

CRUCIBLE

By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

CHAPTER VII—Continued

Professor Brace continued his testimony under the questioning of Mr. Flood:

"What time was it when you came out of the Tunnel?"

"Quarter past twelve."

"And what happened then?"

"A car passed us, then slowed down."

"Did you observe the number?"

"Yes, Miss Sentry said—"

"Never mind what she said. What was the number?"

Mrs. Sentry thought: They take so long to say such a simple thing. Why doesn't he just say, "I saw Mr. Sentry leave his office and drive home?"

But question and answer went maddeningly on.

"What did you do?"

"Followed the car to the Sentry home."

"Where did you last see it?"

"It turned into the Sentry drive."

"What did you do?"

"Miss Sentry and I stayed in my car, in front of the house."

"Hear anything?"

"Steps on the gravel from the garage toward the house."

"See anything?"

"I saw the light from the hall as the door opened."

"Anything else?"

"After about five minutes an upstairs light was turned on. About ten minutes later it was turned off again."

"What then?"

"Miss Sentry went into the house."

"At what time?"

"One o'clock, or a little before."

"Have you since seen that car?"

"Yes."

"With that number?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In the Sentry garage."

"Did you at any time that night see who was in the car?"

"Yes, a man."

"Did you know him?"

"No, not then."

"Did you see his face?"

"Yes, when he first passed us. I had to put on the brakes to avoid hitting him, and a street lamp was shining on his face."

"Do you now know who he was?"

"He was Mr. Sentry."

Mr. Flood turned to Mr. Falkran.

"Your witness, sir," he said.

Mrs. Sentry looked breathlessly at Mr. Falkran, fearing on the one hand that he would allow this deadly evidence to go unchallenged; on the other that his questions would involve Barbara. Yet even at that cost he must do something. For here was the peg upon which the State's whole case must hang.

But Falkran said, "No questions!"

And instantly, like a clap of doom: "The State rests," said Mr. Flood.

During the brief recess, Mrs. Sentry, too shaken to move, stayed in her seat. She was not suffering; but she was so tired! Professor Brace had left the court room without having looked toward them, and she whispered to her son:

"Go catch him, Phil. Tell him we know he had to do it. Tell him we understand, that we don't blame him!"

Phil nodded, hurried out. Then Falkran came to her, and behind the mask of a smile which he wore for the world to see, he said, "Mrs. Sentry, I expect you were surprised I did not cross-examine; but the hour is late, and I wish to call one witness before adjournment today, so that I can leave the jury with something to think about tonight."

She said in low tone: "I see. But isn't that the key of the State's whole case? Proving he was down there that night?"

He said reassuringly: "Be easy. Trust me. We will give them a better key."

And a moment later they rose while the Court and jury resumed their places; and then Mr. Falkran, briefly, made his opening. Circumstantial evidence, he said in calm, assured tones, was only to be trusted when the evidence in question was capable of but one explanation, of but one interpretation. The evidence submitted by the State was elaborate, detailed, well presented, well selected.

"But you will see," he said, "how the truth which we propose to reveal to you fits into this pattern without a misfit anywhere."

And he called the dead girl's father to the stand.

Falkran dealt with the old man gently, winning his confidence with simple questions; but at length he led Mr. Wines to examine that collection of photographs which had previously been submitted to the New Jersey hotel clerk.

"I wish you would pick out all the photographs of your daughter which you find there," he directed.

The old man, after a little, selected two.

Falkran picked up from the clerk's desk those previously identified by the New Jersey hotel man

as portraits of Miss Wines. "What about these?" he asked.

"They ain't her."

"Sure?"

"I'd ought to be, I sh'd think. Sure I'm sure."

"Not your daughter?"

"No."

Falkran smiled contentedly.

"Now, Mr. Wines," he asked, in a new tone, "did your daughter write to you from Boston?"

"Yes, certain!"

"How often?"

"Most generally every Sunday."

"Did she write you while she worked for the firm of Sentry and Lorran?"

"Yes, she did."

"Are you friends still?"

"How often?"

"Once, anyway."

"Have you that letter?"

District Attorney Flood rose hurriedly, approached the bench. Falkran joined him there. They spoke in low tones. The old man on the stand took a letter from his pocket and held it in his hands, waiting. After a moment Falkran turned and took it from him and handed it to the Judge. The Judge read it, spoke to Flood. Falkran smiled and with



"And What Happened Then?" Asked Mr. Flood.

the letter in his hand turned back to the witness.

"Who wrote this letter?" he asked.

"She did."

"Your daughter?"

"Yes."

Falkran said to the Court: "I offer the letter." It was marked. He read it aloud, standing in front of the jury box, facing them.

