# THE BAT

## *A Novel from the Play*

By Mary Roberts Rinehart and Avery Hopwood

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STORY FROM THE START

Defying all efforts to capture him, after a long series of robberies known only as "The Bat" has brought about a veritable reign of terror. The chief of police assigns his best detective, Anderson, to get on the track of The Bat. With his pal, Dale, Jackie, Miss Cornelia Fleming, who owns the country house of the late Courtleigh Fleming, who with the valued stock, had been president of the Union bank, wrecked because of the Bat's activities, Miss Van Gorder, a maiden lady, who is warning her against the place, a lonely spot, where she has been left by her guardian. The gardener arrives, giving his name as Crosby. He admits he is not a gardener, but needs work. Miss Fleming, who is her guardian, is expected. Warning notes are received by the occupants of a wooden lodge house. They are interrupted by the appearance of a masked bandit, who leaves another warning note.

CHAPTER IV—Continued

—6—

"Yes I did," said the doctor, quite by still seeming unconfused of the wisdom of her attitude.

"Miss Van Gorder I confess I'm very shaken up, you," he continued. "This letter business. Why not accept his hospitality in the lodge tonight? It's a little house, but it's made you comfortable, Jim, he threw out his hands in the gesture of one who resents with a willful obstinacy, you won't come to me—let me stay here."

Miss Cornelia hesitated for an instant. The proposition seemed logical enough, more than that—sensible—safe. And yet, some indefinable feeling—hardly strong enough to be called a premonition—kept her from accepting it.

"Thank you, no, doctor," she said briskly, before she had time to change her mind. "I'm not easily frightened. And tomorrow I intend to equip this entire house with burglar alarms on doors and windows," she went on, defiantly. The incident, as far as she was concerned, was closed. She moved on into the alcove. The doctor stared after her, shaking his head.

She tried the terrace door. "There—I knew it!" she said triumphantly. "Doctor—you didn't fasten that bolt!"

The doctor seemed a little taken aback. "Oh—I'm sorry—" he said.

"You only pushed it part of the way," she explained. She completed the task and stepped back into the living room. "The only thing that worries me now is that broken French window," she said thoughtfully. "Anyone can reach a hand through it and open the latch." She came down toward the settee where Dale was sitting. "Please, doctor."

"Oh—what are you going to do?" said the doctor, coming out of a brown study.

"I'm going to barricade that window," said Miss Cornelia firmly, already struggling to lift one end of the settee. But now Dale came to her rescue.

"Oh, darling—you'll hurt yourself—let me—" and between them, the doctor and Dale moved the heavy settee along until it stood in front of the window in question.

"If You Won't Come to Me—Let Me Stay Here!"

The doctor stood up when the dusty task was finished, wiping his hands.

"It would take a furniture mover to get in there now!" he said airily.

Miss Cornelia smiled.

"Well, doctor—I'll say good night now—and thank you very much," she said, extending her hand to the doctor, who bowed over it silently. "Don't keep this young lady up too late—she looks tired." She flashed a look at Dale who stood staring out at the night, then sailed out of the room, still smiling, and closed the door behind her.

The doctor seemed a little nettled at her abrupt departure.

"It may be mind," he said, turning back towards Dale, "but forgive me if I say I think it seems more like foolhardy stubbornness!"

Dale turned away from the window. "Then you think there is really danger?"

The doctor eyes were grave.

"Well—those letters—" he dropped the letter on the table. "They mean something. Here you are—isolated—the village two miles away—and enough shrubbery around the place to hide a dozen assassins—"

If his manner had been in the slightest degree melodramatic, Dale would have found the ominous sentence easy to discount. But the calm, intent statement of fact was a chill touch at her heart. And yet—

"But what enemies can Aunt Cornelia have?" she asked helplessly.

"Any man will tell you what I do," said the doctor, with increasing seriousness. He took a cigarette from his case and tapped it on the case to emphasize his words. "This is no place for two women, practically alone."

Dale gazed away from him, restlessly to warm her hands at the fire. The doctor gave a quick glance around the room. Then, unseen by her, he stepped noiselessly over to the table, took the matchbox there off its holder, and slipped it into his pocket. It seemed a curiously useless and meaningless gesture, but his next words evinced that the action had been deliberate.

