

Detective Burns Narrates Story With Thrills

"THE IRON CLAW"

BY
ARTHUR
STRINGER

[Read this story in the Palladium and see it at the Palace.]

"And what do we gain by that?" "We'll fill our big thirty-thousand dollar mausoleum with thirty big policemen, and round up the gang before Legar can even smell a rat."

But Enoch Golden remained unconvinced.

"Well, it may be a brilliant plan, but you can please leave me out of it," he finally announced.

"That's just what I've been asking for," explained Manley. "All I want is to be allowed to conduct it in my own way."

David Manley, however, did not conduct that strange funeral altogether in his own way. Carefully as every detail had been planned, there were one or two minor features which at the time escaped his attention.

The most conspicuous and yet the most vital of these was, perhaps, the personality of the driver of the third carriage in that small cortege which wended its way so decorously from the Golden home. For under the funeral outfit of this placid-eyed driver reposed the stalwart body of a certain One-Lamp Louie, long known among his associates as an habitue of the Owl's Nest and an underground agent for Jules Legar himself.

Now One-Lamp Louie gave no promise of either active or passive interference with these duly appointed mortuary exercises until the city itself had been left well behind. Then, awakening to the fact that they were traversing a desirably sequestered stretch of road, he watched intently for certain prearranged signals from his one-armed accomplice. Immediately after the discovery of those looked-for signs the spirited team driven by One-Lamp Louie showed unexpected yet unmistakable evidences of restiveness.

But there was a limit to what that team of spirited blacks would endure. And they suddenly, to all intents and purposes, determined to follow their own line of travel at their own rate of speed, for, as the driver sat on the box apparently sawing on the reins, that exasperated team plunged suddenly forward, swerved across the road, and went galloping down a tree-screened bypath which was little more than a cart trail winding in and out through slopes of greensward and shrubbery.

Half a mile deeper in that shrubbery this runaway team would surely have reached the spot where a black limousine stood hidden away in the shadow of laurel-copse, had not still another and an equally unheralded factor entered into the situation. This factor took the form of a high-power roadster in which was seated a man wearing a yellow mask. His irruption into that orderly little procession, indeed, proved as abrupt as One-Lamp Louie's eruption from it. And he seemed plainly suspicious of both Louie's motives and movements, for he lost no time in swinging from the highway and plunging recklessly after the runaway carriage.

As his car approached the runaway cab that mysterious stranger, known as the Laughing Mask, stepped to the

running-board of his roadster, leaning far out as the two swerving vehicles drew together. One-Lamp Louie, whatever he may have thought of that approach, had little means of evading it. To swing off what narrow road remained before him seemed frankly suicidal. To lash his team to greater effort was already out of the question. To take his hands from the reins, even, along that uncertain road, was equally foolhardy. So the strange race went on, the swaying and bounding cab with a white-faced girl tossed about under its hood, the leaping and lurching roadster, every second drawing closer down on its quarry yet every second threatening to turn turtle over one of the grassy embankments above which it shuddered and slewed.

It was the Laughing Mask, leaning far out from his running-board, who threw open the cab-door and called sharply to the startled girl.

"Quick," he commanded. For one moment she hesitated. Then she reached out for the unsteady hand groping for her.

The next moment she found herself sitting back, a little breathless, in the leather-upholstered seat of the roadster and the man in the Laughing Mask smiling down at her.

The Black Watch.

A number of things had happened and were happening to disconcert, if not to discourage, the redoubtable Legar. That astute young adventurer, Betsy Le Marsh, alias Williamsburg Elsie, who, with the aid of divers forged recommendations, had installed herself in the Golden household, repeatedly and stubbornly reported that David Manley was dead.

Williamsburg Elsie also expressed a strong desire to migrate from the house in which she found herself so inquisitive a maid, since that house, she declared, was too full of "queer things" for her comfort.

When, at Legar's suggestion, she had tried to "pump a needfulful o' dope" into her altogether unsuspecting mistress, a dead man's face had suddenly appeared between her and the bedroom door. And on two different occasions, after midnight, when she had ventured down to the housekeeper's telephone to send in a secret message to Legar himself, she had found herself confronted by a ghost in white.

Nor was Betsy Le Marsh the only malcontent. Even Red Egan himself, one of the best "cold-steel" men in all the group that clustered about the Owl's Nest, had of late shown unmistakable signs of mental disturbance. A dead man's ghost, he declared, had looked in through one of the headquarters' windows. Red Egan, it is true, had promptly emptied his six-shooter at that phantasmal intruder, but with nothing more to show for it than a shattered window-sash and six panes of broken glass.