The letter was for the most part without significance. The dead girl had written happily of her work, hoped that even though it was only temporary it might lead to something permanent. But one paragraph Mr. Falkran read slowly and impressively, in his fine trained tones, with a maximum effect, with his eyes upon the jury. He read:

"I don't like Mr. Sentry! He's cross if you make the least mistake. But Mr. Lorran is nice, awfully jolly. He asked me to go to dinner with him tonight. He said there wasn't any harm in it, but of course I didn't go."

A stir ran through the court. Falkran waited a moment for silence, "Your witness," he told Flood.

The District Attorney declined to cross-examine. Falkran nodded, and he said: "It is near the hour, Your Honor. Mr. Sentry is to be our next witness. I suggest a recess till tomorrow morning."

Court adjourned.

CHAPTER VIII

Dan Fisher's assignment at the trial was not to cover the actual testimony—that was recorded by reporters working in relays, using those swift abbreviations meaningless to anyone but themselves which with a good newspaper man take the place of shorthand—but to write the morning paper story. Mr. Sentry was on the stand all Saturday forenoon; and Dan wrote for the Sunday paper:

Arthur Sentry, on trial for his life and charged with the murder of Agnes Wines, on the witness stand yesterday admitted that he fired the shot which killed Miss Wines.

He testified that the shot was fired by accident, in the dark, when he surprised an attempt to rob the safe in his office.

He admitted leaving the dead girl's body where it fell. He admitted taking the money from the safe and burning it in the furnace at home. He admitted throwing the dead woman into the river behind his garage where it was subsequently found by the police.

He denied any misconduct with Miss Wines. He testified that it was another woman who spent two nights with him in a New Jersey hotel last August.

Mr. Sentry's testimony created a sensation. The court officers had difficulty in keeping order until Judge Stanton

warned the spectators that if there was further disturbance the court would be cleared.

Mr. Sentry's testimony follows. Questions by Mr. Falkran.

Describes Business.

Q. You are Arthur Sentry? A. I am.

Q. Of Sentry and Lorran? A. Yes.

Q. Wholesale dealers in produce, fruit, vegetables? A. Yes.

Q. You have a partner? A. Yes, Mr. Lorran.

Q. Is he in court? A. No.

Q. Have you seen him in court during this trial? A. On the first day, yes.

Q. Did you found the business? A. No, it was founded by my grandfather.

Q. And continued by whom? A. By my father, and then by me.

Q. Did you take Mr. Lorran into partnership? A. Yes.

Q. Under what circumstances? A. We were friends, just out of college. We wished to be associated. His father bought him an interest in the business, at my suggestion.

Q. Are you friends still? A. Yes.

Q. Are your families intimate? A. Not particularly. We exchange dinners.

Q. Is your business a good one? A. Yes, of its kind.

Q. Are you athletic? A. I play golf.

Q. Ever box? A. No.

Q. Fish? A. A little.

Q. Hunt? A. No.

Q. Why not? A. Mrs. Sentry dislikes firearms.

Q. Do you? A. Not at all.

Q. Are you experienced with them? A. No.

Q. Ever fire a rifle? A. I had a twenty-two when I was a boy.

Q. Ever fire a rifle of larger caliber? A. No.

Q. Is your father living? A. He has

been dead ten years.

Q. Your mother? A. She is dead.

Q. When did she die? A. Two weeks ago.

Q. Under what circumstances? A. She was old and feeble. She tried to come to see me in jail and she effort killed her.

Q. You have children? A. Three.

Q. How old? A. The oldest is twenty-six, the second twenty-two, the youngest twenty.

Q. Married? A. The oldest is.

Q. And the oldest is a son or a daughter? A. The oldest is a daughter, the second is a son, the youngest a daughter.

Q. Are they in court? A. My son is.

Q. And Mrs. Sentry is in court? A. Yes.

Q. You are devoted to her? A. Yes.

Q. Have you ever wronged her? A. Yes.

The court officers at this point had difficulty in restoring order.

Q. Did you ever have a permit to carry a revolver? A. No.

Q. Did you ever ask for such a permit? A. No.

Q. Did you ever carry one? A. Yes.

Q. Bought ammunition for it? A. Yes.

Q. Where? A. At Forbush's sporting-goods store.

Q. Were you a regular customer there? A. Yes.

Q. So that you made no secret of this purchase of ammunition, bought it at a store where you were known? A. Yes.

Q. When did you start carrying this weapon? A. Last fall.

Q. Do you remember the date? A. It was the day after Mr. Miller was held up, slugged, and robbed near our store.

Q. Did he recover? A. He died in hospital.

Q. Had that incident anything to do with your carrying a revolver? A. Yes.

Q. What was the connection? A. I occasionally went to my office in the late evening. The streets are often solitary. I wanted to protect myself.

