

# JACK O'JUDGMENT :-: By Edgar Wallace

**THE STORY SO FAR**  
**COLONEL DAN BOUNDARY**, fat, sports-orientated but unusually clever, leader of a gang of crooks, has become alarmed at "Jack o' Judgment," after several episodes of which he has subtly gathered the men without ridding the town of the law. He tries to dismiss suspiciously a policeman known to him by the name of **STAFFORD KING** of the London Criminal Intelligence force.

**PINTO SILVA**, a sleek man about town, turns his attention on an actress, who tells him she is **MAISIE WHITE**, daughter of **Billy White**, one of the gang who wishes to retire, and is interested in Stafford.

**LOLLIE MARSH**, a self-jaded but clever girl who acts as "brains" of the stick-up mobbing gang.  
**CRICK CREWE**, once a gentleman, now a thief.  
**AND HERE IT CONTINUES**

so that there's no evidence against me."  
 "That's true," said the colonel, "you've just managed to keep out of taking an important part. I congratulate you."  
 "There's no sense in getting riled about it," said Crewe; "it has just been my luck, that's all. Well, I want to take advantage of this luck."  
 "What was it?"  
 "I'm out of any had trouble. The police, if they search for a million years, couldn't get a scrap of evidence to convict me," he said. "Even if they had you hen Hanson betrayed you, they couldn't have convicted me also."  
 "That's true," said the colonel again. He shook his head impatiently. "Well, what does all this lead to, Crewe? Do you want to be demobilized?" he asked humorously.  
 "That's about the size of it," said Crewe. "I don't want to be in anything new, and I certainly don't want to be in this."  
 "What?"  
 "In this Maisie White business," said Crewe doggedly. "Let Pinto do his own dirty work."  
 "My dirty work, too," said the colonel. "But I reckon you've overlooked one important fact."  
 "What's that?" demanded Crewe suspiciously.  
 "You've overlooked a young gentleman called Jack o' Judgment," said the colonel, and enjoyed the look of consternation which came to the other's face. "There's a fellow that doesn't want any evidence. He hanged Raoul all right."  
 "Do you think he did it?" said Raoul in a hushed voice.  
 "Do I think he did it?" the colonel smiled. "Why, who else? And when he comes to judge you, I guess he's not going to worry very much about affidavits and sworn statements, and he's not going to take you before a magistrate before he hands you over to the coroner."  
 Crewe jumped to his feet.  
 "What have I done?" he asked harshly.  
 "What have you done? Well, you know best," said the colonel with a wave of his hand. "You say the police



"So you're going to quit, are you? Cold feet?"

haven't got you and haven't a case against you. Maybe you're right. That Crewe was saying the same sort of thing to me. He was here this afternoon squealing about taking the girl to the Argentine; wanted us to send the doctor while he would wait to meet us when we land. There's no evidence against him either. Maybe there's more evidence than you imagine. I wouldn't bank too much upon the police passing you by if I were you, Crewe. There's something about Mr. Stafford King that I don't like. He's got more brains in his little finger than that dude commiss- stoner has in the whole of his body. He doesn't say much, but I guess he thinks a lot, and I'd give something to know what he's thinking about me just now."  
 The Brides of Death  
 Time had long ceased to have any significance for Maisie White. There was daylight and night light. She seemed to remember that she had made a great fight on the day she arrived at this strange house when the hard-faced nurses had strapped her to the bed, and an old man, with trembling fingers, had pushed a needle into her

arm. She remembered it hurt, and then she remembered very little else. She viewed life with a dull apathy and without much understanding. She ceased to resent the presence of the women who came and went, and even the uncleanly old doctor no longer filled her with a sense of revulsion.  
 She just wanted to be left alone to sleep, to dream the strange dreams that any girl had ever had. She did not know that this was the action of a drug, consistently administered in every drink she took, in every morsel of food she ate. Bromides in bread, in coffee, in mashed potatoes, in rice, in all the vehicles by which the drug could be administered.  
 Sometimes by reason of her sheer vitality she flung off the effects of the dope, and was keenly conscious of her surroundings. There was one girl, who came and went, a pretty girl with fluffy golden hair, who looked at her dispassionately and made no reply to the questions which Maisie piled her. And once she had seen Pinto and would have screamed, but they stopped her in time. And then a dark man had come, a little man with long curling mustaches, who had looked down and showed his eyes white teeth in a smile.  
 One night the old doctor had come into the room very drunk. He was crying and moaning in a muddled fashion about some mysterious position which he had lost, and he had sat on the bed and cursed his passion for strong drink with such vehemence that she, in her half-dazed state of mind, had found herself interested against her will. In one of her lucid intervals she had realized a vital fact, that she was under the influence of a drug, and instinctively knew that she was becoming more and more immune to its action. She formed a vague plan, which she had almost forgotten the next morning. She must always be sleepy, almost dazed; she must never show signs of returning consciousness. She had been a week in the "nursing home" before she made this plan. She could lie now with her eyes shut, picking up the threads. She heard somebody talk of a ship and of a passport, and learned that she was to be removed in another week. She could not find where, but it was some-

