

The Mystery of the Silver Dagger

By Randall Parrish
Author of "The Strange Case of Cavendish"
Copyright, by Randall Parrish

CHAPTER VII—Continued.

"That's what's got my goat," Costigan admitted grimly. "He said he'd be back in an hour, but he ain't showed up since, nor sent any word. I don't want to shove my nose into your affairs, but I'm gettin' a little nervous 'bout George, that's a fact."

Somehow the fellow gave me the impression of being square—honest according to his lights—and intensely loyal to his friends. Of course, I could not inform him as to the whole story, but it might be of benefit to give him some inkling of the situation.

"There's no harm, so far as I can see, in telling you a part of the plan, Mr. Costigan," I replied slowly, endeavoring to guard my words carefully. "I know Harris has every confidence in you, so I'll take a chance. We're both on to a million-dollar pot—easy money, it looks like—"

"The h—! that's some boodle!" excitedly leaning forward.

"It don't come every day. I'll not explain details, or how the two of us run together on the trail, and agreed to split the pot. That's our business, you'll admit."

"Sure; what was it? A bank job?"

"Better than that—South American revolution fund; coin sent over here from London to pay for arms, and maybe a murder or so. It is all in one bundle, and what we need to do is get our hands on it. We know where the stuff is, but we're still scouting around for a chance to grab it; it's locked up yet."

"I see. Ain't been handed over to the gink who's got to pay it out. That's what George is a-trainin' out now, I suppose?"

"No doubt that is what he started after this morning—shadowing the fellows to whom it was to be paid. What gets me is, why he doesn't return—the guy is dead."

"Judas Priest! How do you know that? What's happened?"

"Why, it's in all the papers; he was murdered last night over in Jersey City—stabbed through the back in an automobile. You saw it, didn't you?"

"H—! that guy? He was a Chilean captain, or something. Yer don't think that maybe George bumped him off, do yer?"

"No; I know he didn't; Harris was with me all last evening."

"And you haven't any notion who did?"

I shook my head negatively. Costigan sat for some moments, his chin cupped in his huge fist, his pipe extinguished and his forehead creased in thought. Then he looked up suddenly, a strange light in his eyes.

"Say, Daly," he asked in a hoarse whisper, "do you know if there was a Russian Jew mixed up in this affair anywhere?"

CHAPTER VIII.

A Friend at the McAlpin—The Dagger Hatpin.

His unexpected question startled me. In a way it was an odd echo of the vague suspicion which had been pursuing me ever since the early afternoon. Somewhere there was a mysterious hand operating—but whose hand?

"A Russian Jew?" I questioned. "Why should you ask that?"

"Well, I'll tell you. Maybe it don't amount to nothin' an' then again it might give us the right steer. A fellow they call 'Sly Levy'—he's a cheap thief, a dip mostly—blew in yere last night with a note for Harris. He left it with one of the night barkeeps, an' seemed ter be in a h— of a hurry ter have it delivered. The d—d thing was sealed, but not stamped, an' there wa'n't no address on it either. So I didn't think it was no penitentiary sentence to pry it open, usin' a bit of steam to loosen up the flap. But I didn't find much, only two lines spelled out in print letters. 'Where you met K. eight tomorrow. Don't fail; important. I. W.' That was every d—n word. Do you make anything of that?"

"Yes, I do," I said heartily. "It's part of this job. I'll explain after a bit. What did you do then?"

"Sealed it up, an' give it back to Joe. I didn't see no harm in it. Do you happen to know who this 'I. W.' stands for?"

"I can make a mighty good guess, Costigan—a Russian Jew, all right; Ivan Waldron."

The scowl on his face remained fixed; evidently the name was unknown.

"Don't know the fellow? Likely enough not; he doesn't operate in your line, but he is a crook just the same. I never saw him myself, but have heard about him for a long while—never anything good. He's an agitator, an anarchist, a revolutionary orator; one of those bugs who fight society and government, and hate everybody but themselves, a loud-mouthed nuisance."

Costigan's mouth was open.

"Say," he interrupted, "what's that kind of guy got to do with George Harris?"