When the master-criminal, to put an end to all such absurdities, had by the force of many dire threats and oaths compelled both One-Lamp Louie and Red Egan himself to repair to the Golden mausoleum and verify the contents of the mysterious casket there

deposited, Red Egan had returned with the preposterous story of a white sheet suddenly descending out of the blackness of the vault and whisking One-Lamp Louie out of reach and also out of sight. And since the once valiant Red Egan showed so craven a spirit that nothing short of a quart of three-star brandy could tranquillize his shaken nerves, and since One-Lamp Louie showed no signs of returning from the mysterious realms into which the afore-mentioned white sheet had whisked him, Legar promptly and wrathfully decided to take the matter into his own hands. He would lay this ghost, he announced, or something would go smash in the process.

But he had no intention of approaching that intimidating mausoleum without due and definite preparation. With him he took a powerful pocket flashlight, a Colt automatic pistol and a couple of extra clips of cartridges. But the instrument on which he reposed the most confidence was a gun-metal disk little bigger than a pocket aneroïd, some three inches in diameter and no thicker than a man's hand. This innocent-looking disk, which could be slipped into a vest pocket as easily as a timepiece, was known to the habitués of the Owl's Nest as the Black Watch.

While actually nothing more than a small-sized hand grenade, its claim to distinction lay in the tremendous explosive power which stood compressed between its slender metal walls.

Legar was not a coward. Yet as he stood in the clammy midnight air of the Golden mausoleum and quietly removed the screws that held the top on the black casket beside him, he found that combination of silence and gloom and unsavory surroundings a little more of a strain on his nerves than he had anticipated. Yet as he lifted back the sable cover of the casket he did so with a hand that was still steady.

Thence he took up his flashlight, and pressing close to the coffin's side, stood studying the pallid face that lay surrounded by its even more pallid drapery of white satin.

He stared at that pallid face long and intently. He stared at it with studious and narrowing eyes. Then he did a strange and an inexplicable thing. Lifting his right arm that ended in its shank of steel, he brought it down with a crash on the glass cover of the casket. Then, as though infuriated by some unreasoning hatred for the pallid face still staring so impassively up at him, he struck again. This time the blow fell directly on the head between the white satin swathings. But that falling arm, instead of striking a human head of flesh and bone, crashed down through a thin shell of fiber and tinted wax.

Legar, focusing his light on that shattered mask, emitted a short bark of triumph as the meaning of it all came home to him. He leaned for several minutes over the violated casket, staring at it with insolent yet abstracted eyes, pondering just what move could lie beyond so intricately engineered a subterfuge. And the answer to that question came more promptly and more directly than he had anticipated. For as he stood there, turning a piece of the wax-covered tissue meditatively over in his fingers, the electric bulbs that strung the mausoleum roof broke into sudden light. From different quarters of that shadowy building, at the same time, stepped a group of hidden officers, headed by David Manley himself.

So quickly and so quietly did that transformation take place, indeed, that the man leaning over the casket had neither time nor chance to change his position. He merely blinked a little stupidly at the revolver which glimmered in Manley's hand. Then, with a gesture that seemed equally stupid, he reached for his watch and held the heavy gun-metal case meditatively between his fingers.

"Stick 'em up!" Manley was at the same time commanding with a curt head movement towards Legar's hands. "It may have taken some work, but this is the time we gather you in!"

Legar laughed as he confronted his enemies. "Do you want to take me alive?" "Alive or dead, I'm going to take you!"

"Then take this first," cried Legar. At the same moment that he spoke the left hand in which he still held what seemed to be a black metal watch case swung forward. And as that object which so closely resembled a black watch hurtled through the air, Legar flung himself flat on his face along the vault flooring. Then the black watch struck.

The next moment the walls of that ponderous structure of marble and sandstone seemingly built to defy time itself, lifted bodily in the air, like the hull of a torpedoed dreadnaught. Then, following the roar and rumble of that vast destruction, came the momentary cataclysmic silence which so strangely and yet so inevitably succeeds a calamity too gigantic and too abrupt to be understood.

[To Be Continued.]

