000000000 The GARDEN MURDER CASE

S. S. VAN DINE

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CHAPTER XI-Continued

-16-Vance jumped down and turned to us.

"Frightfully sorry," he said. "Height does affect most people. I didn't realize." He looked at the girl. "Will you forgive me? . . ."

As he spoke Floyd Garden stepped out on the roof through the passageway door.
"Sorry, Vance," he apologized,

"but Doc Siefert wants Miss Beeton downstairs-if she feels equal to it. The mater is putting on one of her The nurse hurried away immedi-

ately, and Garden strolled up to Vance. He was again fussing with his pipe. "A beastly mess," he mumbled.

"And you've certainly put the fear of God and destruction into the hearts of the pious boys and girls here this afternoon. They all got the jitters after you talked with them." He looked up. "The fact is, Vance, if you should want to see Kroon or Zalia Graem or Madge Weatherby for any reason this evening, they'll be here. They've all asked to come. Must return to the scene of the crime, or something of that kind. Need mutual support."

"Perfectly natural. Quite." Vance nodded. "I understand their feelings . . . Beastly mess, as you say . . And now suppose we go down." Doctor Siefert met us at the foot of the stairs.

"I was just coming up for you, Mr. Vance. Mrs. Garden insists on seeing you gentlemen." Then he added in a low tone: "She's in a tantrum. A bit hysterical. Don't take anything she may say too seriously.'

We entered the bedroom. Mrs. Garden, in a salmon-pink silk dressing gown, was in bed, bolstered up by a collection of pillows. Her face was drawn and, in the slanting rays of the night-light, seemed flabby and unhealthy. Her eyes glared demoniacally as she looked at us, and her fingers clutched nervously at the guilt. Miss Beeton stood at the far side of the bed, looking down at her patient with calm concern; and Professor Garden leaned heavily against the window-sill opposite, his face a mask of troubled solicitude.

"I have something to say, and I want you all to hear it." Mrs. Garden's voice was shrill and strident. "My nephew has been killed today-and I know who did it!" She glared venomously at Floyd Garden who stood near the foot of the bed, his pipe hanging limply from the corner of his mouth. "You did it!"

She pointed an accusing finger at her son. "You've always hated Woody. You've been jealous of him. No one else had any reason to do this despicable thing. I suppose I should lie for you and shield you. But to what end? So you could kill somebody else? You killed Woody, and I know you killed him. And I know why you did it . .

Floyd Garden stood through this tirade without moving and without perceptible emotion.

'And why did I do it, mater?" 'Because you were jealous of him. Because you knew that I had divided my estate equally between you two-and you want it all for yourself. You always resented the fact that I loved Woody as well as you. And now you think that by having got Woody out of the way, you'll get everything when I die. But you're mistaken. You'll get nothing! Do you hear me? Nothing! Tomorrow I'm going to change my will. Woody's share will go to your father, with the stipulation that you will never get or inherit a dollar of it. And your share will go to chari-She laughed hysterically and beat the bed with her clenched fists.

Doctor Siefert had been watching the woman closely. He now moved a little nearer the bed.

"An ice-pack, immediately," he said to the nurse; and she went quickly from the room. Then he busied himself with his medicine case and deftly prepared a hypodermic injection.

The woman relaxed under his patient dictatorial scrutiny and permitted him to give her the injection. She lay back on the pillows, staring blankly at her son. The nurse returned to the room and ar-

ranged the ice-bag for her patient. Doctor Siefert then quickly made out a prescription and turned to Miss Beeton.

"Have this filled at once. A teaspoonful every two hours until Mrs. Garden falls asleep."

Floyd Garden stepped forward and took the prescription. "I'll phone the pharmacy," said. "It'll take them only a few

minutes to send it over." And he went out of the room. As we passed the den door, we could hear Floyd Garden telephon-

down now," Doctor Siefert remarked to Vance when we reached the drawing-room. "As I told you, you mustn't take her remarks seriously when she's in this condition. She will probably have forgotten about it by tomorrow."

"Her bitterness, however, did not seem entirely devoid of rationality,' Vance returned.

Siefert frowned but made no comment on Vance's statement. Instead he said in his quiet wellmodulated voice, as he sat down leisurely in the nearest chair: "This whole affair is very shocking. Floyd Garden gave me but a few details when I arrived. Would you care to enlighten me further?"

