# CRUCIBLE

Ben Ames Williams.

# By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

She tried to tell herself: He did

not do it! Of course, he had lied to

ing she was too sleepy to recognize

after that dreadful moment at the

office when he found the dead girl.

Found her dead! Mrs. Sentry clung

to that thought stubbornly, insisting to herself that Arthur did find the

girl dead as he had told her, refus-

ing to remember the panic in his

eyes, refusing to remember his tone

when he reiterated his assertion that

Miss Wines was dead before he

found her. Found her dead, he said;

and was afraid, and left her and

And Mrs. Sentry hoped suddenly

that he would not tell the District

Attorney that story of chance dis-

covery and craven flight. Anything

was better than that shame. She

thought that if he did not speak

they might find some woman-any

woman-to swear that he had been

with her during the hours when the

murder occurred. That crime at least would be robust, masculine;

But of course anything, any story true or false that could be made

credible, was better than to see him

convicted of murder. If that hap-

pened, she could never lift her head again. The pride she lived by was

worth fighting for. Even with lies!

Linda came in as they finished

dinner, and Mrs. Sentry welcomed her, and proposed a rubber of

bridge. She clung to Linda's friend-

ly loyalty. Linda agreed; but Bar-

"I'm sorry," she said, trying to smile. "I'm afraid this is my

evening for-letting go." Her tones

were tremulously brave. "If you

don't mind, I think I'll slip off by

She darted away. Phil would have

They heard Barbara's door close,

upstairs. Mrs. Sentry rose and they went into the living-room, and talk

ran somehow, and a little after nine,

It was Mary. She came in with-

out laying aside her hat. Mrs. Sen-

try realized that the car had not

gone away, and she was cold with

fear of what Mary would say. The

girl was flushed. Mrs. Sentry saw,

incredulously, that she had been drinking. When Mary spoke, her

tones were louder than usual, harsh,

She said to Linda, curtly. "This is

a family council, Linda." She added

carelessly, "Oh, stay if you like, of

Phil protested: "Hey, Mary, don't

talk like that! What's the matter

with you?" He exclaimed, "You're

She laughed derisively. "If I'm

not it's not for lack of trying." And

she asked Linda: "Going? All

ashore that's going ashore! The ship's sinking!"

Linda said quietly: "No, Mary.

Mrs. Sentry felt desperately that

she must speak, must do something.

Her heart was full of a great com-

passion; but old habit of repres-

sion bound her tongue. "Mary,

you're not yourself!" she said stern-

followed her, but Linda said softly: "No, Phil. Let her go!"

myself and cry for a while.

a car grated on the drive.

defiant.

course.'

drunk!"

I'll stay."

not weakly cowardly . . .

bara would not:

came skulking home.

#### SYNOPSIS

Barbara Sentry, seeking to sober up her escort, Johnnie Boyd, on the way home from a party, slaps him, and attracts the Barbara Sentry, seeking to sober up her escort, Johnnie Boyd, on the way home from a party, slaps him, and attracts the attention of a policeman, whom the boy knocks down. As he arrests him, Professor Brace of Harvard comes to the rescue and drives Barbara home. On the way they see Barbara's father driving from the direction of his office at 12:45, but when he gets home he tells his wife it is 11:15 and that he's been playing bridge at the club. Next day Sentry reports his office has been robbed and a Miss Wines, former temporary employee, killed. The evening papers luridly confirm the story, and Sentry takes it hard. Mary, elder daughter, in love with Neil Ray, young interne at the hospital where she works, goes off to dinner at Gus Loran's, Sentry's partner, with Mrs. Loran's brother, Jimmy Endle. Mr. and Mrs. Sentry call on old Mrs. Sentry, and Barbara, alone, receives Dan Fisher, reporter, who advises her not to talk. Phil Sentry, son at Yale, is disturbed at the possible implication's and suspicion of Miss Wines' absence from her rooms for three days during August. He goes home to help. Sentry is arrested and booked for murder. Dan Fisher explains the evidence against him—that the robbery was a fake, the safe opened by one who knew the combination, changed since Miss Wines' employment there—that a back door key, a duplicate of Sentry's, was found in the girl's purse, and that Sentry, too, had been away those three days in August. Brace calls, and backs up Barbara in her denial that Sentry could have done it, because of the discrepancy of time between the slaying and their seeing Sentry on the road. Phil, showing the police over the house, finds his strong box forced open and his gun, which only his father knew of, gone. Meanwhile, the police find the stolen money burned in the furnace. Mrs. Sentry sees her husband, who swears his innocence, and tells her he had known of the robbery and murder the night before, but failed to call the police, and came home at 12:30. Phil and his mother are doubtful of Sentry