"I don't seem to be able to find any matches—" he said, with assumed carelessness, fiddling with the matchbox holder.

Dale turned away from the fire. "Oh, aren't there any? I'll get you some," she said with automatic politeness, and departed to search for them.

The doctor watched her go—saw the door close behind her. Instantly his face set into tense and wary lines. He glanced about—then ran lightly up into the alcove and noiselessly unfastened the bolt on the terrace door which he had pretended to fasten after his search of the shrubbery. When Dale returned with the matches, he was back where he had been when she had left him, glancing at a magazine on the table.

He lit his cigarette and drew in the fragrant smoke with apparent gusto. But a moment later he had crushed out the glowing end in an ash-receiver.

"By the way, has Miss Van Gorder a revolver?" he queried casually, glancing at his wrist watch.

"Yes—she fired it off this afternoon to see if it would work." Dale smiled at the memory.

The doctor, too, seemed amused. "If she tries to shoot anything—for goodness' sake stand behind her!" he advised. He glanced at the wrist watch again. "Well—I must be going—"

"If anything happens," said Dale, slowly, "I shall telephone you at once."

Her words seemed to disturb the doctor slightly—but only for a second. He grew even more urbane.

"I'll be home shortly after midnight," he said. "I'm stopping at the Johnsons' on my way—one of their children is ill—or supposed to be." He took a step toward the door, then he turned toward Dale again.

"Take a parting word of advice," he said. "The thing to do with a midnight prowler is—let him alone. Lock your bedroom doors and don't let anything bring you out till morning."

"Thank you," said Dale, seriously. "Good night, Doctor—Billy will let you out—he has the key."

"By Jove!" laughed the doctor, "you are careful, aren't you! The place is like a fortress! Well—good night, Miss Dale—"

"Good night." The door closed behind him—Dale was left alone. Suddenly her composure left her, the fixed smile died. She stood gazing ahead at nothing, her face a mask of terror and apprehension. But when Billy returned with the front-door key she was as impassive as he was.

"Has the new gardener come yet?"

"He's here," said Billy stolidly. "Name Brook."

She was entirely herself once more when Billy, departing, held the door open wide—to admit Miss Cornelia Van Gorder and a tall strong-featured man, quietly dressed, with reticent, piercing eyes—the detective!

"Dale, dear," said Miss Cornelia, with triumph in her voice. "This is Mr. Anderson."

The newcomer bowed, glancing at her casually and then looking away. Miss Cornelia, however, was obviously in fine feather and relishing to the utmost the presence of a real detective in the house.

"This is the room I spoke of," she said briskly. "All the disturbances have taken place around that terrace door."

The detective took three swift steps into the alcove, glanced about it searchingly. He indicated the stairs.

"That is not the main staircase?"

"No—the main staircase is out there," Miss Cornelia waved her hand in the direction of the hall.

The detective came out of the alcove and paused by the French window.

"Hello—what's this?" he said sharply, his eye lighting on the broken glass below the shattered French window. He picked up a piece of the glass and examined it.

Dale cleared her throat. "It was broken from the outside a few minutes ago," she said.

"The outside?" Instantly the detective had pulled aside a blind and was staring out into the darkness.

"Yes. And then that letter was thrown in." She pointed to the threatening missive on the center table.

Anderson picked it up, glanced through it, laid it down. All his movements were quick and sure—each executed with the minimum expense of effort.

"H'm," he said in a calm voice, that held a glint of humor. "Curious, the anonymous letter complex! Apparently some one considers you an undesirable tenant!"

Miss Cornelia took up the tale.

"There are some things I haven't told you yet," she said. "This house belonged to the late Courtleigh Fleming." He glanced at her sharply.

"The Union bank?"

"Yes. I rented it for the summer and moved in last Monday. We have not had a really quiet night since I came. The very first night I saw a man with an electric flashlight making his way through that shrubbery!"

"You poor dear!" from Dale, sympathetically. "And you were here alone!"