Vance readily complied. He briefly went over the entire case, beginning with the anonymous telephone message he had received the night before. (Not by the slightest sign did the doctor indicate any previous knowledge of that telephone call. He sat looking at Vance with serene attentiveness, like a specialist listening to the case history of a patient.) Vance withheld no important detail from him.

"And the rest," Vance concluded, "you yourself have witnessed." Siefert nodded very slowly two or three times.

"A very serious situation," he commented gravely, as if making a diagnosis. "Some of the things you have told me seem highly significant. A shrewdly conceived murder-and a vicious one. Especially the hiding of the revolver in Miss Beeton's coat and the attempt on her life with the bromin gas in the vault."

"I seriously doubt," said Vance, "that the revolver was put in Miss Beeton's coat pocket with any intention of incriminating her. I imagine it was to have been taken out of the house at the first opportunity. But I agree with you that the bromin episode is highly mystifyin'." Vance, without appearing to



"I Called the Sergeant Just After I Phoned You."

do so, was watching the doctor closely. "When you asked to see me on your arrival here this afternoon," he went on, "I was hoping that you might have some suggestion which, coming from one who is familiar with the domestic situation here, might put us on the track

to a solution." Siefert solemnly shook his head several times.

"No, no. I am sorry, but I am completely at a loss myself. When I asked to speak to you and Mr. Markham it was because I was naturally deeply interested in the situation here and anxious to hear what you might have to say about it." He paused, shifted slightly in his chair, and then asked: "Have you formed any opinion from what you have been able to learn?"

"Yes. Oh, yes. Frankly, however, I detest my opinion. I'd hate to be right about it. A sinister, unnatural conclusion is forcing itself upon me. It's sheer horror." He spoke with unwonted intensity.

Siefert was silent, and Vance turned to him again. "I say, doctor, are you particularly worried about Mrs. Garden's

condition?" A cloud overspread Siefert's countenance, and he did not answer at

"It's a queer case," he said at length, with an obvious attempt at evasion. "As I recently told you, it has me deeply puzzled. I'm bring-

ing Kattelbaum up tomorrow." "Yes. As you say. Kattelbaum." Vance looked at the doctor dreamily. "My anonymous telephone message last night mentioned radioactive sodium. But equanimity is essential. Yes. By all means. Not a nice case, doctor—not at all a nice case . . . And now I think we'll be toddlin'." Vance rose and

Siefert also got up. "If there is anything whatever that I can do for you . . ."

"We may call on you later," Vance returned, and walked toward

the archway.
Siefert did not follow us, but turned and moved slowly toward one of the front windows, where he stood looking out, with his hands clasped behind him. We re-entered the hallway and found Sneed waiting to help us with our coats.

We had just reached the door leading out of the apartment when the strident tones of Mrs. Garden's voice assailed us again. Floyd Gar-

"I think Mrs. Garden will quiet | den was in the bedroom, leaning over his mother.

"Your solicitude won't do you any good, Floyd," Mrs. Garden cried. "Being kind to me now, are you? Telephoning for the prescription-all attention and loving kindness. But don't think you're pulling the wool over my eyes. It won't make any difference. Tomorrow I change my will! Tomorrow

We continued on jour way out, and heard no more.

Shortly after nine o'clock the next morning there was a telephone call from Doctor Siefert. Vance was still abed when the telephone rang, and I answered it. The doctor's voice was urgent and troubled when he asked that I summon Vance immenese robe and sandals and went into the anteroom. It was nearly ten minutes before

he came out again. "Mrs. Garden was found dead in her bed this morning," he drawled. "Poison of some kind. I've phoned Markham, and we'll be going to the Garden apartment as soon as he

comes. A bad business, Van-very

Markham arrived within half an hour. In the meantime Vance had cup of coffee.

"What's the trouble now?" Markham demanded irritably, as he came into the library. "Perhaps came into the library. "Perhaps now that I'm here, you'll be good enough to forego your cryptic air."

Vance looked up and sighed. "Do sit down and have a cup of coffee while Lenjoy this cigarette. Really, y'know, it's deuced hard to be lucid on the telephone." He poured a cup of coffee, and Markham reluctantly sat down. "And please don't sweeten the coffee," Vance went on. "It has a delightfully subtle bouquet, and it would be a pity to spoil it with saccharine."