The "Crevice"

"M'sieu Blaine, I could not do that!" she cried, ignoring his last question. "I would do much, anything that I could for Miss Lawton, but she would be the last to ask of me that I should lead a man on to—to make love to me, in order to betray him! I will do anything that is possible to find out for Miss Lawton and for you, m'sieu, all that I can by keeping my ears open in the house of the minister, but as to M'sieu Paddington—I will not play such a role with any man, even to please Miss Lawton."

"Yet you have been meeting him in the park," the detective leaned forward in his chair and spoken gently, as if merely reminding the girl of some insignificant fact which she had presumably forgotten, yet there was that in his tone which made her stiffen, and she replied impulsively, with a warning flash of her eyes: "What do you mean, m'sieu? How do you know? I—I told you I had nothing to report concerning M'sieu Paddington, nothing which could be of service to Miss Lawton, and it is quite true. I—I did meet M'sieu Paddington in the park, but it was simply an accident."

"And was the locket and chain an accident, too? That locket which you are wearing at the present moment, mademoiselle?"

"The locket—" Her hand strayed to her neck and convulsively clasped the bauble of cheap, bright gold hang-

ing there. "What do you know of my locket, M'sieu Blaine?"

"I know that Paddington purchased it for you two or three days ago—that he gave it to you that night in the park, and you allowed him to take you in his arms and kiss you!"

"Stop! How can you know that!" she stormed at him, stepping forward slightly, a deep flush dyeing her face. "He did not tell you! You have had me watched, followed, spied upon! It is intolerable! To think that I should be treated as if I were unworthy of trust. I have been faithful, loyal to Miss Lawton, but this is too much! I have not questioned M'sieu Paddington; I know nothing of his affairs, but I like him, I—I admire him very much, and if I desire to meet him, to receive his attentions, I shall do so. I am not harming Miss Lawton, who has been my patronne, my one friend in this strange, big country. M'sieu Paddington does not know that I am working at Dr. Franklin's under your instructions, and I shall never betray to him the confidence Miss Lawton has reposed in me. But I shall do no more; it is finished. That I should be suspected—"

"But you are not, my dear young woman!" interposed Blaine, mildly. "It was not you who was followed, spied upon, as you call it. For Miss Lawton's sake, because she is in trouble, we are interested just now in Paddington's movements, and naturally my operative was not aware that it was to meet you he went to the park."

"Nonsense!" Blaine exclaimed. The color had receded from her face, and a deathly white pallor had superseded it. She retreated a step or two, and continued defiantly: "This afternoon I resign from the service of Dr. Franklin! I do not believe that M'sieu Paddington is an enemy of Miss Lawton; nothing shall make me believe that he, who is the soul of honor, of chivalry, would harm her, or cause her any trouble, and I do not like this work, this spying and treachery and deceit! That is your profession, m'sieu, not mine; I only consented because Miss Lawton had been kind to me, and I desired to aid her in her trouble, if I could. But that he—that I—should be suspected and watched, and treated like criminals, oh, it is insufferable. Today, also, I leave the Anita Lawton Club. You shall find some one else to play detective for you—and M'sieu Lawton!"

With an indignant swirl of her skirts, she turned and made for the door, in a moment of rage; but on the threshold his voice stayed her.

"Wait! Miss Lawton has befriended you, and now, because of a man of whom you know nothing, you desert her cause. Is that loyalty, mademoiselle? We shall not ask you to remain at Dr. Franklin's any longer; Miss Lawton does not wish unwilling service from anyone. But for your own sake, go back to the club, and remain there until a position is open to you which is to your liking. You are a young girl in a strange country, as you say, and at least you know the club to be a safe place for you. Do not trust this man Paddington, or anyone else; it is not wise."

"I shall not listen to you!" she cried, her voice rising shrill and high-pitched in her excitement. "You shall not say such things of M'sieu Paddington! He is brave and good, while you—you are a spy, an eavesdropper, a delver into the private affairs of others. I do not know what this



THE ROMANTIC TOUCH.

"George, father objects to my marrying you."

"And was the locket and chain an accident, too? That locket which you are wearing at the present moment, mademoiselle?"

"The locket—" Her hand strayed to her neck and convulsively clasped the bauble of cheap, bright gold hang-



BEFORE THE FLOOD.

Noah (pausing in his work on the ark)—What were those neighbors talking about?

Japheth—Oh, they were trying to give me an argument against preparedness.



CHEERING THE ANIMALS.

Visitor—A great many people come here Sunday.

Keeper in Zoo—Yes; and I'm glad of it. It seems to sort of cheer the animals up to see a crowd.