"Well, I had Lizzie!" And said Miss Cornelia, with enormous importance, opening the drawer of the center table. "I had my revolver. I know so little about these things, Mr. Anderson, that if I didn't hit a burglar, I knew I'd hit somebody or something!" and she gazed with innocent awe directly down the muzzle of her beloved weapon, then waved it with an airy gesture beneath the detective's nose.

Anderson gave an involuntary start—then his eyes lit up with grim mirth.

"Would you mind putting that away?" he said suavely. "I like to get in the papers as much as anybody, but I don't want to have them say—omit flowers."

Miss Cornelia gave him a glare of offended pride, but he endured it with such quiet equanimity that she merely replaced the revolver in the drawer, with a hurt expression, and waited for him to open the next topic of conversation.

He finished his preliminary survey of the room and returned to her.

"Now, you say you don't think anybody has got upstairs yet?" he queried.

Miss Cornelia regarded the alcove stairs.

"I think not. I'm a very light sleeper—especially since the papers have been so full of the exploits of this criminal they call the Bat. He's in them again tonight."

The detective smiled faintly.

"Yes—he's contrived to surround himself with such an air of mystery that it verges on the supernatural—or seems that way to newspaper men."

"I confess," admitted Miss Cornelia, "I've thought of him in this connection." She looked at Anderson to see how he would take the suggestion, but the latter merely smiled again, this time more broadly.

"That's going rather a long way for a theory," he said. "And the Bat is not in the habit of giving warnings. You can always tell when the Bat has had anything to do with a crime. When he's through, he signs his name to it."

Miss Cornelia sat bolt upright. "His name? I thought nobody knew his name!"

The detective made a little gesture of apology. "That was a figure of speech. The newspapers named him the Bat—because he moves with incredible rapidity—always at night—and by signing his name I mean he leaves the symbol of his identity. The bat, which can see in the dark."

"I wish I could," said Miss Cornelia, striving to seem unimpressed. "These country lights are always going out."

Anderson's face grew stern. "Sometimes he draws the outline of a bat at the scene of the crime. Once, in some way, he got hold of a real bat, and nailed it to the wall."

Dale, listening, could not repress a shudder at the grewsome picture—and Miss Cornelia's hands gave an involuntary twitch as her knitting needles clicked together. Anderson seemed by no means unconscious of the effect he had created.

"He seems to have imagination," he admitted. "Well," his voice grew determined, "I have some imagination, myself. How many people in this house, Miss Van Gorder?"

"My niece and myself," Miss Cornelia indicated Dale, who had picked up her wrap and was starting to leave the room. "Lizzie Allen—who has been my personal maid ever since I was a child—the Japanese butler and the gardener. The cook and the housemaid left this morning—frightened away."

She smiled as she finished her description. Dale reached the door and passed slowly out into the hall. The detective gave her a single, sharp glance as she made her exit. He seemed to think over the factors Miss Cornelia had mentioned.

"Well," he said, after a slight pause, "you can have a good night's sleep tonight. I'll stay awake here in the dark and watch."

"Would you like some coffee to keep you awake?"

Anderson nodded. "That's you." His voice sank lower. "Do the servants know who I am?"

"Only Lizzie—my maid."

His eyes fixed hers. "I wouldn't tell anyone I'm remaining up tonight," he said.

A formless fear rose in Miss Cornelia's mind. "You don't suspect my household?" she said in a low voice.

He spoke with emphasis—all the more pronounced because of the quietude of his tone.

"I'm not taking any chances," he said determinedly.

CHAPTER V

Cross-Questions and Crooked Answers.

All unconscious of the sir just cast upon her forty years of single-minded devotion to the Van Gorder family, Lizzie chose that particular moment to open the door and make a little bob at her mistress and the detective.

"The gentleman's room is ready," she said.

Miss Cornelia, obedient to the detective's instructions, promptly told the whitest of lies for Lizzie's benefit.

"The maid will show you to your room now and you can make yourself comfortable for the night." There—that would mislead Lizzie without being quite a lie.

"My toilet is made for an occasion like this when I've got my gun loaded," answered Anderson carelessly. The allusion to the gun made Lizzie start nervously, unhappily for her, for it drew his attention to her and he now transfixed her with a stare.

