

"The VANITY CASE"

A Tale of Mystery and Love
By CAROLYN WELLS

BEGIN HERE TODAY

MRS. PRENTISS, a matronly figure in the Heath household next door one night, and the next day, the murder of MYRA HEATH and the disappearance of her husband, PERRY HEATH, are the central figures in the story. The story is a tale of mystery and love, and it is told in a series of chapters.

At the Country Club the murder is discussed by SAM ANDERSON, Heath's rival for the club presidency. All GUY, NYGHAM, who is trying to solve the case, and BUNNY MOORE, beautiful, vivacious, to whom suspicion points because of her strange actions.

Myra Heath is heavily rouged, never wears colors, yet when her body was found she was heavily rouged. She had a rare old bottle from her collection that the murderer used to kill her. Candles were burning at her head and feet, nearly as a card market, "The Work of Perry Heath."

The strange thing about Heath's disappearance is that the windows and doors were locked on the inside the night before and were found that way the morning. Fingerprints of Bunny Moore and Lillian were found on the bottle.

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CHAPTER XXXI

"Now, look here, Mr. Detective," said Herrick, who had been sitting still, gloomily listening. "I've got a word to say about that. I locked up everything when I went upstairs at shortly after eleven-thirty. The whole family was up in their rooms then. Now, my room is at the third story front, which isn't a regular story, this here house being a bungalow. But it's a loft, like, and comfortable enough. Any way, that's where I sleep, and it's right over the front door. My window was open, and if anybody had gone in or out of that front door, I'd have heard it. That door wasn't opened after I locked it that night, till I opened it the next morning. I know, because the chain bolt is out of order, and I plug a little stick in it. Nobody would do it exactly like I did, and anyway, I just know that door wasn't opened after I locked it up."

"Very well, Herrick, but maybe Miss Moore let Mr. Heath out by a window."

"I'd heard it if she had. I tell you sir, I'm a light sleeper, and I've always got my ears open for burglars, and I tell you there wouldn't have been a door or window open in the house that night, 'thout I heard it."

"Did you hear Emma open the door for Katie?"

"Course I did!" Herrick looked contemptuous. "That Emma, she thinks she's so quiet! She goes downstairs like a hod-carrier, and she opens that back door so careful, that she takes about ten minutes to do it! Last night she was a little and she had to jerk it open—ain't that so, Em?"

"Yes," and the girl looked her astonishment.

"Yes, it's so. And I was thinking I'd all next day, and then what happened but it clear out of my mind."

"How about the studio French windows? Couldn't a man leave the house that way?"

"They all squeak, every one of them," Herrick averred. "I've been meaning to get 'em fixed, but I just haven't. But they squeak something awful! If you don't believe that, Mr. Detective, you just try them."

"Then, Herrick," Mott turned on him, "how did Mr. Heath get out? Emma heard him talking after 12, that was after you locked up, and yet he was gone in the morning. How did he get out?"

"That's what's botherin' me, sir," and Herrick looked awestruck. "I say, how could he get out? The cellarway was locked inside. Every door and window was fastened in the morning when I came downstairs. I'd heard any of 'em if they were opened in the night. I don't know, sir, how he did get out!"

"Do you think the man Jimmy Lomax saw was Mr. Heath?"

"I don't think so, no, sir. 'Cause why, how could it be? Mr. Heath, he couldn't get out, sir."

"Then is he in the house yet?"

"I think so, sir."

"Why, Herrick, what do you mean?"

"I mean, sir, that the brute as 'one for Mrs. Heath done for him, two, sir, and hid his dead body somewhere."

"Absurd, my man! That couldn't be."

"All right, sir, but you asked me what I thought."

Having gained all he could from the servants, and giving no heed at all to Herrick's wild surmise, Mott, after further injunctions not to babble, went away.

As he walked round the house, he

saw Inman on the front terrace, and stopped to speak to him.

"I say," Mott began, "do you think Perry Heath could have been murdered by the assassin of his wife, and his body concealed in the house?"

"God Lord! What an idea!" Larry stared at him.

"Yes, it sounds absurd, I know. But many details of this mysterious case are absurd. I say, do you think it could be possible?"