#### CHAPTER V -11-

While they were at lunch, a little later, Dean Hare telephoned to say that Inspector Irons had decided to postone his interrogations, so for the afternoon they were free. Mary was to see Neil Ray when he went off duty; and as they finished lunch, Linda came to propose that Phil go for a drive with her.

"I have to go out to those mills in Norwood to get some homespun," she explained, "and I hate to go

Phil looked to his mother for con-sent. "Go along," she said. "Barbara and grandmother will be here." So Phil went, and found a measure of peace and forgetfulness in being thus with Linda. But when she brought him home, in late afternoon, he was reluctant to face them all; instead of going directly indoors, he walked around the house. he heard voices by the muddy stream beyond the pergola and went to look down over the bank. Policemen were there in boats with things like hinged rakes, dragging up debris from the bottom of the stream. One of them saw him and spoke quietly to the others, and they all looked up, silently. Phil went back toward the house, trembling.

He found his mother alone. "Mary's dining with Neil," she explained, "and I sent Barbara in to stay overnight with grandmother. Professor Brace called, drove them in." She smiled reassuringly. "So we'll have dinner together, you and

"Professor Brace?" he echoed. He remembered warily that the District Attorney had questioned Professor Brace, but he did not say so. "Funny for him to-hang around."

"I suppose he's naturally interested. The scientific mind, you know." Her tone was edged. "We're under his microscope, like insects."

"He introduced himself to the reporters," Phil recalled. "Almost as if he-wanted publicity."

"I see you don't like him either." "Oh-I like him all right."

Dinner was served and they went in; and since they might here be overheard they spoke of other things. Phil talked at random, steadily, fighting down his thoughts: that his father had taken his gun, that his father had tried to burn money in the furnace, that his father was a murderer! He must not let his mother guess his dreadful certainty.

And she, as intent to hide her thoughts from Phil as he was to conceal his from her, helped him keep talk alive; but when they left the table and went into the livingroom and were alone, silence crushed them; and Phil noisily lighted a fire, and Mrs. Sentry telephoned old Mrs. Sentry's apartment to say good night to Barbara. She reported to Phil, when she left the phone, that Professor Brace had

stayed to dinner with them. "I suppose he's taking notes," she reflected. "Like that German tutor at the foot of the table in 'War and Peace.' Remember? There's just a paragraph about him, but he's perfectly clear cut, a complete character in your mind afterward."

Phil did not remember. "But speaking of Russians," he suggest-"how about some Russian Bank?" So they played till Mrs. Sentry said at last that they might as well go to bed. The house seemed very big and empty when they went upstairs, and parted for the night.

Later, Mrs. Sentry, still awake, heard Mary come in; but the girl did not come upstairs, so her mother went down, a dressing-gown over her night garments. She found Mary | hereafter, Phil."

in the living-room, standing by the hearth, her lips bitten red, her hands twisting.

And Mrs. Sentry tried in an awkward way—they were not a demonstrative family—to take the girl in her arms, but Mary said, "Don't, please!"

So Mrs. Sentry sat down. "Shall we talk for a while?" she suggested. "Or are you sleepy?" "Sleepy!" The word was fierce

with scorn.

"How is Neil?" "Very sensible!"