"This is the maid you referred to?" he inquired. Miss Cornelia assented. He drew nearer Lizzie unhappy Lizzie.

"What's your name?" he asked, turning to her.

"E-Elizabeth Allen," stammered Lizzie, feeling likea small and distrustful sparrow in the toils of an officious python.

Anderson seemed to run through a mental rogues' gallery of other criminals named Elizabeth Allen that he had known.

"How old are you?" he proceeded.

Lizzie braced herself. "Thirty-two," she said, with an arch toss of her head.

The detective looked surprised and slightly amused.

"She's fifty if she's a day," said Miss Cornelia, truthfully, in spite of a look from Lizzie that would have melted a stone.

The trace of a smile appeared and vanished on the detective's face.

"Now, Lizzie," he said sternly, "do you ever walk in your sleep?"

"I do not," said Lizzie indignantly.

"Don't care for the country, I suppose?"

"I do not!"

"Or detectives?" Anderson deigned to be facetious.

"I do not!" There could be no doubt as to the sincerity of Lizzie's answer.

"All right, Lizzie. Be calm. I can stand it," said the detective with treacherous suavity. But he favored her with a long and careful scrutiny before he moved to the table and picked up the note that had been thrown through the window. Quietly he extended it beneath Lizzie's nose.

"Ever see this before?" he said crisply, watching her face.

Lizzie read the note with bulging eyes, her face horror-stricken. When she had finished, she made a gesture of wild disclaimer that nearly removed a portion of Anderson's left ear.

"Mercy on us!" she moaned, mentally invoking not only her patron saint but all the rosary of Heaven to protect herself and her mistress.

But the detective still kept his eye on her.

"Didn't write it yourself, did you?" he queried curtly.

"I did not!" said Lizzie angrily. "I did not!" and she flounced out of the room in high dudgeon, her pompadour bristling, before he had time to interrogate her further.

He replaced the note on the table and turned back to Miss Cornelia. If he had found any clew to the mystery in Lizzie's demeanor, she could not read it in his manner.

"Now, what about the butler?" he said.

"Nothing about him—except that he was Courtleigh Fleming's servant."

Anderson paused. "Do you consider that significant?"

A shadow appeared behind him deep in the alcove—a vague, listening figure—Dale, on tiptoe, conspiratorial,

"How Old Are You?" He Proceeded.

taking pains not to draw the attention of the others to her presence. But both Miss Cornelia and Anderson were too engrossed in their conversation to notice her.

Miss Cornelia hesitated.

"Isn't it possible that there is a connection between the colossal theft at the Union bank and these disturbances?" she said.

Anderson seemed to think over the question.

"What do you mean?" he asked, as Dale slowly moved into the room from the alcove, silently closing the alcove doors behind her, and still unobserved.

"Suppose," said Miss Cornelia slowly, "that Courtleigh Fleming took that money from his own bank and concealed it in this house?" The eavesdropper grew rigid.

"That's the theory you gave headquarters, isn't it?" said Anderson. "But I'll tell you how headquarters figures it out. In the first place, the cashier is missing. In the second place, if Courtleigh Fleming did it and got as far as Colorado, he had it with him when he died, and the facts apparently don't bear that out. In the third place, suppose he had hidden the money in or around this house. Why did he rent it to you?"

"But he didn't," said Miss Cornelia, obstinately. "I leased this house from his nephew—his heir."

The detective smiled tolerantly.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Gospel in Form That Appeals to Tibetans

Tibetan printed books are printed from wooden blocks on very fine buff-colored paper manufactured in the country from the bark of a certain shrub. The pages are long and narrow. They are not bound into a volume, but lie loosely one above another. When not in use the leaves are inclosed in two wooden slabs, which are often finely carved, and tied with silk ribbons. The whole is wrapped in a beautifully embroidered silk cover. The sacred books of Tibet, produced in this way, are regarded with the greatest reverence. A lady missionary working on the borders of Tibet suggested to the British and Foreign Bible society that a part of the New Testament should be produced in Tibetan style. "This," reports the society, "has now been done. St. Mark has assumed a dress which will make a strong appeal to the Tibetans. They will be led from the attractive appearance to the contents, which are still more attractive, and we hope that many of them will be led to the Lord himself."

