The

Mystery of the Silver Dagger

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Illustrations by A. Weil

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CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

—22—

"Philip Severn," he repeated slowly, his glance wandering again to my face. "You are a friend of Clement Breckenridge—is that right?"

"Why, yes," in surprise. "I have known him for some years."

"I thought so; I don't forget a face often, but never heard your name before. I was waiting at the bank to see Breckenridge a few days ago, when he came out with you from his private office. He seemed very friendly. Well, now, Mr. Severn, what's been takin' place in here? Some hot fight, hain't there?"

His tone was friendly enough, and it was quite evident that my acquaintance with the banker had already given me a new standing.

"This is the end of the Alva murder and robbery," I said directly; "one of the men is dead, the other lies in there senseless, while the money they were after is there also in a valise untouched."

"Good God! What money?"

"So you didn't know about that, even! Well, I'll tell you. Captain Alva was killed to gain possession of a large sum which had been paid him for revolutionary purposes in Chile. These fellows inside found out about such a payment having been made and waylaid him. They had to kill him in order to get the money."

"Who did it?"

"I am not quite sure, sergeant, but I think Gaspar Wine committed the murder. He plunged from a window and is lying dead down below there. The other fellow is still alive and was going to share in the spoils. You know him, I guess, a Russian Jew by the name of Waldron."

"Ivan Waldron, the Red orator?"

"That's the man. I'll tell you the story briefly; all that needs to be told now. I had reason to suspect these two and hid in that closet, where I could overhear them discussing a division of the spoils. The two quarreled, during which Wine was forced out through the window. Then I got the best of Waldron, just as you fellows tried to break in."

The sergeant looked about, plainly puzzled.

"I guess your word ought to be good, Mr. Severn," he admitted. "Seein' as who you are. You live in Washington?"

"Yes—officially; my home is in Ohio."

"Where yer stopping here?"

I told him, naming the hotel at which I was registered.

"All right, then. I'll look around a bit; Morris, run down and call the patrol; have 'em get that body down out of there first when they come; Kelly, you stay here, with Halsey at the door."

I followed him and the fourth officer into the inner office. It was a wreck, but the sergeant took the scene in at a glance and picked his way across to the shattered window. The policeman bent over the outstretched figure of Waldron.

"How is the cuss, Carr?"

"Alive, all right, but got a h—l of a crack on the coco."

"Give him a glass of water in the face. Is this the grip you was telling me about, Mr. Severn?"

"Yes; it's locked, but supposed to be full of yellowbacks."

He pulled it forth from beneath the grasp of Waldron's arm.

"All right; I'll see it safe out o' here. I guess you'll have to go along with us, Mr. Severn; the captain will likely want ter ask some questions."

CHAPTER XV.

The Private Secretary.

I told my story to the captain much more in detail, and Breckenridge being found, stood sponsor for my identity, so that I was not detained. The next morning I testified before the coroner's jury over the crushed body of Wine, and later appeared in the room of the grand jury which indicted Waldron. On both these occasions I told enough to make matters reasonably clear, yet carefully avoided any direct mention of Miss Gessler. No doubt her name would be brought into the case later, but I was determined it should not be introduced through any indiscretion on my part. Krantz's name was used, but only indirectly, and the impression was left upon me that influence was being brought to bear to shield the banker from any direct connection with the crime.

I knew that when the time came for trial I could scarcely hope to escape thus easily. Under cross-examination by the defendant's attorney, the whole affair would be probed to the very bottom, and I should be compelled to disclose every bit of information I possessed. In the meanwhile I must discover the girl, and learn from her own lips, if possible, just how deeply she was involved. Then, and then only, could I decide upon my own future course. But how was I to locate her? I had nothing to guide me in the search. There were only two people to whom I could turn for even a suggestion—Krantz, the banker, and Sarah Waldron. I doubted if either would reveal the truth, but I could use the threat of exposure against Krantz, and might thus terrorize him into revealing the truth. I decided that if the girl did not call me by phone before noon the next day I would certainly exhaust every effort to find her. She would assuredly learn by that time what had occurred, but, whether she so desired or not, I was not willing to let her drop out of my life. I would learn, at least, whatever Adolph Krantz knew about her.