"I certainly do not. But it is surely a question easily answered. Why not search the house? There are not many hiding places in it that would serve such a purpose."

"Look here, Mr. Inman," Mott stalked along by the other's side, as they patrolled the long terrace, "who killed your cousin?"

"That's the question that's tormenting me to death!" Larry exclaimed, so emphatically, that Mott more than half believed him.

"Is it tormenting you because you don't know the answer or because you do?" he said, shrewdly.

"Just what do you mean by that?" Inman stopped and stared at him.

"I mean, do you suspect somebody whom you do not want to suspect? Are your convictions forced to a conclusion that you cannot bear to accept? In a word, do you feel you must suspect Miss Moore, though you hate to do so?"

"The other glared at him.

"No," he said, "I do not suspect Miss Moore, and any one who does must be out of his mind! It's too absurd!"

"Now don't go on to say that that sweet young thing couldn't commit a crime! Crimes have been committed by young women, by girls, even before this day of the wicked and degenerate flapper."

"I suppose, Mr. Mott, your position and your calling give you a right to voice such monstrous beliefs, but I can't believe you really mean them. I think you are putting it to me, to see what I will say to it. Well, sir, I say this. Miss Moore could no more have killed Mrs. Heath than I could myself. And I think your accusation of her is to get me to deny it, and stand up for her, and then you will accuse me, as the only other possibility. Why do you leave Perry Heath out of your reckoning?"

"First, because I cannot believe he could be the criminal and place that card in evidence as a clue to his guilt. Another could do it, but not the criminal, himself. Had Heath committed that crime, he would have left a false clue that would have pointed to yourself or to some other person, but not to his own name."

"This doesn't seem to be one of those cases that have the regulation clues—fingerprint, broken cuff-links, special sort of tobacco ash—"

"Fingerprints, one of a pair of pistols, library table paper cutter, button torn from assailant's coat—no, Mr. Inman, none of the hackneyed clues are present, except—fingerprints. You know of those important ones on the bottle—the weapon. How do you explain those?"

"I fancy they are easy of explanation. Both Miss Moore and myself fingered that bottle when Mrs. Heath was showing it to us."

"Yes, and after that, Mrs. Heath polished it clean with her delicate handkerchief, leaving no marks on it of any sort."

"Oh, I don't know. We must have picked it up again, Miss Moore and I, after that. You know how dirty, even unconsciously one picks up objects that are lying about."

"Yes, but there are only the prints of you two people, and Miss Moore's are beneath yours. She grasped it first."

"Indeed," said Larry Inman, and turned away with a yawn.

(To Be Continued)

OFFICER RESCUES BOAT

By United Press

NEW YORK, Sept. 6.—George V. McLaughlin, police commissioner of New York City, plunged into the sea and swam to the rescue of four occupants of a motorboat Sunday night after telephoning for a police launch. The boat's motor had stalled and the occupants were tired, wet and frightened. They feared the treacherous swells might dash their boat to pieces on the rocky shore. They were floating helplessly off-shore from Commissioner McLaughlin's summer home at Sea Gate. Reassured by his arrival on their boat they waited until the launch arrived and towed them to shore.

OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS

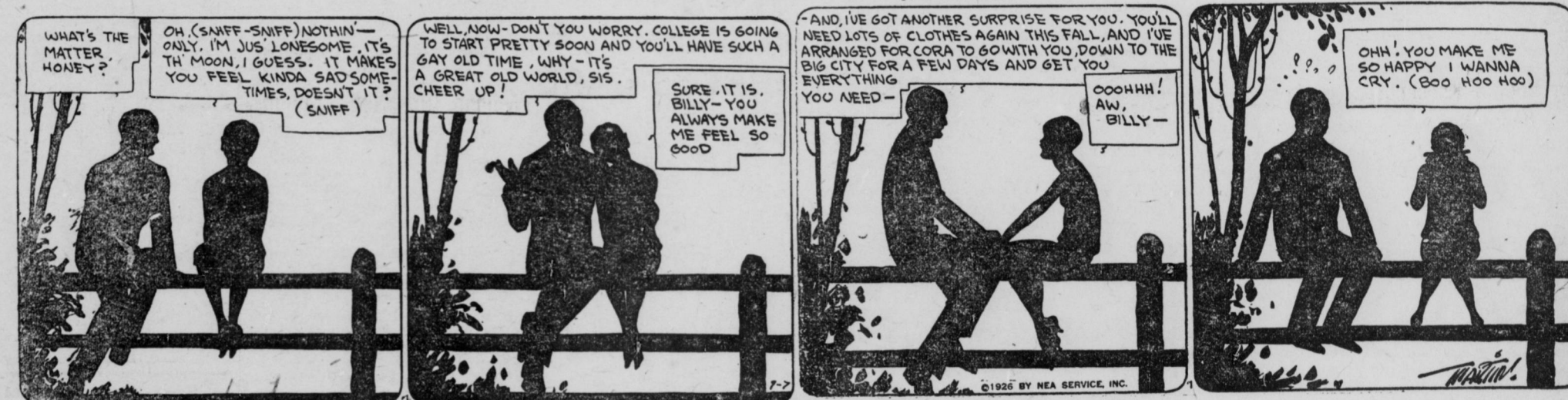


LAMB OR WOLF?

SALESMAN \$AM—By SWAN



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES—By MARTIN



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—By BLOSSER



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A FLAPPER DIVA

Lucretia Goddard.

By Gilbert Swan
NEW YORK, Sept. 7.—Introducing the "flapper diva."
Lucretia Goddard, 17-year-old Bos-

ton girl, is the youngest prima donna in grand opera.
Her hair is bobbed and she has learned to smoke, though she tosed

over the habit when told it threatened her career; she swims like a fish, can turn somersaults from a spring board, drives a racing car and can talk intelligently and frankly on any of the modern subjects."

On the other hand—she has studied seven languages, sings operas in four and is well acquainted with five; knows music and musicians and has devoured everything written on both subjects; is an ardent student and says she has had as much fun working as playing; keeps pace with reading, and converses wittily and without self consciousness.

Comes of Old Family

In brief she combines those qualities that make the "modern youth" the topic for so much debate.

Lucretia's is no Cinderella story. Whereas Marion Talley, last season's spectacular young figure in music, came from humble mid-West background, Lucretia traces back to Colonial days. Her folks are cultured, aristocrats, well-to-do New Englanders.

Lucretia, it seems, was born with both a silver spoon and a silver note in her mouth.

Fortune Gallo, the opera impresario, who has taken her under his wing and contracted with her to sing principal soprano roles with his San Carlo Grand Opera Company, announces her debut for October in ultra-critical Boston.

Unlike Miss Talley, who was quiet, poised and somewhat colorless of manner, little Miss Goddard is dark, fiery, dramatic. What she may lack in the high, flute-like notes achieved by the 19-year-old Marion is said by her sponsors to be more than made up for in stage presence and robustness of tone.

Better than Talley

Some predict for this "baby diva" a place beside the dramatic, fiery Mary Garden—that is, when Lucretia has lived and learned a bit more.

Impresario Gallo's attention was attracted to her last season. He declares her better than Talley and says her acting will be widely acclaimed.

Her first role will be Marguerite in "Faust," though she already has been heard in Boston in "Mignon" and "Manon."

UNGER SIGNS CONTRACT

Glady's Unger, well-known playwright, has signed a contract to write original stories for Paramount. Her first will be one for Pola Negri, to be filmed following completion of "Hotel Imperial."

"BEAU GESTE" ON VIEW

"Beau Geste," the romance of the French Foreign Legion from P. C. Wren's novel and directed by Herbert Brenon, has started an extended run at the Criterion Theater, New York City. In the cast are Ronald Colman, Alice Joyce, Noah Beery, Neil Hamilton, Ralph Forbes, Mary Brian, Norman Trevor.

AWFUL SICK HEADACHE AND SALLOW COMPLEXION

"I was almost down with stomach trouble when I began taking Black-Draught," says Mrs. Ada Blackmar, of Alexander City, Ala. "I would have spells of nausea and sick stomach which would put me to bed. I began three times a day before my meals. I kept this up for several weeks, and it was just a little while before I began to note an improvement in my condition."

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