"He's got this to do with him—he's out after the coin. He saw some easy

money, and naturally reached out for it. He was the first one to get onto this particular game. They were using him, this Chilean gang, to pull their chestnuts out of the fire, and that's how he tumbled to this bunch of money floating about, begging somebody to pick it up. He had wormed himself inside, and knew it was coming. But he didn't have nerve enough to tackle the game alone. He wanted somebody else to run all the risk, and then turn over his share. Do you get it now?"

"Sure; he blew the thing to Harris."

"In a way—yes. He sent for him to come back from England, but without explaining just what his graft was. On the way over Harris picked up another end of the same net, and went after it himself. He wasn't under any obligation to Waldron, and preferred to play his hand alone."

"And the Russian has found that out, and now he butts in."

"That's the way I'd read the cards, Costigan."

He sat silent a long while, and I lit a cigar and watched him, his great hands closing and unclosing, as he slowly reviewed the situation.

"Say, this guy what was bumped off—did, whoever did it, get anything?"

"His pockets were rifled, the papers say—all but a little change."

"Are you sure this fellow Alva didn't have that bunch of money along with him?"

"No! I'm not sure, of course, but Harris had been shadowing him for a month. Still, come to think, Alva was with Krantz the same night. He might have touched him."

"With who?"

"Krantz—Adolph Krantz—the banker. Krantz and Company, over in Wall street," I explained.

"Is he the same guy that 'K' stands for in the letter?"

"No doubt. He and Harris had an interview at 247 Le Compté street."

"Le Compté, hey! I wonder who lives there?"

"Well, I can tell you—it's Ivan Waldron."

His fist came crashing down onto the arm of his chair.

"H—! That's all clear enough then. He and George are up to some deal



I Stood Motionless, Looking at Her Intently.

together. Say, I believe this Russian guy is the buck who got Alva."

"Do you think so? Well, I am not so sure of that. But, anyway, what shall we do?"

"Wait until George comes back. There ain't any cause for us to butt in yet. This is his game, as I see it. If it was you, Mr. Daly," he added grimly, "you wouldn't thank nobody to shove in uninvited—would yer now?"

I was unconvinced by his argument, yet knew of no way of answering it. He must have read my predicament in the expression of my face.

"It'll come out all right, Daly," he volunteered. "I know George, an' he ain't the kind to be outwitted by no Russian Jew. Let's have a drink an' we'll call it off for tonight. You leave me your telephone number an' if anything happens I'll let you know."

I took a taxi back to the hotel, feeling restless and dissatisfied, yet unable to decide on any definite action.

As I asked for my key, the clerk handed it over, together with a card in the box, which I read in bewilderment. "Mr. Philip Severn, C-145. Call Hotel McAlpin." Could this be Harris, endeavoring to reach me privately with some message? Or was it merely an acquaintance who had learned of my presence in the city? I found the McAlpin exchange number in the telephone book and gained connection, my pulses throbbing with excitement. A woman's voice answered.

"The McAlpin."

"This is Philip Severn. You left a call here at the hotel for me."

"Oh, yes, Mr. Severn. I'm requested to ask you to come at once to the

parlor of the McAlpin, on the mezzanine floor—a friend wishes to see you."

"But really, I do not recognize your voice."

"Which is not altogether strange, as I am only the clerk on this floor. I am making this request in behalf of a guest."

"A man or a woman, may I ask?" She laughed good-humoredly.

"Really, I am not at liberty to say. You will come?"

"Yes, of course—"

Before I had really finished my sentence the connection had been severed. However, there was no doubt now in my mind but that it was Harris. I took the subway and was at the entrance within twenty minutes, eager to learn what had actually transpired during the past twelve hours. Without using the elevator I passed up the marble stairs to the mezzanine floor, pausing in uncertainty at the top to look about in search of some familiar face. A number of people were congregated about the railed opening looking down into the lobby, while others were scattered around on convenient divans, or at small writing desks. From the recesses of the ladies' room at the left came the strains of piano music, and the sound of a soprano voice singing. The song ceased to a clapping of hands. The faces I was able to distinguish were all strange and I moved forward in search.