"Congress-woman" is Nominated in Montana



MISS JEANETTE RANKIN

Republicans in thirty of the forty counties in Montana have named Miss Jeanette Rankin, of Missoula, as their choice for "congress-woman" at large, and in spite of the fact that the state is usually Democratic, she stands a fair chance of being elected, it is said.

Even if she is defeated, she will have the distinction of being the first woman nominated for congress by one of the two leading political parties. Miss Rankin came out on a dry platform and has the anti-liquor interests back of her. The suffrage element, which is strong in Montana, is also supporting her.

Miss Rankin is well known in New York, where she spent some time as state organizer for the National Woman Suffrage association. In 1913 she worked hard during the campaign to pass the suffrage amendment through the Montana legislature.

trouble may be, which Miss Lawton is in, and I am sorry for her, that she should suffer, but I shall have nothing more to do with the case, nor with you, m'sieu! Au revoir!"

"When!" breathed Blaine to himself, as the door closed after her with a slam. "What a firebrand! She may not have actually betrayed us to Paddington in so many words, but it isn't necessary to look far for the one who warned him that he was being watched, and put him on his guard, all unknowingly, that the whole scheme in which he is so deeply involved, was in jeopardy. Oh, these women!

Let them once lose their heads over a man, and they upset all one's plans!"

Blaine arrived promptly within the hour at the house on Belleair Avenue. Anita Lawton received him as before in the library. He observed with deep concern that she was a mere shadow of her former self. The slenderness which had been one of her girlish charms had become almost emaciation; her eyes were glassily bright and in the waxen pallor of her cheeks a feverish red spot burned.

[To Be Continued.]

For the Woman's Eye



Full of color, and of snappy style, too, is this out-of-door costume for October and November days. Heavy silk hersey in gray, crossbarred with orange kid on cuff and collar. The black beaver sailor hat, and white gloves and boots make a smart contrast with the sport suit.

Adults, \$25
Children, \$15
Cremation
Cincinnati Cremation Co.
Office, 30 Wiggins Bldg., Cincinnati, O. Booklet free.

First Aid to a Weak Stomach

HOSTETTER'S Stomach Bitters

FOR THE APPETITE—
THE DIGESTION—
THE LIVER—
AND BOWELS—
DON'T EXPERIMENT—GET
Hostetter's
A family remedy for 63 years

Why Is a Storage Battery Like a Baby?

Because it must be properly nursed through its first few months. Ask us about our new free service plan.

Richmond Electric Co.
19 South 7th St. Phone 2826

Free inspection of any battery at any time

Confidence

To get any satisfaction out of a dentist, you need CONFIDENCE in him. You need confidence in his judgment, in his skill, in his sympathy, and in his honesty. Come and see us, investigate our methods and our record, and we are sure that the confidence that you put in us WILL NOT BE MISPLACED.

Dentistry

—Good Teeth are an absolute necessity and we make their possession possible. All our work is practically painless.
Highest Grade Plates \$5.00 to \$8.00
Best Gold Crowns \$3.00 to \$4.00
Best Bridge Work \$3.00 to \$4.00
Best Gold Fillings \$1.00 up.
Best Silver Fillings .50 cents up
We Extract Teeth Painlessly.

NEW YORK DENTAL PARLOR

Over Union National Bank, 8th and Main Streets.
Elevator Entrance on South 8th street. Stair entrance on Main street.
Hours: 8 to 5:30—7 to 8 P. M. on Tues., Thurs. & Sat. Sunday 9 to 12.

A Discovery about your TEETH

Tonight, if you will closely examine your teeth after brushing them, you will make a surprising discovery. Though you have been cleaning your teeth regularly, you will find an accumulation of tartar on the enamel and bits of food deposit hiding between the crevices. Your dentifrice has not been REALLY CLEANING!

Loss of teeth is usually due to one of two conditions—Pyorrhea or Decay—both of which ordinarily develop only in the mouth where germ-laden tartar is present. CLEAN your teeth—REALLY CLEAN them! Senreco, a dental specialist's formula, will do it. Senreco embodies specially prepared, soluble granules unusually effective in cleaning away food deposits. Moreover, it is particularly destructive to the germ of Pyorrhea. Go to your dealer today and get a tube of Senreco—keep your teeth REALLY CLEAN and protect yourself against Pyorrhea and decay. Send 4c to Senreco 304 Walnut St., Cincinnati, Ohio, for trial package.