Mrs. Sentry said, "I knew he would-help you.

"Oh-help? Of course!" "He didn't, then?"

Mary said: "Don't worry about Neil! We were practically engaged, but I told him tonight we must forget that. That after all this, I was hopelessly disqualified to be a missionary's wife, even in China!"

Mrs. Sentry waited. Mary said in a flat voice, passionless as ashes, 'He agreed with me." After a while her mother spoke,

On the homeward way-Barbara returned with them-they heard sewsboys calling late editions, and her about the time, that night, knowone bawling youngster jumped on the running-board when they his lie; but naturally he would lie, stopped for a traffic light to thrust a paper before their eyes. A headline, inches high. "Sentry Indicted." Mrs. Sentry closed her eyes, and

leaped ahead. At home a knot of people scattered from the entrance to the drive, gaped at them as they drove in. Phil saw that one woman had broken off a branch of rhododendron, and he thought bitterly: For a souvenir!

the light changed, and the car

Indoors, Barbara asked in a shaken whisper, "Mother, what does 'indicted' mean?"

Mrs. Sentry said, "Hush, darling!" And she asked, "Do you know where Mary is, whether she'll be home to dinner?" She felt cold as iron. Barbara shook her head. "I think Mary's rotten!" Phil said

angrily. "We've got to-stick to-gether!"

"She's pretty unhappy, Phil,"



"Good Night! I'm Going to Bed."

broke their engagement."

were engaged."

Mary loved him."

both of you."

"Engagement? I didn't know they

"They would have been, in time.

"I'd like to knock his block off!"

Mrs. Sentry said: "Don't be a

child, Phil. I'm afraid you'll find a

good many people take the same at-

titude. Now get ready for dinner,

She thought at dinner, while Phil

and Barbara talked to her, bravely

cheerful, that the world of which

they were a part must be just now

full of buzzing tongues. Her own

tongue had never been under a curb.

From the security of an assured

position she had spoken as she

chose, rigorous toward those who

transgressed her code. Now others

would have their turn. She tried to

imagine what people would say,

them would find them out; there

would be whispering, whispering . . .

tentatively. "I wish I could-hold | Mrs. Sentry explained. "Neil Ray you in my lap, dear, as I did when you were little and were hurt."

"No, thanks. I'm not little any more." The girl stood before the hearth, rigid and still, her eyes fixed, her hands clasped behind her. Mrs. Sentry thought of a martyr at the stake surrounded by flames, burned without being consumed. She began to talk, of casual, healing

"Some people called this afternoon," she said. "Mrs. Harry Murr, bulging with questions she wanted to ask and didn't quite dare. And Mrs. Furness brought Miss Glen. You could see her memorizing every stick of furniture, every picture on the walls, to use in her next

novel-" The girl cried: "Mother, don't! How can you stand it?"

"And that young professor, Mr. Brace, dropped in," Mrs. Sentry persisted. "He took mother and Barbara to town."

"You're driving me crazy!" Mrs. Sentry sighed wearily, surrendering. "I'm sorry about Neil, Yet-if he couldn't-stand Mary. the gaff, isn't it a good thing to know?"

"No it isn't!" Mary cried. "What does that matter, if you love a man? What does it matter if he's weak, a sniveling coward, a drunkard, a thief?" Her eyes widened. "Even a murderer," she whispered. "You go on loving him just the same." And she cried: "Oh, why is love so deep a part of women, mother? Why can't we be reasonable, sensi-ble!" She spat the word. "Like men!" And suddenly, seeing the older woman's face, she stopped, said then curtly: "Good night! I'm going to bed." The still room ached when

she was gone. When Mrs. Sentry came downstairs in the morning, Mary had departed, leaving no message; and the older woman felt a deep concern that was half despair.