Markham, frowning defiantly, put three lumps of sugar in the cup.

'Why am I here?" he growled. Vance drew deeply on his cigarette and settled back lazily in his chair. "Siefert phoned me this morning, just before I called you. Explained he didn't know your private number at home and asked me to apologize to you for not notifying you direct." "Notifying me?" Markham set

down his cup. "About Mrs. Garden. She's dead. Found so this morning in bed. Prob-

ably murdered."

'Good God!" "Yes, quite. Not a nice situation. sleeping medicine he prescribed for black, indeed. mits it might have been something

CHAPTER XII

Markham pushed his cup aside with a clatter and lighted a cigar. 'Where's Siefert now?" he asked.

"At the Gardens'. Very correct. Standing by, and all that. The nurse phoned him shortly after eight this morning-it was she who made the discovery when she took Mrs. Garden's breakfast in. Siefert hastened over and after viewing the remains and probing round a bit called me. Said that, in view of yesterday's events, he didn't wish to go ahead until we got there."

"Well, why don't we get along?" snapped Markham, standing up. Vance sighed and rose slowly from his chair.

"There's really no rush. The lady can't elude us. And Siefert won't desert the ship."

"Hadn't we better notify Heath?" suggested Markham. "Yes-quite," returned Vance, as we went out. "I called the ser-

geant just after I phoned you. He's been up half the night working on the usual police routine. Stout fella, Heath. Amazin' industry. But quite futile." Miss Beeton admitted us to the

Garden apartment. She looked drawn and worried, but she gave Vance a faint smile of greeting which he returned.

"I'm beginning to think this nightmare will never end, Mr. Vance," she said.

Vance nodded somberly, and we went on into the drawing-room where Doctor Siefert, Professor Garden, and his son were awaiting

"I'm glad you've come, gentlemen," Siefert greeted us, coming forward.

Professor Garden sat at one end of the long davenport, his elbows resting on his knees, his face in his hands. He barely acknowledged our presence. Floyd Garden got to he worked in a carpet factory, rishis feet and nodded abstractedly in ing to the magnificent position of our direction. A terrible change seemed to have come over him. He looked years older than when we had left him the night before.

"What a hell of a situation!" he mumbled, focusing watery eyes on Vance. "The mater accuses me last night of putting Woody out of the secration," in which he announce in her will. And now she's dust and scum of the earth." Books dead! And it was I who took charge of verse and novels followed, one of the prescription. The doc says it upon the other, and John Masefield could have been the medicine that became established as one of Engkilled her."

Vance looked at the man sharply. "Yes, yes," he said in a low, sympathetic tone. "I thought of all that, too, don't y' know. But it terror or that young scamp who certainly won't help you to be mor-bid about it."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

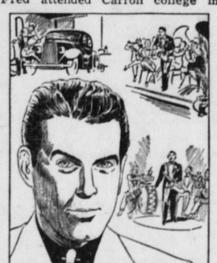
Way Back When

By JEANNE

FRED MACMURRAY WASHED CARS FOR A LIVING

NECESSITY is the mother of invention, they say; and if that is so I think someone should emphasize that "Courage is the father of opportunity." So many times, when things look blackest, it seems that only by drawing on reserve strength can we keep going. Suddenly we find ourselves face to face with opportunity. Everything looked hopeless before. We were diately. Vance slipped into his Chi- really almost ready to give up. And, then looking back, we wonder how things could have seemed as bad as they were.

