

What the Gray House Hid

THE STORY

Hilton Hanby has purchased a country place—the Gray house, near Pine Plains, Miss. Selenos, a former tenant, warns him that the house is under a curse. Further alarming details are impressed upon Adolf Smucker, Hanby's secretary, by a man who claims to have been chauffeur for Sir Stanford Seymour, former occupant of the place. The Hanbys laugh off the warnings. But they are shocked when they hear that the caretaker of the Gray house, a man named Kerr, has been mysteriously murdered. Hanby consults his friend Pelham. The family starts for the new home. Appleton, a clerk of Douglas and Smith, the agents from whom Hanby bought the Gray house, explains to Pelham, that a dangerous pond near the house, in which several children have been drowned, has since been filled in, but he urges Pelham to dissuade Hanby from occupying the Gray house. Hanby and Junior learn that the caretaker was known to the police as "Red Chapin" and had a bad record. Hanby considers asking Leslie Barron, long an admirer of Celia, to join the house party. Mrs. Hanby declares she likes the house. Pelham becomes a member of the household, with the official title of "house detective." Over the telephone Hanby is warned by a woman not to subject his family to the dangers of the Gray house. Leslie Barron arrives making four able-bodied members of the Hanby household. A phone call from a man who declares he is an old acquaintance of Hanby's and interested in ornithology, but whom Hanby cannot identify, urges him to preserve a part of the grounds as a bird sanctuary. The idea appeals to Hanby and he makes the promise. The Hanbys take possession of the Gray house.

CHAPTER V—Continued

"Bill," she said, "you must be fond of the Hanby clan to do this. Poor old Bill!" she murmured softly.

"Why poor?" she demanded.

"I know," she said wisely. "You can't fool me."

"I'm not poor," he retorted. "I'm rich. I have a family without the labor of supporting it. I'm much more sensible than you imagine. I adore your mother. She married the man she loved. Three things might have happened to me—I might have married another woman, and made her unhappy; I might have become one of those sour, cynical old devils who poison this earth; I might have drunk myself to death. I thought of doing all three at various times. I did try drinking for a year, but Dina made me feel like a d-d coward. I am now going to use some of your modern terms. I sublimated my love into affection for everything that was dear to your mother. That's why I bear your superior airs with cheerfulness. That's why I talk baseball scores with Tim."

"You love baseball," said Celia.

"I love you," retorted Pelham.

"About four years ago—the summer we had a house at Allenhurst—I cherished a hopeless passion for you," Celia confided. "It began when you used to do those fancy back dives at the Allenhurst pool, and was fanned to fury when you rescued that man from the surf. Did you ever suspect it?"

"Not a bit," he said. "Mine is an open, modest nature, shrinking and simple. You interest me strangely, Celia. Why did you drop me?"

"I went back to school," she said, "and there was an adorable being who taught us music. I wanted to practice Beethoven ten hours a day."

"Why did you drop him?"

"He was sent away for kissing a teacher—or, rather, for being caught kissing a teacher. After that Les rather amused me. I was then an emotionally old woman of seventeen."

"Are you really fond of Les?" asked Pelham.

"I wish I knew!"

"I thought one always knew."

"Not in these times," said Celia. "One meets so many boys. Les is on probation this summer. What about a swim before breakfast? There's a gorgeous high dive into twenty feet of water. I want to beat Junior at back diving. Please, Bill, give me a lesson!"

"You'll have to make it right with Dina," he said. "I'm home man in chief, and I want to keep my job."

"Dina and dad will be there before you, if you don't make haste."

"What? Taking advantage of me like that? I'll be in my bathing suit before you are!"

The two raced toward the house.

The swimming party was not ready for breakfast until half past nine. The meal was hardly begun when a package of mail was brought in.

"I'm going to send a postboy on horseback for it, when things are in running order," Hanby commented, sorting it out. "Tradesmen's invitations, mainly. Here's one from a Poughkeepsie undertaker, with most attractive illustrations of the latest in caskets."

Next he held up a large square envelope, lavender-colored, and adorned with a black coat of arms.