The hours dragged away bringing no message, the silence merely strengthening my resolution and increasing my interest. After a lonely lunch, in which her face seemed ever before me, I took a taxi and drove direct to the bank. I crossed the marble-floored lobby and approached a desk rather doubtfully. A middle-aged man glanced up from his work, and listened quietly to my question, examining my card attentively.

"Ah, yes, United States consular service—I see. I regret to say that Mr. Adolph Krantz is not in the bank today. In fact he is out of town, possibly for a week. Yes, he left rather suddenly for Washington. Perhaps you might talk with his secretary."

I hesitated, yet almost as quickly decided to see what might develop.

"I will if you please, for just a moment."

"Very good, sir. The third door down that corridor to the left. You will find it ajar, I think; walk right in."

I proceeded as he directed, the glass partitions of the bank on one side, the other divided into small private offices, the equipment plainly handsome. The third door stood partly open, giving me a glimpse within before I ventured to enter. The place had far more the appearance of a private library than a downtown business office. A woman was bending over the further desk, busied at some work. With heart beating somewhat faster I ventured to open the door sufficiently wide to enter.

There was no one else present, but her head instantly lifted, and she rose to her feet, with a quick smile, and outstretched hand, coming directly toward me.

"Mr. Philip Severn, at last," she exclaimed pleasantly. "My faith is rewarded."

"Your faith," I echoed, rallying from my surprise at this greeting. "Then you were expecting me?"

"I have never felt a very serious doubt. Does that sound odd? Let

She Did Not Move, or Glance Up.

me close the door, and then we will sit down and talk. I am never disturbed when the door is shut. Here is the best place. Yes, Mr. Severn, I was certain curiosity would cause you to seek me, even if there was no other motive. I did not phone, so you came here."

"I had but two choices—to seek information either through Adolph Krantz or Sarah Waldron. I chose to try Krantz first."

"And you really had no suspicion I was to be found here?"

"None whatever. Why should I? Not even yet do I know whom I am speaking with."

"Oh, yes, you do—Marie Gessler, revolutionist, messenger to the Chilean junta." She laughed, her eyes sparkling. "Does not that satisfy?"

"Far from it; I believe I am entitled to even more."

"Indeed you are. I have the honor of being also private secretary to Mr. Adolph Krantz. Now, what next?"

"Well, when he writes you a check, what name does he make it payable to?"

"Let me see; did you ever know any one called Tom Longdale?"

"Did I! Why, great Scott! you cannot mean that you are actually Helen? It is not possible."

"Oh, yes, it is; little girls grow up, you know. And now if you will be very good and quiet I am going to tell you just how it all happened. What led me to become a desperate conspirator, and—well, yes—a famous detective. Are you all ready for my confession?"

She rested her hand on mine, and permitted my fingers to close over it, in a spirit of frank good fellowship.

"Then listen; it may make you shudder in some of its blood-curdling details, and possibly you may consider my actions very unwomanly. Now just be quiet until I finish."

Her eyes met mine earnestly, but I felt I could perceive a certain pleading in her depths.

"I am Tom Longdale's sister Helen. As you doubtless know, financially there is no necessity for my seeking employment. Indeed I did not seek it, but was induced to accept this position at the request of Mr. Krantz, who has been a lifelong friend of my father's. I enjoy the work, however, and have been here now nearly three years. Adolph Krantz is a most lovable man, and I am devoted to his service. He is an Austrian by birth, and has found it more or less difficult to get away from that influence. Much money from Europe passes through his hands in financing various schemes, and among others this revolutionary fund was intrusted to him. At first he accepted this in the ordinary course of business, without suspicioning its purpose, but later learned how the money was being expended. The moment he became doubtful, Mr. Krantz absolutely severed all connections with these plotters and their schemes. While this was thoroughly understood officially, in Washington, where he reported his suspicion, certain circles, engaged in underhand work, still believed he could be used for their purposes."

"Yet he accepted the trust?"

"In a way, yes; but with perfectly loyal intent. As soon as word secretly reached him that he was to be thus used, he laid the full facts before the officials of this bank. I was present as his secretary, and learned then for the first time what I have already told you. They advised that he make the plot known immediately to the authorities at Washington. He was directed to accept the order, and thus, through seeming co-operation, learn the details connected with it. There was delay; for some reason Alva was not quite ready to go ahead, and refused to draw the money. Proof of conspiracy was lacking until this was consummated. Mr. Krantz, being afraid that he would be followed if he went again to Washington, delegated me to go, as I was entirely unknown. The Secret Service there outlined a plan designed to hurry matters. I was to be sent direct to these men—Alva, in particular—with positive instructions from the higher powers in Washington to draw the money and get busy. As I speak Spanish easily, and took the name of a well-known female revolutionist now in this country, but unknown even to Alva, the task did not seem a specially dangerous one."

