

JIMMIE DRURY

WHAT THE DARK ROOM REVEALED

by
DAVID O'HARA



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“I WANT A SHOT OR TWO OF THAT,” TOM SAID.

[\(Page 17\)](#)

A JIMMIE DRURY MYSTERY

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BY
DAVID O'HARA

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JIMMIE DRURY: WHAT THE DARK ROOM REVEALED

CHAPTER I FIVE MEN AND A LADY

“Look Jimmie!” The slender finger of Tom Howe, the young detective, pointed at the part of the door nearest the knob. “That’s how he got in—if,” his voice dropped to a whisper, “he got in at all!”

Jimmie saw only one thing, that the narrow strip of board known as the door-jamb, stood out from the door-frame a fraction of an inch, and that only at the point closest to the knob.

“Pried it out a little, slipped something thin through,” Tom explained. “He pushed the spring-lock back, and in he walked. Not a sound. If he did,—” he repeated after a second’s pause.

“Why do you say ‘if’?” Jimmie asked in a surprised whisper.

“Because in this case you may suspect anything. Look here, Jimmie!” Tom gripped the boy’s arm hard. “This is almost sure to prove an inside job. Strangest thing I ever heard of. Five men and a woman, every one of them rich, or supposed to be—in these days you never know. They are locked in a building for the night, two A.M. until morning. Not another soul in the place. And fifty thousand dollars in set diamonds, —bracelets, rings and pendants, disappear into thin air.

“Of course,” he added after a pause, “When we’ve looked things over we may find where a window has been jimmied or a lock sprung, but I doubt it. Only that one.” He pointed again at the innocent-looking door.

“Tell you what, Jimmie,”—he was still talking in a whisper, “Suppose you let me go in alone. You just seem to happen along when I open the door. People are often reluctant to talk before a boy. That’s queer, but it’s true.”

3

“Ri—right,” Jimmie whispered. He was all keyed up. His nerves were on edge. He felt like a bird-dog that is pointing a quail. He was thinking what a difference a few minutes can make in a fellow’s life!

“There’s a dark corner.” Tom nodded toward the right. Jimmie faded into the shadows.

Tom rapped sharply on the door. No answer. He rapped again. The door was thrown open by a large man in a silk bathrobe:

“What is it?” he demanded. There was a suggestion of

gruffness in his voice.

“I’m Tom Howe, from the city detective force.”

“City detective?” The man stared. “But this is The Glen, not the City.”

“I know,” Tom agreed. “Mr. Utter sent me up here to look into things. After all, he’s manager of the club.”

“And I am a guest here.” The man’s voice rose. “Believe me, the Indian Hill Golf Club shall pay for this. It’s an outrage. I shall proceed at once to sue this club!”

4

“For what?” Tom asked quietly.

“For the loss of our diamonds, to be sure! Think of it! One night in a place like this and all those diamonds gone. Worst of all, less than half of them insured!”

“Ah!” said Tom, “If that is true, you have had a real loss.”

“If IT IS true!” the man exploded, “Do you think I, George Dawson, would falsify for a mere handful of diamonds?”

“Having had very few dealings with those who are reputed to be rich, I wouldn’t know,” Tom replied. There was more than a shade of sarcasm in his voice. “If you don’t mind, I’ll have a look at this lock.”

“Look as much as you like,” the man said, moving back a step or two. At the same time a second figure moved up beside him. It was a woman. The light from a window fell full upon

her. She wore a dressing gown of bright film-like silk. She was Marie Dawson, young wife of George Dawson. Jimmie had lived in the same town with them for two years. He saw them now for the first time. Marie was said to be beautiful. She had been on the stage. Jimmie saw at a glance that she was very attractive.

“He is rich, she beautiful,” he thought. “They live in our city on a large estate. And yet, when they play a game of golf or attend a party at this rich man’s course, it is always as guests, not as members. I wonder why?” He was to know. 5

Now his eyes were on the young detective, Tom Howe. As he turned the knifelike beam of light from a tiny flashlight on the lock of that door, his body stiffened.

“He’s found something,” thought Jimmie, longing to join him but still hiding in the shadows.