### *Famous "Blacklist"*

Publication of the names of debtors who paid in depreciated currency, during and after the civil war period was known as the greenback "blacklist." The Pacific coast states conducted trade and other operations on the gold standard. It was considered a breach of faith to buy on a gold basis and pay in paper money, though it was legal tender. The boycott was unknown, but the blacklist was not illegal and the practice of publication was common.

### *Then Look at Your Watch*

To tell time by the stars, explains an Iowa professor, "First look at the North star and the two points in the Great Dipper which are on a line with it. Imagine that in the sky there is a huge clock face with the hour hand pointing to these pointers. Read the time to the nearest quarter hour. To this figure add the number of months since January 1. Double this and subtract the result from 16¼. If the result is more than 16¼, subtract it from 40¼. The result is the time in hours, after noon. If the time is greater than 12, it means that it is after midnight, so subtract 12 and you have the time in hours, a.'e forenoon."

As regards the day, of course, by the time you have done all this it will be the middle of next week.—Exchange.

### *All Silence Not Golden*

We often hear of the wife who talks too much. But pity the husband—the wife who talks too little.—Ladies' Home Companion.

# POULTRY

## CUT OUT DRAFTS FOR MOST EGGS

An important requirement for successful winter egg production in a flock of pullets is a house that is free from drafts. Colds, chickenpox, and roup, says the New Jersey State College of Agriculture, often can be traced to the birds' becoming chilled because of a drafty house.

To insure oneself against this undesirable condition it is necessary to have the house airtight on three sides. This is often difficult to do, but any cracks near the door or directly around the roosts particularly are to be avoided. These should by all means be covered. Cracks around the entrance door are a very common occurrence and one may often find the birds huddled up in a far corner in an effort to keep warm. By putting weather strips on the doors the poultry men easily eliminate this problem.

After the three sides are tightened up, the front may be kept reasonably open. As a rule, however, it is best to have about equal proportions of glass and muslin in front, and the two combined may take up about one-half of the front surface of the house. The spaces between the rafters above the plate may also be kept open. The muslin curtains should be closed at night and never opened on stormy days or even in the early morning or late evening. The house should always feel comfortable when one enters it. Many poultrymen have found that the glass substitute products have been very satisfactory. They admit much more light than the muslin, and also keep the house warmer. Ventilation through the rafter spaces at the eaves is actually sufficient to keep the birds in good health.

With the sides and front well taken care of, the only possible cause for drafts would be a long house without partitions. To overcome the tendency for the wind to sweep in one end of such a house and out the other, it is well to build partitions every 40 feet. There should extend to the roof and come up to within three feet of the front of the house, or if desired, a door may be fitted into this three-foot space, making the partition solid. Partitions in the roosting quarters only should be built every 20 feet.

## Forcing Maturity of Pullets Is Mistake

It is a mistake to force the maturity of pullets with large amounts of milk or meat, warns O. C. Ufford, extension poultry specialist, Colorado Agricultural college. "A pullet should have a good body growth before she starts laying. An undersized pullet seldom makes a profitable hen. Small amounts of milk or meat should be used to produce normal growth, but it should not be overdone. Feed plenty of grain, part of it ground along with milk or meat.

"Once pullets have begun to lay," Mr. Ufford continues, "the milk or meat should be gradually increased, as it is part of the ration necessary to produce eggs. If there is a deficiency of animal protein in the ration production will gradually decline and fall molt result. Gradually allow the birds all the milk they will drink. If milk is not available bring the amount of meat scrap up to 20 per cent of the ground feed used."

## Sees Hatchability and Feeding Value of Eggs

One of the important points brought out by Prof. J. G. Halpin of the University of Wisconsin at the Ohio poultry day at Wooster, Ohio, is that the hatchability and food value of eggs may be changed with the type of feed given. Professor Halpin asserted that the time will come when people will demand that eggs for their children shall not come from hens with rickets. It is as he said, generally agreed that children are benefited by cod liver oil, especially during the winter months. But it is unnecessary to compel the children to take cod liver oil—then it might as well be fed to the chickens in the first place, and the quality of the eggs improved to overcome the deficiency.