She passed for a moment, her mind gathering up the odds and ends of narrative.

"It is not necessary that I go further into detail. I met Captain Alva as planned, and was taken to the place where his gang gathered. Krantz was there with the money, and my message compelled the Chilean to accept, and receipt for it. Government agents were stationed in Jersey City to intercept him on his way back to New York. He never got far enough to fall into their hands; before he had driven four blocks he was murdered and robbed. The rest of the story you already know."

"The money was actually in that valise, then?"

"Some money was, but not all. We were afraid it might be opened before an arrest could be made. Each package had real money on the outside; altogether the amount did not exceed fifteen hundred dollars, and these bills were all marked."

"But you suspected Wine? I know of your call at his office."

"I wondered if you did. Were you there then?"

"Yes, I followed you in."

"I wish I had known; I would have ventured more than I dared to alone. I suspected—yes; but that was all. I possessed no facts, but I frightened him so when I exhibited that hat-pin I felt absolutely convinced that he was guilty."

"You had no reason to believe he possessed such a weapon?"

"None whatever; I merely took a chance. I think now the pin used belonged to Sarah Waldron, but how it came there can only be determined through a confession by her husband."

Her eyes lifted again to mine, questioningly, and a bit anxious.

"Was my course right or wrong, Philip Severn?"

"Undoubtedly right, although I imagine few girls would have had the courage."

"You believe in me still? in the woman?"

My handclasp tightened, and her eyed dropped before the message she must have instantly read in mine.

"This has been a test of us both which we will never regret," I answered soberly, "for it has brought faith, hope, love; is this not true?"

She did not move, or glance up, but I caught the whispered response of her lips.

(THE END.)

Alone in the Jungle.

Mrs. Clementi, an English woman who has achieved a reputation as a traveler and explorer says: "To be alone even for a minute in the jungle is alarming, for such is the profound silence all around that one has a terrifying sense of being inimically watched by unseen things." Of the forest noises one of the most uncanny is the howling of baboons. "When they are close at hand, the whole air is alive with the din, so that you cannot tell from which direction it proceeds. Every nerve in your body tingles, and there is a curious fascination in the great volume of sound."

IN COAT DRESSES

Garments Are Made to Give Youthful Appearance.

Embroideries Are Given Much Emphasis—Braid Favorite Means of Embellishment.

Coat dresses which are invested with youthful qualities are conspicuous, with the straight-line frock developed along chemise lines also sponsored. Further diversity is expressed in the model which features the pouched bodice and straight skirt, while a frock which stands out distinctly for its indivduality affects princess lines.

Gold thread and floss embroideries are given considerable emphasis, with braid a favorite means of embellishment, novelty braids as well as the well-liked military braid being accorded attention.

A coat dress of twill having a straightline back is unusual for the distinct bodice section, which appears at the front only. The side closing is marked with gold thread embroideries, which also stretch in band formation around the lower skirt edge. A sufficient flare is introduced to give a

Suit of Twill Embroidered in Black Silk.

youthful swing to the garment. Another coat frock, also affecting a side closing, is adorned in an interesting manner with braid which takes on a pointed outline. A tiny watch pocket adds a naive touch.

French Evening Wraps.

The Spanish influence, of which the shawl is but one reflection, is transferring itself to evening wraps in gay Paris. French ladies are taking the Spanish designs and the Oriental designs and combining them to make some of the best-looking wraps that have been devised for many a long day. Women are accustomed to regard their evening wraps as the most colorful of their adornments, and, by this new development of fashion, they will lose not a jot in regard to smart and becoming embellishment.

USE VELVET FOR FALL HATS

One of the loveliest of fall styles is this sapphire velvet. The turnup brim is ornamented by two antique silver and cut steel bead ornaments.

BROWN AND ECRU ARE SMART

Warmer Shades are Given Preference Over Gray Toned Blouses for Fall Wear.