But she hid it from Phil. They stayed at home, together and yet each one alone. Phil wondered whether his mother knew that the Grand Jury might act today; he thought of a group of strange men, in a secret room somewhere, hearing evidence against his father, and trembled as though he were ill. He thought his mother might suggest that they go again to see his father, and knew that he himself had no strength to face the older man and to pretend he did not know what he did know. But his mother did not make the suggestion; and after lunch they drove in to see old Mrs. Sentry, and heard newsboys shouting the name of Sentry, and Mrs. Sentry shivered at last and

"I think we'd better stay at home

said with a weary smile:

testing they believed him innocent, professing friendship and sympathy while they watched her with sly, av-

'Myself?" Mary laughed in a what their attitude would be. Would they speak to her of Arthur? Pro-Who are you? Who are any of us?" And she said furiously: "Oh, I thought I knew! I thought we were idly curious eyes? She shuddered, so secure, and settled, and decent, and good." Her laughter rang madand she thought: I might take the children abroad, live the rest of our deningly. "Decent? Good? No decent, good people will ever speak to lives abroad, perhaps assume another name. But someone who knew us now."

"Mary!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Sensitive Springs Spun From Quartz: Tiny Threads Give Precise Measurement

Quartz, which looks like glass and | mine just how much moisture cotton is a sort of glass, is the last material most of us would use to make a spring. But the scientists in the General Research laboratories find nothing but quartz will do for springs in making precise measurements, says a writer in the New York Times.

Steel springs rust; quartz springs don't. Steel springs are affected by changes in humidity; quartz springs are not. Steel springs begin to lose their temper at about 250 degrees Centigrade (482 degrees Fahrenheit); quartz springs never lose their temper except at temperatures

not attained in ordinary practice. A quartz spring has a sensitivity of one milligram. In other words, it can detect a difference of weight as little as one 28,350th of an ounce. And it always snaps back, after stretching, to exactly the original point of rest.

Suppose it becomes necessary to measure the amount of moisture absorbed by cotton or cellulose. The cotton is suspended at one end of and more water at varying pres- because it has the larger it becomes possible to deter- any castle in England,

can absorb.

Making a quartz thread is something of a fine art. The first step is to spin a fine thread no more than six one-thousandths of an inch in diameter. This is done by heating a fused quartz rod to more than 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit and pulling threads from the rod. The threads are measured by calipers. All within a quarter of a mil of the desired six-mil size are saved. (A mil is a unit used to measure the diameter of a wire. It is equivalent to a thousandth of an inch.)

The final step is to place the thread in a long brass trough which leads to a mandrel (technical term for a drum of the right diameter). As it passes over the mandrel the thread is heated to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit. The mandrel makes two revolutions a minute. After cooling, the coils are ready for use.

Castle of Merry Old Soul At the old Roman town of Colchester, in Essex, England, tradithe spring and the weight of the tion places the castle of "Old King sample determined by the stretch of | Cole" of the nursery rhyme. Many the spring. By introducing more visit the Eleventh century castle because it has the largest keep of



GETTING OVER IT

Pat was being shown over a new house by the estate agent, who was, perhaps, a little more inclined to candor than some of his tribe.

"I think I must tell you," said the agent, "that there is one drawback to this house. It is very close to the railway, and you may be disturbed at night by the trains. Still, I'm quite sure that after two or three days you'll get used to it and not notice it."

Pat thought for a moment, then said:

"Sure, an' ye needn't worry. Oi'll sleep at me brother's the first three nights."-Answers magazine.

DON'T BELIEVE SIGNS

Mike was going to Dublin for the first time, and his friend Pat was giving him a few hints on what to do and where to go in the big city. "What do I do when I go to the zoo?" asked Mike.