## Hopper Space

Standing in line for their feed is objectionable to hens, and, furthermore, they will not do their best when forced to do this, says H. H. Alp, poultry extension specialist of the college of agriculture, University of Illinois. Hence the value of a good egg mash often is limited by the hopper in which it is fed, he said. Feeding space for all hens at all times is the rule that should be kept in mind in building a poultry feed hopper, he recommended.

## Dry Skimmed Milk

Feed dealers and feed mixers are recognizing the increasing demand for dry skimmed milk, which is now being manufactured in sufficient quantities to supply the growing poultry needs. Milk by-products, semi-solid and dry, supply the poultryman a superior quality of protein and lime and certain vitamines; but apparently of equal or more importance is the milk sugar which in the intestinal tract seems to perform a service not supplied by any other feed on the list.

Drugs Excite the Kidneys, Drink Water

Take Salts at First Sign of Bladder Irritation or Backache

The American men and women must guard constantly against kidney trouble because we often eat too much rich food. Our blood is filled with acids which the kidneys strive to filter out; they weaken from overwork, become sluggish, the eliminative tissues clog and the result is kidney trouble, bladder weakness and a general decline in health.

When your kidneys feel like lumps of lead; your back hurts or the urine is cloudy, full of sediment, or you are obliged to seek relief two or three times during the night; if you suffer with sick headache, or dizzy, nervous spells, acid stomach, or if you have rheumatism when the weather is bad, begin drinking lots of good soft water and get from your pharmacist about four ounces of Jad Salts. Take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys may then act fine.

This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for years to help flush and stimulate clogged kidneys, to neutralize the acids in the system so they no longer are a source of irritation, thus often relieving bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is inexpensive, cannot injure, makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink and belongs in every home, because nobody can make a mistake by having a good kidney flushing any time.

Blooming health is evident in a clear complexion. The impurities of the system are eliminated by Wright's Indian Vegetable Pills "THE TONIC LAXATIVE"

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HOXSIE'S CROUP REMEDY
THE LIFE-SAVER OF CHILDREN
No opium, no nausea. 50 cents at druggists, or KELLS CO., NEWBURGH, N. Y.

### *Treasures in Wilderness*

Lost in the Caucasian wilderness in the village of Zugdidi, a palace of the former Dadiana princess, one of the oldest and wealthiest Georgian families and related to Napoleon and Alexander I, stands today practically as it stood 100 years ago in the heyday of those powerful rulers. In addition to much rich furniture of the period, some of which is said to have been presented by the French emperor, there is a collection of stone and bronze arms, Greek statuettes, ancient Greek coins, a number of skulls of untold value. The contents of the palace have been converted by Caucasian authorities into a museum, but owing to the inaccessibility of the mountain village few except Georgian peasantry ever visit it.

### *First Session in 1800*

The first session of congress held in Washington was in 1800, when the north section of the original capitol was completed, according to an answered question in Liberty.

### *Weak Human Nature*

"We become weary of the friend who irritates us," said Hi Ho, the sage of Chinatown, "and trust ourselves to a stranger who betrays us."—Washington Star.

Self-laudation abounds among the unpolished; but nothing can stamp a man more sharply as ill-bred.—Charles Buxton.

Life gives nothing to men without great labor.—Horace.

Coughs and Colds are not only annoying, but dangerous. If not attended to at once they may develop into serious ailment.

Boschee's Syrup is soothing and healing in such cases, and has been used for sixty-one years. 25c and 50c bottles. Buy it at your drug store. G. G. Green, Inc., Woodbury, N. J.

For Old Sores
Hanford's Balsam of Myrrh
All dealers are authorized to refund your money for the first bottle if not suited.

Dr. Peery's Vermifuge "Dead Shot" kills and expels worms in a very few hours. One dose suffices. It works quickly and surely. All Druggists, 50c.
Dr. Peery's Dead Shot for WORMS Vermifuge
At druggists or 372 Pearl Street, New York City.

Best For Eyes that smart or feel scalded. Once used always preferred
ROMAN EYE BALSAM
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