I had attained the opposite side of the room before I came to a halt, suddenly arrested by a vision as startling as unexpected. Leaning over the railing, gazing intently down on the jostling crowd to the lobby below, apparently unconscious of all else, was Marie Gossard. There could be no doubt; I stood motionless, looking at her intently, satisfying myself that I could not be deceived. No. It was certainly the same girl I had talked with the evening before, dressed more elaborately, changed somewhat in appearance by a more careful toilet, yet assuredly the same. She must have felt the intensity of my stare and thus sensed my presence, for she suddenly looked about with a little start, saw me instantly and arose to her feet. There was a second of hesitation, barely perceptible, before she ventured a step forward, her lips smiling, her gloved hand held out.

"You were very nice to come," she exclaimed quietly. "Especially in response to so ungracious a message of invitation."

"It was you then who sent for me?"

"Of course. Did you imagine some one else?"

"I came rather blindly," I admitted, unwilling to mention Harris. "Your messenger refused to satisfy my curiosity even to the extent of telling the sex of the one calling."

She laughed, quite at her ease now, and seemingly amused.

"She was duly warned. I confess I feared you might hesitate to respond if you once knew what awaited you."

"No fear of that."

"But I didn't know," her voice more earnest, her eyes on my face questioningly. "You have not thought very well of me, have you? Let us go over there in the corner, where we can talk without being overheard—there are two vacant chairs."

We reached there and seated ourselves in silence. I felt the necessity of restraint, the desire to permit her to lead the conversation in whatever direction she thought best. She appeared younger in the bright light, her face even more attractive than in my memory.

"You are thoroughly puzzled, are you not?" she asked gayly. "Well, so was I, last night. It is only right I should pay you back in your own coin; that is perfectly fair, I am sure. Now I know who you are, but I am still an enigma. You accepted me on blind faith before; I wonder if you are willing to do it again?"

"I can hardly refuse."

"Answered like a gentleman. But suppose I tell you nothing and yet ask of you a dangerous service? Would you risk your life for me, not even asking who I am or why I make the request?"

There was a grave earnestness to the voice, an entreaty in the eyes not to be ignored. This was no idle question to be thrust aside with a smile.

"I believe I can make the pledge—to you," I replied soberly. "It is very unusual, but—"

"But you are Philip Severn," she interrupted, with an expressive gesture. "Had you not been I would have never asked."

"It is very nice of you to put it in that way, I am sure, but how do you chance to know that I am Philip Severn?"

"Suppose I insist that also is my secret? Yet surely you could not believe I would be here with you, unless I knew? You must have faith in me, in spite of all."

"Undoubtedly I do. I hardly hold it a reasonable faith, however. More, a certain amount of curiosity should be gratified, especially when a young lady asks unquestioning devotion to an unknown cause. You admit that?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

When a man falls in love his acquaintances soon tumble to the fact.

A SUMMER WRAP

White and Black Combination for Picturesque Cape.

Mandarin Sleeves in Exaggerated Form Take Away From Graceful Outline of Figure.

The recent race meetings at Long-champs have been specially brilliant, writes a Paris fashion correspondent. It has been interesting, and not a little extraordinary, to note the prominence of black and white effects. It is really true that, amongst the best dressed women, nine in ten wore black, white or the two mixed.

One picturesque cape especially was greatly admired. The important point was the wide scarf collar turned back with embroidered silk. A splendid effect was obtained by the most simple methods and nothing could be more graceful than the way in which the scarf collar was thrown over one shoulder.

It is the day of picturesque wraps. These garments are worn on all sorts of occasions, in the afternoon as well as evening. On coats and wraps one finds very wide "mandarin" sleeves.

It must be confessed that the mandarin sleeve in exaggerated form takes away from the graceful outline of the feminine figure; this is especially the case when a skirt of 1830 outline is adopted.

When autumn sets in we shall find sleeves of uncommon, often very eccentric, design fashionable. This will be a pity, but I am afraid it is inevitable.



