

UNCONFESED

By MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY

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CHAPTER IX—Continued

"Anson wasn't there. Hiding out somewhere; reluctant to give testimony, I suppose." I told Mitchell about my conversation with her, and her words. "She said that she'd be sorry enough to have to tell it. That any one might have washed out a handkerchief."

CHAPTER X

Eventually every one quieted down. The sharp outbreak of protests dropped to more considering undertones at that phrase, "without permission."

"Well"—mumbled Donahey. "Well?" challenged Deck. "Are we going on with this indefinitely? I'm telling you that I've got to be back on the job tomorrow or my paper will want you fellows to say why."

I didn't notice what was happening until I saw the funny look on Clancy's face. He was holding the cigarette case in his hands and feeling it with slow, investigating fingers. Then he pushed up beside Deck in front of the table.

He was dumping out the contents of the case. I saw the cigarettes come out, one after the other, and then, with another shake, something else came rolling out. Instantly the heads closed over it; I couldn't see what was there. I heard Donahey say, "By God," in an incredulous voice and Clancy, "Will you look at that?" and then somebody cried sharply, "It's the diamond!" and Hardeen pushed forward.

We were all pushing forward. Through the confusion Deck's voice came, sharp with anger. "I tell you I only picked the thing up again a few minutes ago—I left it about this morning."

I had reached Mitchell now. "Oh, that's true—don't you remember he asked you for a cigarette this morning?" I gasped. "Oh, do get in to them and tell them so!"

"Steady on," Mitchell was murmuring. He put his hand over mine as it gripped his arm. Hardeen's voice dominated the confusion. He stood over Deck like a madman; he looked as if it was all he could do to keep his hands off him.

I did not scream. It seemed to me as if I could never make any sound again, but I did, over my shoulder, to the people crowding now in back of me.

CHAPTER XI

Anson was dead. . . . Choked to death and thrust behind one of the prince's overcoats. Her pretty face was dark and terrible in congestion. She was rigid in death. She had been dead five or six hours they said.

The police were already with us; very soon the medical examiner made his appearance, together with Dr. Olliphant. A dazed horror hung over the house. Anson—dead. The second murder. The thing was inexplicable.

Letty Van Alstyn's hair ornament. The broken thing she had thrown away and permitted Anson to carry off—and then demanded back from her. It didn't make sense. She couldn't have been murdered for its possession, or the murderer would have taken it away. And why had she got it back from Miss Van Alstyn?

With drawn revolvers the police tramped through room after room, peering behind doors, beneath beds, investigating the basement, the storerooms, the laundries, the wine cellar. And there was not a trace of an invader to be found in that great

house. There was not a clue except the brown crescent, and not a mark on the closet door except the prints of the maid who found the body. No one had seen Anson alive since the time that I had talked with her in the hall.

Donahey had us herded all together again in the drawing room, and he barked his questions at us with the manner of a thoroughly belligerent and bewildered man. "And just what time was that, Miss Seton?" he snapped.

"He can keep his hands off me." Slowly the inspector's gaze shifted towards Rancini. "Been making passes at her, prince?" Rancini smiled boldly back. "A pretty maid—" He shrugged. "Anything else?" said Donahey shortly to me.

"I asked her why she didn't complain to the princess, and she said that the maid was always wrong. Then she said she'd have to go back for the towels she had forgotten. I asked her to wait, and we had the talk about the handkerchief."

"What'd she tell you?" "Not a thing. But I had the very definite impression that she had something on her mind. She said she'd tell all she knew downstairs at the inquest, but she didn't like to make trouble—any one might have washed out a handkerchief. Then she went back into the room. And I don't think she thought that Prince Rancini had come out of it while we were talking, I flung out, "for she looked awfully bothered at having to go in again."

My eyes encountered Donahey's cynically thoughtful face. I wondered if he was thinking the same thing as I was. Suppose Rancini had been in the room when Anson returned—suppose he had grabbed her and she had started to scream? In his anger and panic he might have choked her and choked harder than he meant. He was a big fellow.

But ticking away, deep down in my mind, was the insistent thought that Anson had known something. Something about a handkerchief drying on a radiator. Something that was silenced now forever. The prince had muttered, half angry, half soothing, "That is nonsense! There was nothing . . ."

"All right, prince," Donahey agreed. "The girl goes back to your room but you aren't there—that's your story, and you stick to it. But now some time after that, any time in the next hour or so, somebody in that room got hold of her and choked her to death. Now where was everybody for that next hour?"

