prove Popular Fad in Paris.

Summer Frocks Made Up of the Combination Which Has Been Declared Good Taste.

There is a run on black and white this season. One sees it on all sides and in many different circumstances. One of the most successful entertainments which had ever been given in Paris, writes a correspondent, was the Black and White ball, which came off recently at the Theater des Champs Elysees.

It was immensely brilliant and everyone admired the black and white walls and pillars, which made such an effective background for the exquisite and beautifully dressed women who crowned the big theater.

In one lovely model white organdie and black satin were combined with great success. The whole front of the dress was organdie—a series of gaufered frills arranged in neat rows with black ball buttons running right down the front. This was an exceedingly chic model, the perfection of good taste and elegance.

One white model has short sleeves. This is an important point. Influential dress experts assert that high necks and long sleeves were to be "the



This cool, comfortable and most attractive sport dress of crepe de chine, with bands of heavy wool embroidery, is one of the coolest creations imaginable.

Material Affords Ideal Summery Evening Gowns and Enhances Grace of Youthful Silhouettes.

What could be more youthful or more charming than the dainty, filmy-colored laces offered for our admiration? They make ideal summery evening gowns and more than anything yet created enhance the slim grace of young silhouettes. The laces of this season were most certainly designed for youth! The new shades, so soft, are exquisitely becoming. Lace is, in itself, enough ornamentation and in consequence dresses of this delightful stuff should be absolutely trimming-less.

A charming frock worn by one of the guests at a recent fashionable wedding was fashioned of fine cream-colored silk net with edgings of graceful design worn under an underslip of citron messaline satin. The bodice was exceedingly snug, the short sleeves and yoke being cut in one.

In contrast to the severity of the corsage was the widely bouffant skirt of Spanish origin. The grille of citron tulle had floating draperies falling over the sides of the skirt, swinging a long tassel at each end.



Simple Summer Frock of Black Linen and White Organdie.

Decoration is Coming Into Vogue With New Coiffures; Plucker Will Be Taboo.

Tinted eyebrows are coming into vogue with the new coiffures. Of course, they'll not be, but, according to a beautifier, mildy will not have to resort to her eyebrow plucker so often.

"The eyebrows will be permitted to grow as bushy and shaggy as of old," the beauty doctor said, "but they will be trained with pomade to present silky thick lines over the eyes. Instead of retaining the natural color of

TINTED EYEBROWS NEW IDEA

FRILLS OF FASHION

Plaid taffeta is used for sport skirts. Nearly all new blouses are made of hip length and slip on over the head.

Plaited ruffles of white organdie trim some very pretty black satin frocks.

Drawnwork is often the only trimming of imported crepe de chine gowns.

Soft black chantilly lace is charming over white satin. This combination makes adorable evening gowns.

Silk fringes are very much in evidence just now. We see them on dresses, coats, hats, handbags and even gloves.

The Egyptian sash tied in front and held in place with a jeweled ornament is still seen on some imported evening frocks.

New collar seen on many new wraps is very deep at the side, on the shoulders and quite narrow at the front and back.

Calico is used for a number of quaint summer frocks. Calico, combined with linen, makes attractive garden or porch dresses.

Many new dresses have widely flaring skirts, the fullness placed on the side, while front and back remain just as flat as possible.

The new sport suits have brightly colored jackets with white skirts trimmed with wide bands of the colored material, to match the coat.

Attractive afternoon summer dresses will be made of printed chiffon. This new chiffon is very striking, decorated with huge flowers and queer butterflies worked out on a rather dark background.

White silk skirts laid in accordion

NEW LACES ARE YOUTHFUL

AMONG THE DRESS NOVELTIES

Trains Cascade Down Over the Arms—Fashions in Fans to Suit the Various Types.

Trains may do anything this season—one of the newest ones is that which starts at the square-necked front of the corsage and cascades down over the arms in place of sleeves. This is a delightful departure from the court train which swings from the back shoulders.

