

"The VANITY CASE"

A Tale of Mystery and Love

By CAROLYN WELLS

BEGIN HERE TODAY
In Harbor Country, Long Island, in the elaborate bungalow lived PERRY HEATH, an artist, and his wife, MYRA. They were entertaining as house guests, a relative of Myra's and, aside from Perry, the only person in the house.

BUNNY MOORE, young, vivacious, red-haired, an old friend of Myra's, a Perry, an artist, was a candidate for presidency of the Country Club. The other leading candidate was SAM ANDERSON. Perry's wife was beautiful, but cold and sarcastic. She collected rare, never worn, gowns. She collected a box of glass and silver and a set of a whisky bottle which aroused her husband's scorn.

Myra, provoked at a growing intimacy between Perry and Bunny, announces she has made her will in favor of Bunny, cutting Perry off. That night she is found with her husband and slanders mysteriously to his "secret."

That night, Heath, stealing downstairs, surprises his wife with human and orders her to leave out of the house by morning. The next morning Myra's body is discovered in the street. She is made up with rouge and dressed in a gown. HEATH, the butler, discovers near the body a card marked "The work of Perry Heath." The doctor, when he comes, finds the death blow was struck with Myra's cherished whisky bottle. The coroner conducts an examination, and it develops that Perry Heath had disappeared during the night, in spite of the fact that the windows and doors had been locked on the inside. Detective Mott takes Bunny to the police station to identify the night of the murder. "Yes, why not?" says Bunny.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY
The sudden question was in a rather impertinent tone, but was accompanied by an innocent and enchanting smile that made Detective Mott sit up and take notice. He had his own opinion of young women who tried to cajole or bewitch a detective, and he immediately began to watch his step.

"Why, because I want to know all about when you last saw Mrs. Heath alive."

"That was the time," Bunny spoke softly. "I said good night—I think—or, perhaps I didn't, we're not very punctilious about such things, and I went up to my room and shut the door, and I didn't hear anybody else come upstairs at all."

"And you didn't leave your room again, last night?"

Bunny paled and her big blue eyes stared at the detective.

"W—what do you mean?" she said, with a gasp and a little catch in her voice.

Mott looked at her. Could it be that this lovely child had some knowledge, guilty or otherwise, that she was keeping back?

"It doesn't seem to be an abstruse question," Mott smiled kindly at her. "I only asked if you left your bedroom again after you went in and shut the door."

"Why, no—no, of course I didn't."

Then you knew nothing of the tragedy until you came downstairs this morning?"

"I knew before I came down, because Carter, Mrs. Heath's maid, came to my room and told me."

"I see. And did Carter tell you the details of Mrs. Heath's appearance? How her face was painted and how there were candles at her head and feet?"

"No—she didn't tell me that—"

Bunny looked vaguely at Mott, her lovely eyes clouding with tears as she glanced at the beautiful still figures on the floor.

"Then you were shocked afresh when you came downstairs and saw the—"

"Yes—oh, yes."

"You gazed at the strangely painted face—"

"Yes." Bunny's eyes looked straight into the detective's own.

"You saw the crimson scarf draped across the body?"

"Yes."

"You saw the card about Mr. Heath's work?"

"Yes."

"You saw the candles burning at her head and feet, almost as if in a church?"

"Yes." Bunny looked rapt now, and then, as the detective ceased his questions she burst into a flood of helpless tears, and kindly took the handkerchief Larry silently offered.

"Miss Moore," Mott seemed to ignore her sudden breakdown, "please answer this with candor. Was there any ill feeling, to your knowledge, between Mr. Heath and his wife?"

"No," and Bunny ceased crying, and faced the detective with all her old insolence and independence.

"Most certainly not! They were one of the most devoted couples I ever knew."

"There was no difference of opinion—I mean on a vital subject?"

"No, nothing special or definite. Except, perhaps, that Mr. Heath did not sympathize in Mrs. Heath's fancy for collecting old glass."

"That would scarcely be sufficient reason for him to attack her with"

the loveliest girl he had ever seen and was the one girl in the world for him, and many such decisions and assumptions."

Bunny acknowledged his introduction with absent-minded politeness and asked them to come with her to a small morning room back of the dining room, where they could talk in more seclusion.

"Who is looking after you?" demanded Mrs. Prentiss, with her usual brusqueness.

"Nobody," said Bunny. "I am all alone. I'd go home, but the police won't let me. I haven't sent word to my people about this yet—of course, they'll see it when it gets into the papers—but it's all so terrible—so awful—that I couldn't bring myself to write about it, and I just couldn't telephone."

"No, no, of course not, my dear. But you can't stay here alone—haven't you heard a word from Mr. Heath?"

"Not a word," Bunny's face turned rosy-pink, but her voice was calm and steady. "I can't imagine where he went or what's keeping him away."

"Who is in charge here?"

"That's what everybody asks. Why nobody's in charge, exactly. Mr. Inman is, in some ways, and of course, the servants keep the house running just as usual. I see a few of Myra's friends, but not all of them—I just can't!"

"Of course, you can't put in 'Tidy Buck, with real sympathy. I'd oughtn't to be expected of you."

"You must come over and stay with me," Mrs. Prentiss ordered.