It was hard to discover where every one had been during that hour for they had moved about so much. Rancini said he had gone downstairs for a time, then up to the Kellers' sitting-room on the second floor where he and his wife had waited with the Kellers and Mrs. Crane for the summons to the inquest. The only ones who declared they had stayed definitely in their own rooms during the entire time were Alan Deck, Hardeen and myself.

STAR DUST Movie • Radio

PETE SMITH of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who's made a name for himself with his short subjects, bought a film made by an amateur on sixteen millimeter film, remade it on thirty-five millimeter, and liked the result so well that he is putting on a nationwide contest for such subjects.

Theater executives and representatives of film-selling companies all over the country will send the best films submitted to them by amateur movie makers to Mr. Smith, and he'll pick the winners.

George Arliss is busy in England making "East Meets West," and his brother, Fred H. Andrews, is equally busy at the same studio. He is advising the producers on Oriental matters connected with the picture. It comes easily to him because he used to be curator of the Lahore museum. The veteran English character star continues to be a favorite with American movie goers. His pictures have invariably been interesting and the movie public is looking forward to his version of "East Meets West."

Imagine the feelings of one of our foremost movie stars when, as she motored through a small city recently, she saw one of her latest and best pictures advertised on the marquee of a theater—along with another feature, the Louis-Schmelinger fight picture, and the \$550 that was the evening's Bank Night award.

Football fans are going to flock to movie theaters when RKO's "The Big Game" is released. Bobby Wilson, All-American quarterback from Southern Methodist university, has just been signed for it, and along with him will appear five more star football players, all members of Stanford university's championship eleven of last fall. They are Monk Moscrip, Bones Hamilton, Keith Topping and Frank Alustiza.

Ruth Chatterton loves to fly her own plane, and does it very capably. But she's been asked not to go up in her plane while she's working in "Dodsworth"; valuable property can't be risked, you see. So she went for a whirlwind trip on a motorcycle the other night, and the company had the jitters all over again when word of it came out. First thing she knows, she'll be requested to do all her riding, if any, in a wheel chair.

If you are among the many who never fail to tune in on Colonel Stoopnagle and Bud, you may have wondered why they omitted Mr. Bopp, one of the most amusing characters on their broadcasts, the first time they substituted for the vacationing Fred Allen.

The Colonel had his tonsils out a few days before the broadcast. And he plays Mr. Bopp, which is very hard on the voice. You may recall that Merle Oberon was slated for "The Garden of Allah" till Marlene Dietrich came along and got the role. Merle was upset, and decided to sue the producers. The matter was settled out of court very nicely. Miss Oberon received \$10,000 in addition to the \$12,000 which she got before she lost the part. And she's to do another picture, "It Happened in Hollywood," which will bring in another \$60,000. Not so bad.

Bette Davis has been having her troubles. Her salary and the kind of roles assigned her caused the difficulty, and, after she failed to show up for three weeks to work in "God's Country and the Woman" she was suspended by Warner Brothers.



GETTING SOMEWHERE The two tramps were stretched out on the green grass. Above them was the warm sun, beside them was a babbling brook. It was a quiet, restful, peaceful scene.



SOME HELP "This boy who graduated is a good advertisement for you, professor." "How so?" "He acts like he knows everything in the world."

The Start A surgeon, an architect and a politician were arguing as to whose profession was the oldest. Said the surgeon: "Eve was made from Adam's rib, and that surely was a surgical operation."

Please Move On The meek little man approached the policeman on the street corner. "Excuse me, constable," he said, "but I've been waiting for my wife for over half an hour. Would you be kind enough to order me to move on?"—London Tit-Bits Magazine.

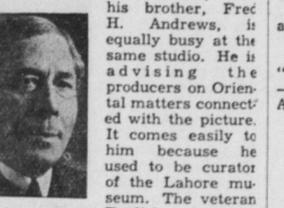
All Settled "How's that widower you married turning out as a husband?" the former widow was asked. "A pain in the neck," she sighed, "the poor fish was so cowed by his first wife there even isn't any pleasure fussing with him."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

While Rome Burned Nero had just completed his historical solo. "There's no use of trying to uplift the public," he said. "Think of a crowd that would rather run to look at a fire than hear me play the violin!"

Mental Attitude "I wouldn't marry the best man on earth," said the irate young woman. "And if you did," said Miss Cayenne, "you'd never believe it."



The Prince Was Most Self-Possessed.



George Arliss



Merle Oberon

(TO BE CONTINUED)