Fashions in fans are myriad—select one which suits your type. Cock feathers, lustrous and incandescent of color, are new and clever. Ostrich feathers are still good for the fluff woman, and for the tall, luring woman, who would wave a wicked weapon, there are the peacock feathers.

To Place Rugs Properly.

Rugs should not be placed cornerwise in a room. Lay straight on the floor; follow the lines of furniture and the proportion of the room.

Daddy's Evening Fairy Tale

BY MARY GRAHAM BONNER

THE TRAVELING FLOWERS.

"I've a story to tell you," said Mother Nature one day to her children.

"We'd like to hear the story," said the ferns.

"So would we," said the wild flowers. "And we would, too," said the garden flowers.

"We love to hear anything you have to tell us," said the shrubs. "What are you going to tell us today?"

"My story," said Mother Nature. "Is about some traveling flowers."

"A great, great, great many years ago, oh, so many, many, many years ago, there were not so many big cities as there are now."

"There was more room everywhere and people almost all had gardens and flowers and could walk just a little distance and gather all the wild flowers they wanted."

"But the cities grew up and somehow, without meaning to, I'm sure, the flowers were pushed out of the way."

"Many of the people missed the flowers and the ferns and the shrubs and the Nature children. But they couldn't do the work they had to in the city and have gardens, too, for there wasn't any room in the city for the gardens. Some of them worked in the city and



"Cheer Them Up."

had their homes in the country, but many more had to be in the city all the time.

"And city after city grew up in just this way. Well, as I have said, the Nature children were greatly missed, though the people tried not to feel too badly about leaving the Nature children."

"They still loved the Nature children and the Nature children still loved them and understood how things were. 'Well, when the springtime came along one year, after so many cities had grown bigger and bigger and so many people had gone to live in the cities, the Nature children called me and said:

"'Dear Mother Nature, we have something to ask you.'

"'What have you to ask me?' I said and then they told me.

"'Mother Nature,' they said, 'the Dream King has told us that many, many people from the cities would be out in the country places for holidays and for week-ends this spring.'

"'So we have thought up a plan. You see, the Dream King tells us that every once in a while the people get very tired from all the business they must do and all the studying they must do, too.'

"'They get tired of the same old talk of business and of studying. They get tired of talking of how much rent they must pay and where they can possibly find room to store away some jam and preserves from the country, which has been sent to them.'

"'They get tired of all their worries which they have. The Dream King says they have lots of fun, too, and that city life is very pleasant, but that every once in a while they long for the country and the flowers and the smell of the nice old earth and of the blossoms.'

"'So we've decided we would look our very best all the time, so that when the people from the cities come out to see us they may pick some of us and take us home with them so we'll cheer them up.'

"'I told them I thought their idea was wonderful. And ever since then the flowers have all looked their best and the ferns have all looked their best, so they could cheer up the city people when they were taken back after holidays.'

"'The Sun, too, has worn handsome suits for the people to admire. He can't be taken back with them, but he can show them his beautiful golden-edged suit and his suit of many colors, for he says they've hardly time to look at him in the cities very often.'

"'And the birds have sung their prettiest songs to give the city people real country holidays.'

"'But the flowers which have traveled to the cities have done a great, great deal to add to the holidays of the city people, and have stayed fresh and bright in the city apartments for just as long as they could.'

"'So when any of you are picked and carried to the cities, keep your prettiest and freshest smiles on your faces.'

"'And they all promised Mother Nature they would."

No, That Won't Do.

Freshie—Have you a thumb tack? Other Freshie—No; but I have a rugger nail.



"Well, What Is It?" She Snapped.

ever in this house. Besides, I'm house-cleaning and can't stand yere talkin' all day."

"Do you know a man named Krantz?" I flung at her desperately, in a last effort to arouse some response, "Adolph Krantz."

"No, I don't; ther ain't none of those people yere, I tell yer."

The door slapped shut in my face, and I heard a bolt shot into place—the interview was ended.

I stared a moment at the blank door in bewilderment; then turned away, and slowly retraced my steps to the street. So the young woman had deliberately lied to me; had merely been amusing herself at my expense; had