Q. Did you carry this revolver in your pocket? A. No, it was too big. I kept it in the dash locker in my car.

Q. And you had no permit? A. No.

Q. Asked for none? A. No.

Q. Why not? A. I was unwilling to admit that I was nervous.

Q. Did you buy this revolver? A. No.

Q. Where did you get it? A. My son had it, in a metal lock box in his room. He was away at college. I forced open the box with a screwdriver.

Q. So you were nervous about robbers and decided to carry a gun? A. Yes.

Q. Are you a nervous man? A. I have a lively imagination, a lot of imaginary fears.

Q. Do they affect your actions? A. I sometimes do shameful things, make bad mistakes, through fear.

Tells of "Enid"

Q. Did your office take on extra help last summer? A. Yes.

Q. Stenographers? A. Yes.

Q. Any stenographers with whom you came in contact? A. Yes.

Q. How many? A. One.

Q. What was her name? A. Miss Wines.

Q. A good stenographer? A. Fair.

Q. Pretty? A. Attractive, yes.

Q. Flirtatious? A. Not at all.

Q. Ever see her outside of office hours while she worked for you? A. No.

Q. Did you see her at all afterward? A. Yes.

Q. After she worked for you? A. Yes.

Q. How often? A. Twice.

Q. Did you go anywhere last August? A. Yes.

Q. Where? A. I spent two nights at a hotel in New Jersey.

Q. Under your own name? A. No.

Q. Alone? A. No.

Q. Who was with you? A. A woman.

Q. Who was she? A. I don't know.

Q. Know her name? A. She said her first name was Enid.

There was laughter in the court. Judge Stanton warned the spectators that if there were further interruption the court room would be cleared.

Q. Was she Miss Wines? A. No.

Q. Why New Jersey? A. Because her home was in that state. I did not want to travel with her across a state line.

Q. Did she resemble Miss Wines? A. About the same size and coloring; yes, rather. But she was older.

Q. Did she know your name? A. No.

Q. Did you arrange to meet again? A. No.

Q. Why not? A. I didn't want any possible further contact between us. I was afraid of blackmail.

Q. And did you ever on any other occasion wrong Mrs. Sentry? A. Yes.

Q. With Miss Wines? A. No.

Q. Now Mr. Sentry, you said you saw Miss Wines twice after she left the employ of Sentry and Lorran? A. Yes.

Q. Take the first occasion. Where did you see her? A. In my office.

Q. At what time of day? A. In the afternoon.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Piranha, Most Vicious Jungle Fish, Lurks in the Rivers of South America

Probably the worst enemy of any living thing (in the South American jungle) lurks in the river itself—the piranha. There are piranhas in almost every South American river and they are literally devils, writes Stuart Martin in *Wide World*. London. I have seen three varieties—the green-and-gold ones of Paraguay, the shiny gray specimens of the Amazon, and the green-and-black spotted demons of the Araguaya and Kingu. The natives eat them, but the quality of their flesh is nothing to brag about.

For a wounded ox or horse to fall into the river means certain death; it is also fatal for a human being to get among a shoal of piranhas, especially if there is any sore or wound on his body. Piranhas can scent their prey far away, and go literally mad at the taste of blood.

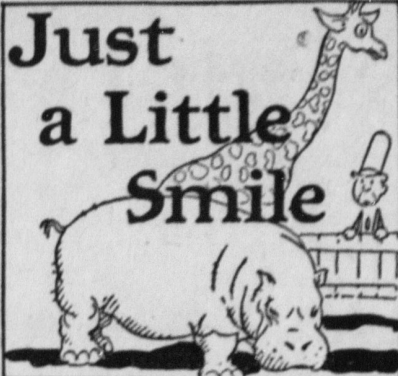
It is a sickening spectacle to see these fierce fish conducting a mass attack. The water around the unfortunate animal that falls into their clutch becomes a whirlpool, a maelstrom of death, boiling and foaming as the blood-crazed piranhas rush to the feast. They eat the flesh off

the living victim until they reach the bones; soon nothing but the skeleton remains.

The Indians catch piranhas fairly easily by baiting their hooks with a bit of meat or newly-dead fish. When the creature is jerked ashore it is still snapping viciously. As an example of the ferocity of the piranha I may say that it is a common custom to slice off the heads with a sharp knife—and even when this is done the jaws continue to snap at you! These demons are usually between 18 inches and 2 feet in length.

Malta and Italy

Malta has little kinship with Italy, other than religious ties, notes a writer in the *Washington Post*. It has been ruled successively by Phoenicia, Greece, Carthage, Rome, Arabia, Italy, Spain, the Knights of Malta (an international religious order), France and Great Britain. In Malta was born the great Carthaginian general, Hannibal, and on Malta's shores the Apostle Paul was once shipwrecked. He introduced Christianity to the islands.