"You be careful about the zoo," advised Pat. "You'll see foine animals if you follow the words, 'To the lions' or 'To the elephants,' but take no notice of the one, 'To the exit,' Mike. It's a fraud, and it's outside I found myself when I went to look at it."-Dublin Evening

#### STEAM-ROLLERED



"Welcome home, Bob, I suppose your European travels broadened

you?" "Well, as they flattened me completely, no doubt I've gained in

Our Censorious Civilization "Why do people find fault with a mistake and so seldom encourage

good deeds?" "It's due to natural requirements of our civilization," answered Mr. Chuggins. "A traffic cop, for instance, is out to arrest reckless motorists. He wouldn't be any good at all if he put in his time running

around to compliment cautious driv-Observation The witness was on the stand dur-

ing an important trial. "You say," thundered the defense attorney, "that you saw the two trains crash head-on while doing 60 miles an hour. What did you say when this happened?" The witness shrugged.

"I said to myself," he replied, "this is a helluva railroad!"—New York Mirror.

Among the 'Mizzen'

The captain of a sailing vessel was questioning a rookie sailor regarding his knowledge of ships and the sea. After repeatedly receiving wrong answers, in desperation, he "Where's the mizzenmast?"

"I don't know," replied the seaman. "How long has it been mizzen?"

#### IN PLAIN VIEW



"It was love at first sight, eh?" "Yes." "Why didn't you marry her?"

"The second sight was a close-

Modern Idea "How did Tom manage to get so much of his uncle's estate?' "He married his lawyer's only daughter."

A Friendly Warning "I realize I owe a lot to my coun-

try," declared the orator.
"Not too much of that, mate," whispered a sympathetic voice. "You're not the only one that has not paid his income tax."-Providence Journal.

O. K. Then Husband-So you think there are times when it is permissible for the husband to kiss the cook, eh? Wife-Yes, darling, when the wife

is doing the cooking.

#### Crochet This Set and Tot Will Be Delighted



Pattern 6224

She'll be proud as a peacock to wear this set so why not delight her with it? Made of sport yarn, it's mainly single crochet (which gives it a firm body) with picots for decoration. The muff is a combined purse and muff-very grown-up and stylish! Pattern 6224 contains instructions for making the set shown; illustrations of it and of stitches used; materials required.

To obtain this pattern, send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) to the Sewing Circle, Household Arts Dept., 259 W. 14th St., New York, N. Y.

## Ask Me Another A General Quiz

The Questions

1. What does the phrase "by and large" mean? 2. Who are the Jukes?

3. What is a consanguineous marriage? 4. In writing the international

distress call signal S O S, are periods used after the letters? 5. Which country is known as

the "Pearl of the Antilles"? 6. Why is a book called a volume?

The Answers

1. Comprehensively, on the 2. The Jukes are a celebrated

family of imbeciles and criminals to whom students of heredity have given this fictitious name.

3. Marriage to a person who is related to you.

4. No. The letters were chosen merely for their simplicity, and do not represent words.

5. Cuba-the largest and richest of the West Indian islands.

6. Egypt developed papyrus, which was then rolled and tied. This accounts for the word volume, which comes from the Latin word meaning to roll.

Natures Remedy all you thin act alike, all vegetal so mild Without Risk get a 25c box of NR from your to not delighted, return the box to me We will Get NR Tablets today. ALWAYS CARRY **QUICK RELIFF** INDIGESTION

Mad Lover A man of sense may love like a madman, but not as a fool .-Rochefoucauld.

#### **How Women** in Their 40's **Can Attract Men**

Here's good advice for a woman during her change (usually from 38 to 52), who fears she'll lose her appeal to men, who worries about hot flashes, loss of pep, dizzy spells, upset nerves and moody spells.

Get more fresh air, 8 hrs. sleep and if you need a good general system tonic take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made especially for scomen. It helps Nature build up physical resistance, thus helps give more vivacity to enjoy life and assist calming fittery nerves and disturbing symptoms that often accompany change of life. WELL WORTH TRYING!

WNU-4 47-38

## That Nagging Backache

May Warn of Disordered Kidney Action

Modern life with its hurry and worry, irregular habits, improper eating and drinking—its risk of exposure and infection—throws heavy strain on the work of the kidneys. They are apt to become over-taxed and fail to filter excess acid and other impurities from the life-giving