Fred MacMurray was born in Kankakee, Ill., in 1908, and spent his boyhood in Beaver Dam, Wis. He lived a normal small town life for an American youngster. In 1925, when he was seventeen, he was awarded the annual American Legion medal for the student showing the most well-rounded development in scholastic subjects and dressed and was finishing his second sports. His mother worked in offices to support them both, and Fred attended Carroll college in



Waukesha, Wis., earning his way by playing the saxophone. A broken hip forced his mother to quit work, and Fred left college to try to blow a living out of his saxophone. They moved to Hollywood, Calif., for her health and the boy was glad to get a job washing cars in a garage, to pay her hospital bills. Before he could collect his pay, the garage went bankrupt, and Fred MacMurray faced a discour-No. The lady died some time during aging period without a job. He the night-exact hour unknown as tried to obtain work in the picture yet. Siefert says it might have studios as a saxophone player, but been caused by an overdose of the had no luck. Things looked very

her. It's all gone. And he says Then, he was signed up with a there was enough of it to do the band called the California Collegitrick. On the other hand, he ad- ans, which worked its way to New York city and was hired for the play "Three's a Crowd." Fred had a small bit which led to a slightly better part in "Roberta." A talent scout for Paramount saw him, brought him back to Hollywood, and he was given a contract which led to his success in pictures.

POET LAUREATE OF ENGLAND

WAS A PORTER IN A SALOON WHAT romantic occupation could you possibly predict for a boy so adventurous that no one could control him, so reckless that the aunt who took care of him after his father and mother died indentured him to a merchant ship at the age of fourteen to curb him? That was John Masefield's start in life and today he holds the highest honors England can give any poet.

Born in Ledburn, Herefordshire, England, in 1874, he sailed the seas for three years. Leaving the ship in port at New York city, he took any odd job he could get. He worked in a bakery and in a livery stable. He was porter in Luke O'Connor's saloon at the Columbian hotel near Jefferson Market jail. Then he moved to Yonkers, at the north end of New York city, where



ing to the magnificent position of "mistake finder" at \$8.50 per week. It was at this time, in his early twenties, that Masefield started to write poetry and in 1897 he left for London. His first volume of verses, "Salt Water Ballads," was published in 1902 opening with "A Conway, and then threatens to cut me himself as the champion of "the

> land's greatest poets. So, remember John Masefield beworks in the saloon across the railroad tracks.

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Washington Digest National Topics Interpreted By WILLIAM BRUCKART NATIONAL PRESS BLDG WASHINGTON D. C.

other session of congress will go by without the con-

Spending

gress and the ad-Will Go On ministration doing anything serious In the way of cutting down government expenses. There is nothing that can be done now toward carrying out the expressions made by President Roosevelt in his message last January when he told congress that he wanted to cut federal expenses and take important steps toward balancing the federal budget. The reason that federal spending is due to go on for another year at the extraordinary rate of the last four or five years is because a majority in congress, under the lash of the White House, refused to require states and local governments to bear a percentage of the relief costs. In other words, federal spending will go on because congress and the President have lacked the courage to start taking the federal government out of the relief work and gradually restore it to the care of those folks in the various communities who know where relief is needed.

There had been a very determined movement in congress to compel the states to share in the gigantic relief burden. It took on various forms and had various sponsors. But the end and aim of all of them was to divide the cost in equitable fash-

The proposal that had the best chance of getting through was one offered by Senator Robinson of Arkansas, the Democratic leader in the senate. He offered an amendment to the relief bill which would have required the states to contribute one-fourth of the amount expended in each state, with the federal Treasury supplying the remainder. When that amount was offered, it was something in the nature of a compromise between proposals that the states should bear 40 per cent and that they should bear none of the cost. With the White House operating through the President's lobbyist, Charles West, and Senator Barkley of Kentucky, the administration was able to force defeat of the Robinson amendment.

Now, Senator Barkley is assistant Democratic leader of the senate and so we had the spectacle of one of Mr. Roosevelt's spokesmen being on one side and a second one on the other side. The one who was spurred on by the President was victorious.

I am not sure that the Robinson proposal would have resulted in an appreciable reduction in the federal outlay for relief. Of course, it would have cut the total somewhat but not by the full one-fourth that appeared on its face. It was valuable as a piece of legislation, however, because it would have required the states again to assume some of the burden which only a few years ago a principle for which Senator Robinson fought and it was a principle upon which he was defeated because Harry Hopkins, relief administrator, objected and still objects to returning any part of the relief obligation to the local authorities.

I suspect that Senator Robinson's activities on the relief proposition will not help his relations with the White House but I think it ought to be said that Senator Robinson demonstrated again his capacity as a statesman. He demonstrated as well that he recognizes the dangers confronting the United States Treasury which at the end of the current fiscal year-June 30-had an outstanding debt in excess of \$36,000,000,000.