Though there are many gray-toned blouses among the autumn models, one notes a tendency to get away from the rather overdone dove shade and a strong tendency toward the brown tones. In tailored suits brown is an extremely fashionable color for autumn; some of the most distinguished French tailleurs are in coffee brown, or fawn, or beaver brown, and, of course blouses in the brown, tan and ecru tones will go with these brown tailored suits. There is one color that simply will not go with brown—and that color is gray. Almost all other shades may be combined smartly or harmoniously—but never brown and gray!

Black is another modish color for tailored suits and with these black suits gray, rather than tan blouses, will make the proper harmony. So there are plenty of gray-toned blouses, though brown, tan and ecru ones are far more numerous. One ecru georgette blouse is trimmed with deep cream Venice lace and is mounted over a sleeveless slip of flesh-tinted chiffon. The vestee and square neck are in line with the new mode and the deep collar coming far down at either side of the lace vestee is graceful. The sleeves are just over the elbow and are trimmed, like the collar, with dangling crochet ornaments. This blouse comes just over the waistline and has a narrow folded sash which loops over once at the back, with short ends weighted with the crochet ornaments.

Frocks of Velveteen.

The ever popular sleeveless frock may now be secured in velveteen. It is said that already there has been evidenced a strong demand for these sleeveless frocks of velveteen, presented in black, navy and brown, and that buyers are enthusiastic about them. Their diversity lies in their neck and pocket treatment and in their embellishment.

Military braid is one embellishment medium employed, and is seen outlining necklines and sleeve holes, as well as marking pocket sections. Some of the pockets affect a shield shape, while others are in slanting order.

Brown Shades Rule.

One has only to make a round of the specialty shops to become convinced of the place the brown shades have in fall fashions. One charming youthful frock is of brown red canton crepe with a wide band of openwork trimming, while the cafe au lait shades are represented nearly everywhere. Even the evening gowns have adopted the bronze brown shades, especially in pailletted robes, as these light up better than most shades of brown for evening wear.

IN ACCESSORIES LIST THIS SEASON

Purses, Bags and Costume Jewelry Provide the Keynote in Displays of Fall Novelties.

Originality is the keynote of displays of purses, bags and costume jewelry this season. One is supposed to have as many pocketbooks as one has costumes to wear with them, and they should, of course, be in harmony with one's hat and other details. For dress purposes, the times when one goes calling, if indeed anyone ever indulges in this form of civility any more, there are smart-looking envelope purses which should never be packed out of their slender lines; envelopes of moire with flexible metal edge having an initial, and sometimes with an edge of marcassite, a steel so brilliantly cut that it has the effect of rhinestones. The envelopes take as many forms as do the paper oblongs and squares from which they are named. An oblong pocketbook with a strap near one end has a very dignified air whether it be in moire, which seems to lead in envelope effects, or in satin, which is also carried.

For a bag mounted on a Japanese frame, navy moire is embroidered in a cherry blossom design and one may know that the fittings are in keeping with the attractive exterior.

Having made frames out of everything under the sun, tiny jet beads, of course, are not omitted. They cover not only the frame but the strap on which the bag hangs from the wrist, a long narrow affair made of double and overlapping rows of monkey fur. Fur bags have been tried at various times and not always with success; but the early season brings a few new models in its wake, and monkey seems rather likely to succeed where less adaptable furs have failed.

Sashes.

The sash continues to be prominent and it is no difficult task to make this of the dress material or ribbon, and then knot up some silk for the fringe edging, but for the woman who does not care to do this herself there are ready-made sashes in large variety to be had in the ribbon section. They can be had in plain or fancy ribbons, among which the Roman stripes are prominent. The home dressmaker can save $2 or more by buying two yards of ribbon and making fringe herself.

Tapioca Cream.

Cover three tablespoonfuls of tapioca with water overnight. Put it into one quart of milk over the fire. When it boils add the yolks of four eggs well beaten, two-thirds of a cupful of sugar and a little salt. Stir until it begins to thicken; beat the whites of the four eggs to a stiff froth; stir the mixture into this. After taking from the fire, flavor with vanilla, pour into a dish and set away to cool.

Eyelet Embroidery.

It is seen again. It is much in vogue for collar and cuffs. It is cool looking and serviceable, and there is a crispness about it, most attractive. It makes an extremely smart gilet for the serge frock.

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"Well, they told the truth."—The American Legion Weekly.

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