Cape With Wide Scarf Collar.

I have already seen advance models for autumn wear which had extraordinary sleeves, some of them fringed down the under seam from elbow to wrist, others arranged in a series of graduated panels. The "set in" sleeve is an accomplished fact. It is to be seen on shirtwaists and also on casquin blouses.

TO OPPOSE LONG, FULL SKIRT

Women of England Band Together to Protest Introduction of Objectionable Fashion.

In England, observes a fashion writer, quite a number of influential women have banded together to protest against the introduction of "long, full skirts." They say—and with much reason—that this fashion has nothing to recommend it, that full skirts which reach the ankles make every woman who wears them look years older than is necessary and also that long skirts are dust-catchers and for that reason unhygienic.

The fact is that nearly every woman realizes that she looks smarter and younger in a moderately short skirt which falls in straight lines. I do not mean exaggeratedly short, indeed, a straight skirt may quite well reach the ankles, especially if it happens to be plaited; but when it comes to gathered or flounced dresses, not to speak of those models which are obviously supported by hoops, it is another affair.

In Paris we talk a great deal about "long and full skirts," but at all the fashionable race meetings and summer festivities the straight outline still prevails.

I think we shall find that the 1830 outline will be largely exploited on the stage and at certain evening entertainments but that it will not easily replace the becoming straight-outline for street wear. I am encouraged in this opinion by the determined stand now being taken by the best Paris tailors. All the latest models designed in their studios show straight, moderate-

BROWN CANTON, CREPE BOUND



Here's a model worth shopping in—and for. It is brown canton crepe with self-material of a lighter shade. It is regarded as a most practical suit.

FASHION NOTES OF INTEREST

Rickrack braid edges some of the smart gingham morning frocks. Jumper dresses of wool jerseys are designed to wear over shirtwaists.

The straight line is strictly observed in the advance fall coat dress models now being shown.

White embroidery is much used on black, both in the French frocks and in those designed in this country.

However much your new gown is draped, there is a way of showing the slim uncorseted line—and it is smart.

A ryal of the colored linen handkerchief is of gingham, plain checked and finished with a very narrow ruffle. Cut outs of leather form the trimming for many of the new hats. They are found most often in white or blue hats.

Long, loose coats of taffeta are to be worn much this summer. Many of them have thin muslin linings usually quite bright in color.

Deep bead fringe edges the ends of a sash of georgette. The beads hang in festoons about 12 inches deep and form a really rich and decorative trimming.

Paisley Sashes.

A pretty type of the stockette frock, which as well as the stockette coat and skirt continues its popularity this season, is made like a casack buttoned from neck to hem down the front, and without decoration, except for the sash, which makes up for the simplicity of the gown by showing as many colors as the wearer likes. Paisley is in great favor. A mushroom-colored stockette gown has a Paisley sash in soft tones, but the more sober-minded may prefer sashes of thick-ribbed silk to brighter ones.

Purple Sport Clothes.

The run of late on sport hats of various purple hues is held by fashion authorities to be due to the fact that much of the season's sport clothing of tweeds, homespuns and other rough weaves has distinct tinges of purple, even though those shades may not stand out prominently at first glance.

Veil and Hat Styles.

Turbans of felt were much in evidence at a smart prenuptial party given recently, as well as small high-crown hats. The latter were trimmed with petals flowers and fruits of silk, velvet, kid and ermine. The large shapes of hair and straw were wreathed in flowers and ostrich. All-white veils of silk georgette were thrown carelessly about on some of the smartest hats, but drawn tightly around the throat.

New Sleeve Designs.

Striking effects may be expected from the designs in sleeves for the new fall street dresses, according to designers who have just returned from the Rue de La Paix. These sleeves often will be open from the shoulder down and will be held together only at the wrist by a cuff. Metallic belts will predominate on street dresses this autumn and cre braid will be widely used as a trimming.

Crushed Velvet.

When velvet gets crushed from pressure hold the parts over a basin of hot water with the lining of the article next to the water; the pile will soon rise and assume its original beauty.

Old Little Jackets.