From among some of the senators I gained the impression that there is considerable worry about the government's spending and they wanted to see the Robinson amendment prevail because they recognized it as a move that would eventually bring federal government spending within control. Also, senators of that school of thought maintained that if states were called upon to bear some of the burden of relief, it would bring home forcefully the fact that all of this spending must sometime be made up out of taxes. People do not like to pay taxes and they cannot be blamed for their attitude. Unless they realize, however, that borrowed money is being spent and they and their children and children's children are to be taxed to pay off the loans, they will not be in favor of reducing national, state or local expenses.

The debate in the senate on the proposition to send some of the relief burden back to City Mayors the states showed Are Active rather plainly that most of the sena-

tors are disgusted with talk that hunger and distress will haunt the land if states are required again to take over some of this charity work. The impression I gained from this debate was that a powerful lobby of mayors from some of the larger cities was turning on all of the steam it could muster. Mayor La-Guardia of New York was the boldest of these as he has been bold

Washington.-It appears that an- | constantly in forcing the federal government to pay the relief rolls in New York city and save his own New York city budget.

Another phase of the debate should be noticed. It was the reluctance of congress to reassume! its right to direct and control the spending of federal funds. The above-mentioned Mr. Hopkins wants to be free and unfettered in his spending and those policies were the ones he recommended to Mr. Roosevelt. Consequently, with administration pressure on many senators, the Hopkins idea prevailed and so for another year congress must sit back and watch the Hopkins organization spend money virtually any way it desires.

I think there ought to be a lesson in this whole situation upon which the country can look back rather regretfully. The experience gained by making lump sum appropriations certainly shows how a bad habit can be contracted and how difficult it is to cure that habit. Seldom in history until this depression would congress ever vote lump sum appropriations for executive departments to spend as they will. Having contracted the habit, however, it is going to be difficult hereafter to deny any President lump sum appropriations, provided only that he has a substantial majority in the house and senate.

No doubt many persons will wonder why this sort of thing constitutes an important issue. The answer is simple. Governments are wasteful and the federal government, being larger than state or local governments, is just that much more wasteful and unable to handle money carefully. If states and local communities have to bear expenses of this sort out of their own treasuries, they see to it that only those entitled to relief obtain it. Unhappily, the national relief system is caring for thousands upon thousands of men who could get jobs and who could support their families but who will not do so as long as money is given them from Washington.

Since the national debt is at the highest point in the history of our nation, there is a growing conviction at the Capitol that a halt must be called sometime. The present trouble is that there are not yet enough courageous representatives and senators to force a stoppage in such spending.

While the steel strike blazed forth with battle after battle, blood was shed and property Baker Takes was damaged, lit-Labor Job tle attention was paid to a development here in the nation's capital-in

the government itself. While all of the sensational things were happening on the steel front, one Jacob Baker was resigning his they carried in its entirety. It was job as assistant relief administrator and was accepting the job of chief of a new labor unit to be associated with John L. Lewis and his Committee for Industrial Organization. Mr. Baker's unit is to be made up of government workers themselves, a labor union in the government of

the United States. For some years, there have been minor labor units among government employees. They were affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Generally speaking, they were impotent and did little more than create a dozen jobs for the officials of the organization.

Now, however, the government workers are to have a "militant, fighting labor union which will get things done for them." Such at least is the press agent word that has been spread under Mr. Baker's direction.

Mr. Baker is familiar with the problems of government service. Undoubtedly he recognizes that he cannot use the same methods in organizing government workers that are used in private industry. If, for example, he would attempt a strike, I think probably it would be the end of labor organizations in the government of the "militant, fighting" type.

The advance notices concerning Mr. Baker's plans seem to indicate that he is seeking members below the grades of official rank. In other words, if the Baker plans are carried out, the new union will be made up of the so-called rank and file. This would seem to be an advantageous arrangement because it eliminates some of the dangers that always develop where bureaucrats and division heads assume too much authority.

There is a danger also in confining the organization to the rank and file because among the less experienced labor leaders there is always a tendency "to flare up." That is to say, lacking experience they may say things or do things which are regrettable or which they have cause to regret later on. The violence that has shown its ugly head in the steel strike proves this So Mr. Baker has his job cut out for

him in this direction.