"Buddiegh Salterton," he read. "I didn't tell you, Dina, that I wrote to Mr. Seymour weeks ago, asking if he had a chauffeur like the one Smucker described." Hanby frowned a little. "It's odd that his reply should come on our first breakfast here!"

"What does he say?" Dina asked. Hanby slit the envelope.

"In the center is a crest," he commented. "Underneath is a simple

The Mystery of a Haunted Mansion

— By —
Wyndham Martyn

W. N. U. Service

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English address. Listen! 'Seymour Manor, Bovey-Tracey, Ottery St. Mary, Budleigh Salterton, Devonshire.' That makes the Gray house fade into nothing! On the top left hand corner it says, 'Telegraph, Ottery.' On the top right-hand corner it says, 'Great Western station, four miles.'

This was the missive that Hanby read aloud:

"HILTON HANBY, ESQ.,

"My Dear Sir:

"Owing to a fishing trip in Norway my answer to your letter has been unavoidably delayed.

"During my stay in your country my chauffeur was the one now in my service, Richard Betterton. He is five feet nine in height, weighs one hundred and forty pounds, is dark, pale of face, with an aquiline nose—in fact, as you see, in every respect differing from the impostor who claimed to have held this position.

"I am, my dear sir,

"Faithfully yours,

"STANFORD SEYMOUR."

"I resign as hoe man," Bill Pelham said. "I am now the house detective. I report for work here and

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On the right side of the front of its blouse rose a group of vertical tucks, with a pointed top, and with just a little imagination, there was a genuine skyscraper adorning the dress.

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Wide shapes are generally used. Many of the collars slip over the head. Others are finished with short self-fabric ties to be slipped through bone or pearl ornaments. Puritan collars and Buster Brown collars have returned once more. One attractive Buster Brown collar of yellow is scalloped and finished at each scallop point with a yellow pearl button. Another collar of georgette slips on over the head and reaches almost to the waistline, in a triangular shape, in the back.

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shaw slumbers not nor sleeps. I'll tell you what I will do, Bill," he suggested briskly. "I'll beat you three sets out of four whenever you are ready. I've been reading a book on tennis tactics, and after committing it to memory I've burned it, so you can't read it. You haven't a chance!" Hanby's mood was more cheerful.

"I wrote that book," he declared. "Want to bet?"

"Go and get into flannels," Pelham told him. "Bill's worried," he added, to Dina, when Hanby had left the room.

"I never saw him so before. Try and make him laugh at it, Bill."

Hanby's mood of depression passed very quickly. New daily interests so crowded one upon the other that there was no room for gloom or in

tropection.

The Parkers did not come. Parker's stomach, after many unheeded warnings, had finally rebelled against its owner's habit of taking three meat meals a day. Julia Parker wrote that her husband was about to be operated upon.

One day, walking down the drive, Hanby met a small, florid, neatly dressed man approaching the house—the sort of man to inspire confidence even among the most suspicious.

"If he's a salesman," Hanby reflected, "I'm gone. A man like that could sell me anything!"

The stranger bowed politely.

"Mr. Hanby, I believe?"

"Yes," replied Hanby, wondering what it was he was about to buy.

"My name is Appleton—Frederick Appleton. You are probably unaware of my existence."

"On the contrary, you are expected when the bass season opens. You were kind enough to give my friend Mr. Pelham some information about this house."

"As I was in the neighborhood, I took the liberty of coming to see your improvements. I have always been much interested in the Gray house."

"I shall be glad to show you over it and ask your advice. I find every day that there are a lot of things about country estates that they don't teach boys on farms—these improvements, for instance."

Mr. Appleton's manner was almost eager.

"May I ask what they are?"

"A big swimming pool between the tennis courts and the house, a new garage for six cars, a Japanese tea house, and a dozen smaller jobs."

Nothing pleased the new owner more than the opportunity to exhibit his property. Mr. Appleton was bored by nothing. He begged to be shown everything. He had no criticisms. He congratulated Hilton Hanby warmly.

"You will make this," he declared, "one of the stately homes of America. You have a genius for this sort of thing."