where on a ship. She tried once, when the nurses were out of the room, to get out of bed and walk to the window. Her legs gave way beneath her, and it was with the greatest difficulty that she managed to crawl back to bed.  
 There was no escape that way. There was no help either from the nurses who were not nurses at all, nor from the muddled little doctor, nor from the pretty girl who came sometimes and looked down on her with undigested contempt—or was it pity? Then one night she woke in a fright.  
 Two people were talking. She half turned her head and saw that Pinto Silva was in the room and his face was flaming red. She had seen that look before, but now his gaze was directed at somebody else, and with a start she recognized the pretty girl that the nurses called Lollie.  
 "You're not in this, Lollie," said the man, and she laughed.  
 "That's just where you're wrong, Silva," she replied. "I'm very much in it. What happens to this girl when she leaves here, I don't know—I guess it's up to the colonel. But while she's here, I'm looking after her."  
 "You are, are you?" he said between his teeth. "Well, now you can go and take a walk."  
 "I can also take a seat, too," she said. He walked over to her and puffed a cloud of cigarette smoke in his face.  
 "I'm a crook because it pays me to be a crook," said the girl calmly. "If he's jolting along one of the colonel's blue-eyed innocents, or keeping a watchful eye upon Mr. King—why, I'm ready and willing, because that's my job. But this is a different matter altogether. If the colonel says she's got to go abroad, why, I suppose she's got to go. But she's not going to be subjected to your persecution while she's under my charge," said Lollie.  
 "Oh, that's all, is it?" repeated Pinto. "Now, just come outside; I've a few words to say to you."  
 They passed through the door into a smaller room where the night watchmen sat. Lollie made as though to sit at the table when he gripped her arm and wrung her round. She put her hands to defend herself, but she was thrown against the wall and his grip was on her throat.  
 "Do you know what I'll do to you?" he threatened.  
 "I don't care what you do," she said. She was on the verge of tears.

"You're not going into that room!" She sprang at him with a snarl like a wild beast, he turned and struck at her, and she fell against the wall.  
 "Now get out!" he pointed to the door—"get out and don't show your face here again or I'll mark it for you."  
 She slunk from the room, sick at heart, and he locked the door behind her.  
 All that was worst in him was alive and active this night. Here was a girl who had rejected him, who had pored contempt upon offers which he honestly believed more generous. Pinto Silva was nine-tenths brute. He had neither conscience nor pity, and he went back to the room where the girl lay, determined to marry her beauty with the acid he carried in his pocket, if she still refused to marry him as soon as he should obtain a divorce.  
 He knelt down beside the bed.  
 "Covered your head with a blanket, my pretty, eh?" he said with a sneer. "Pinto must see that pretty face, and now."  
 He laid hold of the blanket's edge and pulled it down. He wanted to see the eyes panic-stricken, and the drawn mouth that he had glimpsed in that second before Lollie Marsh had intruded upon his plan of revenge.  
 But the blankets would not come away. They were being clutched tightly. The resistance infuriated him.  
 With a jerk he rounded them down, then stumbled backward to the floor, a grotesque and ludicrous figure, for the white silk mask of Jack o' Judgment

confronted him and the hateful voice of his enemy shrieked:  
 "I'm Death! Who wants me as a bride? Jack o' Judgment! Poor old Jack! Jack Ketch, the hangman. You'll meet him one day, Pinto—meet him now!"  
 Pinto collapsed—he had fainted.  
 To be continued tomorrow  
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