One hears more and more of the odd little jackets and capes that are to accompany the petite robes, made of the same material, even if it is only a light silk.

Daddy's Evening Fairy Tale

MARY GRAHAM BONNER

LITTLE CATERPILLARS.

"Hello," said the first little brown caterpillar. "So you're having a good meal at this leaf?"

"It is what I am having," said the second little brown caterpillar.

"How I do love to eat," said the third little brown caterpillar.

"When I grow bigger I'll eat more," said the fourth little brown caterpillar.

"I will eat so much and grow so fat," said the fifth little brown caterpillar.

"You won't eat any more than I will," said the sixth little brown caterpillar.

"I'll eat as much as any of you," said the seventh little brown caterpillar.

"When I get bigger I'll leave the rest of you," said the eighth little brown caterpillar.

"So will I," said the ninth little brown caterpillar.

"So will we all," said the tenth little brown caterpillar.

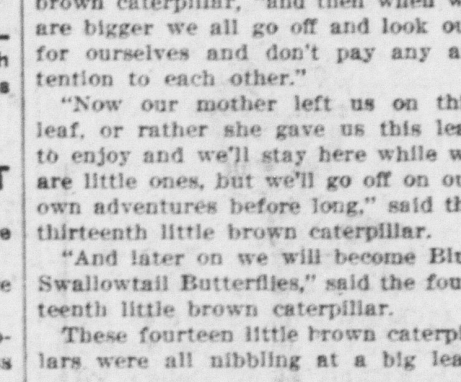
"Of course, we will," said the eleventh little brown caterpillar.

"We only stay together while we are young," said the twelfth little brown caterpillar, "and then when we are bigger we all go off and look out for ourselves and don't pay any attention to each other."

"Now our mother left us on this leaf, or rather she gave us this leaf to enjoy and we'll stay here while we are little ones, but we'll go off on our own adventures before long," said the thirteenth little brown caterpillar.

"And later on we will become Blue Swallowtail Butterflies," said the fourteenth little brown caterpillar.

These fourteen little brown caterpillars were all nibbling at a big leaf.



"We'll Stay Here."

Soon they would go off by themselves, each one looking out for himself and paying no attention to his sisters and brothers, for these fourteen little brown caterpillars were sisters and brothers.

"Did our mother receive this leaf as a gift?" asked the first little brown caterpillar.

"Oh no," said the second little brown caterpillar. "She just liked the looks of it or thought the taste of it would be good for us and so she just took it."

"Gracious," said the third little brown caterpillar, "you know caterpillars can't wait until they're asked to have their meals."

"They can't wait to be given leaves," said the fourth little brown caterpillar.

"They'd never get them if they did," said the fifth little brown caterpillar.

"And we must have leaves in our lives," said the sixth little brown caterpillar.

"How handsome we will be when we become Blue Swallowtail Butterflies," said the seventh little brown caterpillar.

"I greatly look forward to that day," said the eighth little brown caterpillar.

"And then we shall fly about and drink honey," said the ninth little brown caterpillar.

"And people will forget that we were caterpillars and will say,

"Look at those beautiful butterflies with their blue markings," added the tenth little brown caterpillar.

"We will pretend not to hear them but it will please us," said the eleventh little brown caterpillar.

"Of course it will please us," said the twelfth little brown caterpillar.

"We will eat and grow strong so we will be very beautiful," said the thirteenth little brown caterpillar.

"And eat too because it is so pleasant to eat," said the fourteenth little brown caterpillar as he took an extra large nibble at their leaf dining-room.

So they ate until they were a little bigger and then they went off, each one alone, to look for more food and adventures.

RIDDLES.

Why is Ireland like a bottle? Because it has a Cork in it.

When was beefsteak highest? When the cow jumped over the moon.

What precious stone is like an entrance to a field? Agate (a gate).

Why is a horse the most sympathetic of animals? Because he always gives the bit out of his mouth.

Which is the most wonderful animal in the farmyard? The pig, because he is killed and then cured.

What is the difference between a hen and a musician who plays in his spare time? One lays at pleasure, and the other plays at leisure.