Not was he disappointed. He told himself on the spot, that she was

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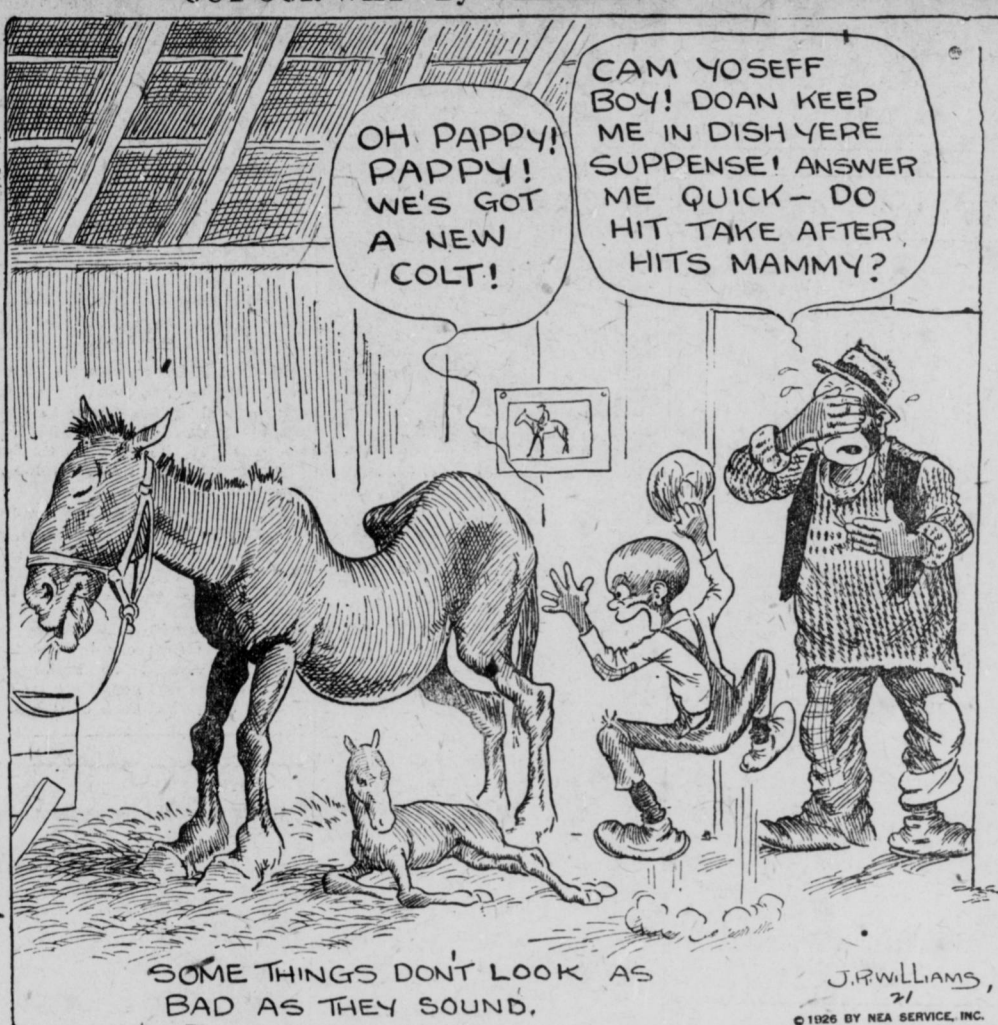
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This Study Deals With the Ten Commandments

The International Uniform Sunday School Lesson for August 22, The Ten Commandments: Duties to God. Exod. 20:1-17.

By Wm. E. Gilroy, D. D.
Editor of The Congregationalist

This lesson and the lesson following deal with the ten commandments. The first four in this lesson are grouped under the heading, "Duties to God," and the last six in the next lesson under the heading, "Duties to Man." This is an arbitrary and not very wise division and distinction. The more one inquires into the matter the more one will realize that there are no duties to God that do not involve duties to man, nor are there duties to man that do not involve duties to God.

The ten commandments constitute the greatest social and legal code in the history of mankind. Probably no words in the same space have been more influential in determining laws and social standards.

How are we to think of these commandments? Are they binding in every sense upon the Christian conscience and upon the modern world? How literally are they to be interpreted? Mohammedanism, for instance, has interpreted one commandment so literally as to prevent any spirit of notation or mere speculation. They must, in fact, be faced by one who would understand the relationship of the commandments to the New Testament and to Christian liberty. It must be remembered that the commandments stand as a part of the general Mosaic law. They are not set apart in such a way as to say, "These things must be obeyed, but other things are not so important."

The Christian does not feel called upon to fulfill all the requirements of the Jewish law. Is he then directly under obligations to fulfill these commandments?

To this last question we give an unqualified "yes," though it is to be added that the Christian's duty is to obey these commandments in the light of Christian knowledge and Christian liberty. They are not formal principles to be observed merely according to the letter. But they are, as Paul suggested, living principles to be written upon the tablets of the heart.

Inherently Sound
Two things may be said. First, that these ten commandments stand out particularly from the general Mosaic law inasmuch as they are represented as being written upon tablets by the finger of God. They had a special place in the religion of Israel as they have had a special place in the life of the world.

In the second place they depend for their validity, not upon some external authority; they are vindicated in the school of life itself as principles inherently sound and sacred. It is this that makes them God-given and godly. They are a part of the world of human blessings that God has made. They indicate the relationships that must exist between

man and man and between man and God if man would attain to true and wholesome living.

Can any one fail to recognize that much of the curse upon our modern life arises directly from the failure of men to perceive the truth of these commandments and to apply that truth in their lives? No, trouble with modern life is not only that there is no Sabbath, no sacred day, but for too many people there is no sacredness in life itself; nothing is holy and yet all of great living is established on the sense of holiness, the worth of the soul, the worth of man himself as a spiritual being made in the image and likeness of his Creator, reaching out to that Creator in aspiration and faith.

That is religion in its deepest essence, and where religion springs from this essential attitude of holiness is lacking man is at a low ebb and society is in a precarious state.

When we speak of Christian liberty we must remember the words of Jesus that He came "not to destroy but to fulfill." The only modification of these commandments that Christianity approves is that which gives them larger, freer and truer expression in the lives and relationships of men.

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