Only in one matter was his view opposed to that of the owner. He thought that the ground given over to the bird sanctuary would do admirably for ornamental glass houses.

"My wife and I wouldn't think of such a thing," Hanby asserted firmly. "We are for the conservation of bird life. You may not know it, but our rarer species of songsters are in serious danger of extermination. That bird sanctuary is a hobby of ours, and it will not be disturbed while we live."

Mr. Appleton wrung his host's hand. Hanby was surprised at the emotion written on this cheery, unlined face.

"It does you credit, sir," he exclaimed. "In my ignorance I have given no thought to such matters. It was criminal negligence. I did not know."

"As a matter of fact," Hanby confessed, "I was just as heedless as you until a month ago. Mr. Baylis, whom I met at the Metropolitan club, told me all about it. I rather think he is president of the Ornithological society."

"The name seems familiar," said Appleton. "One of our national authorities. If I mistake not, I think I have read a notice of one of his books on the subject."

Appleton was sightseeing until luncheon. Hanby would not let him refuse to stay to the meal, despite the fact that he had a neat package of sandwiches and fruit.

The interior of the house charmed him greatly. He was filled with admiration at the rules of the Sanctuary club. The critical family circle approved of him.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Dame Fashion Smiles

By Grace Jewett Austin

When Sir Walter Scott named a favorite character in his novels "Friar Tuck," the word probably sounded as pleasant to him as it does to most women this year.

There is something subtly pleasing about tucks that cannot be explained right out in black and white.

When one sees a thoroughly well-made coat with

pin-tucking radiating away from the shoulders, or up from the bottom of the coat, or along its side, it is hard to keep from murmuring right out loud, "I like that coat."

The matter of capes upon coats is one that has its own fascination, but without quite the universality of agreement that there is in the matter of tucks.

Out of a thick round metallic pancake, which is one of the modern miracles, came the words the other day, "The achievement of beauty and elegance is through simple lines."

The voice, speaking from half a continent away, was referring to an article far different from a woman's dress, but Dame Fashion thought he gave quite a perfect text for a dress discourse.

It is faith in this text which leads a great many to believe that humpy monstrosities like bustles, offenses against the "simple line," will never return to power again.

There are many adornments which do not break a general simplicity of line at all. Queen Elizabeth's famous "ruff" around her neck was a decided breaker of line, and it would be a bold designer who would suggest wearing it for anything but a costume party. On the other hand, the exquisite jewels which as necklaces lay upon the neck and shoulders of Empress Josephine gleamed and dazzled without line interruption, and might be donned for dinner or evening wear today with perfect propriety.

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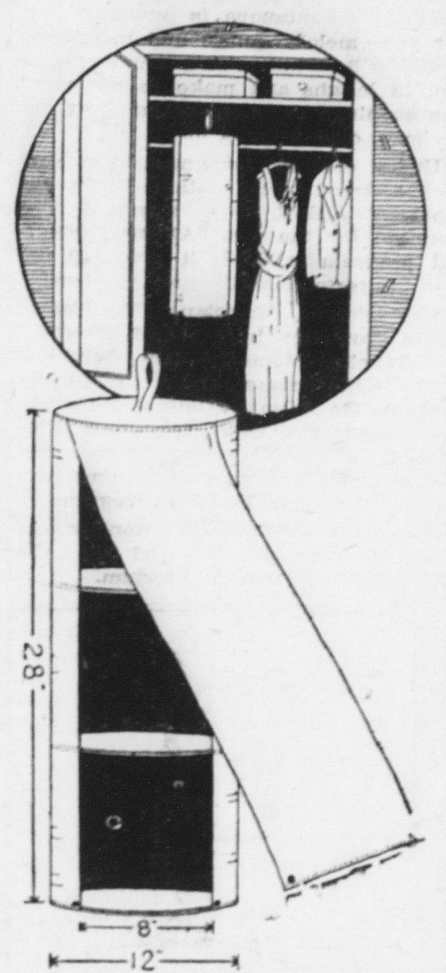
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