WRONG NUMBER

A cobbler christened his establishment "The Boot Hospital." A customer brought him a pair of boots which would have disgraced a tramp, says *London Tit-Bits Magazine*.

"Shouldn't have these mended if I were you," said the cobbler. "I would throw 'em away."

"But I want them mended," was the reply. "This is supposed to be a hospital for boots, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's a 'ospital all right," rejoined the cobbler, "but it ain't a mortuary."

THE PROOF



First Castaway—Yes, this island's inhabited all right. Just saw five white men, all trying to sing "Sweet Adeline."

Second Ditto—Thank heavens! We're in a civilized country.

Spare the Rod

"I say, pa," said little Tommy, "didn't you tell me the other day that it was wrong to strike anyone smaller than yourself?"

"Yes, Tommy, that's what I said," confessed the fond parent.

"Well, I wish you'd write my teacher a note to that effect," said the youngster. "I don't think she knows about it."

Competition

Business man—Well, if it isn't John Corcoran, the man I met up in Maine one rainy night six years ago at the Moose River Junction railway station.

Salesman—Good-by, sir.

Business man—Aren't you going to try and sell me something?

Salesman—No, I sell memory training courses.

Almost Submerged

Wyles—You look miserable. What is wrong?

Gyles—I am up to my neck in debt.

It can't be as bad as all that.

It is. My hat's the only thing I have paid for.—*Minneapolis Journal*.

Rather Aged

First Student—I wonder how old Miss Jones is.

Second Student—Quite old, I imagine; they say she used to teach Caesar.—*Royal Arcanum Bulletin*.

Nuff 'Snuff

Mo—I say, why don't you get a larger paint brush? You could do twice as much work.

Lasses—"Cause Ah ain't got twice as much work to do, das why!

Share and Share

"I can hear your new radio set as though it were in my room."

"Well, what about helping to pay off some of the installments?"—*Atlanta Constitution*.

Careless

Hubby—I got a mustard bath today.

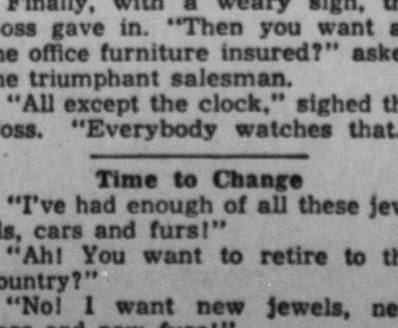
Wife—Hm-m! Don't those hot-dog stands provide paper napkins?—*Houston Post*.

Sound Advice

Stranger—Sonny, can you tell me the quickest way to get to the station?

Oliver—Run.

NO LESSONS NEEDED



He—I could learn to love you.

She—Most fellows don't have to learn—it comes natural.

Ticked Off

Finally, with a weary sigh, the Boss gave in. "Then you want all the office furniture insured?" asked the triumphant salesman.

"All except the clock," sighed the Boss. "Everybody watches that."

Time to Change

"I've had enough of all these jewels, cars and furs!"

"Ah! You want to retire to the country?"

"No! I want new jewels, new cars and new furs!"

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Ask Me Another

A General Quiz

The Questions

- To what coin of the United States did the Spanish "pieces of eight" correspond?
- What are sun spots?
- What marks the distinction between a cathedral and an ordinary church?
- What are the two capitals of Holland?
- Where is the International Date Line?
- Who is now the prince of Wales?
- What was the capacity of the Roman Circus Maximus?

The Answers

- The dollar.
- Sun spots are solar cyclones in which hot gases are cooled by expansion.
- A cathedral is the seat of a bishop.
- The Hague (seat of the court) and Amsterdam (legislative).
- The 180th meridian, in the mid-Pacific.
- There is no prince of Wales at the present time.
- It is said to have had a seating capacity of 385,000. Including the crowds that could stand outside, on the upper slopes of the two hills and have a distinct, though distant, view of the arena, a possible audience of 485,000 people could be accommodated.

QUESTION

Why are Luden's like lemons?

ANSWER

Both contain a factor that helps contribute to your alkaline reserve.

LUDEN'S 5¢

MENTHOL COUGH DROPS

Doomed to Perish

He that despiseth small things will perish by little and little.—Emerson.

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That's what the prematurely gray—and their friends, too—often think. Thousands have found the solution to that problem in the use of

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the change coming about so gradually that even every day associates will not suspect its use. It's most easily applied and even the first bottle shows results. Follow the simple directions, give it a fair trial on a money-back guarantee. If your druggist does not have it, just send \$1 and your name and address today to

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A fool always finds a greater fool to admire him.—Boileau.

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