Taking a small envelope from his pocket and holding it open beneath the end of the night-lock, Tom began scraping away at this bit of shining metal. Jimmie could see nothing unusual about the lock, but that Tom had made a real discovery he did not doubt.

“I’ll ask him about it,” Jimmie said, “But not now.”

And indeed he would ask him. If you have read our other book, “Jimmie Drury, Candid Camera Detective,” you will know that boy though he was, Jimmie, with his small candid camera had offered valuable aid to Tom in his work, and that in so far as the rights of others permitted, Tom always told him everything. Even at that moment Tom was 6

making signs behind his back that told Jimmie plainer than words that when opportunity presented, he was to snap a picture of that door-lock. And snap it Jimmie surely would.

At last Tom stood up, took a deep breath, murmured “All right,” stepped inside, and silently closed the door, leaving Jimmie to his own thoughts, at which Jimmie whispered to himself, “It’s queer how much difference a few minutes can make in a fellow’s life.”

And indeed the last few hours of his life had been strange. Half an hour before Jimmie had found himself seated on the old caddy-bench of this, the Indian Hill Golf Club. Anyone looking at him then might have said he seemed rather forlorn. And they would not have been wrong. Not that Jimmie did not like being a caddy. He did. In fact he gloried in it. Few were better than he. And why not be a caddy? Why, indeed? Had not nearly all great golfers been caddies before they were great golfers? Indeed they had! Right there before him, hanging on the wall, suspended from solid silver hooks, hung a much honored plank that had once been the top of a caddy-bench. The surface of that plank was scarred—or glorified—by many a boy’s initials. Largest, most artistically done of all, were the letters N. J. H. And what a name they stood for! Ned J. Hunter. 7

Ned Hunter was the pride of every caddy on the Indian Hill course. He had once been a caddy—was now supposed to be very rich, and had won the Western Open. Besides being the finest golfer on the grounds, he gave the largest tips, and treated every caddy he knew as a pal. What more could be said? How every boy’s heart beat when Ned Hunter looked

about for a caddy. He had his favorites. Jimmie was right at the top of this list. But often his roving eyes fell upon some small boy with patches on his knees and deep longing in his eager flushed countenance. Then he would say:

“You there, with the patches! Come along!”

8

Yes, caddying was an ancient and honorable occupation but just then Jimmie was not thinking of this. He did not care whether he was called to caddy this day or not. Perhaps he hoped he would not be. He had come out here on this fine October morn to drown his troubles. Only two hours before old Dr. Block had sealed his fate as far as football for the season went. And at this very moment the boys were having light skirmish practice for the afternoon game.

“Fellow’s heart,” he grumbled. “Just a little whisper. That’s what Doc said. Life was too long to risk it. Fellow’d think _____”

Jimmie had not thought a single word farther in that direction. Instead he was on his feet and out of the caddy-house door with a bound.

“Tom Howe!” he had exclaimed in a hoarse whisper. “What you doing out here?”

The slender freckle-faced young detective had wheeled about to take Jimmie in from head to toe with one sweeping glance then murmured low:

9

“Jimmie Drury, as I live! And at just the right moment!”

“Why? What,——”

“Come over here.” Tom’s voice had been low. There had been a tenseness about him that sent a chill coursing up and down Jimmie’s spine.

And that was how it came about that at the very moment when he might still have been glooming about his football troubles Jimmie was crouching in a shadowy corner of the guest house in one of America’s richest and oldest golf courses.

Together in silence before entering the Club house he and Tom had wandered out to the fresh greens of the golf course.

“There’s been a robbery,” Tom said, turning to face Jimmie. “Got your camera?”

Jimmie threw open his sweater revealing a small candid camera. It was slung under his arm in the manner in which a mountaineer carried his gun.

“Good!” said Tom. “We may need it. I’m in on this, as you are going to be, by accident.”

10

“But I don’t see——”

“You will,” Tom broke in. “And plenty. Before many hours it will be in all the papers. Staring headlines will read: ‘BIG SOCIETY ROBBERY—MARIE DAWSON’S JEWELS STOLEN AT INDIAN HILL GOLF CLUB.’”

“Dawson!” Jimmie had exclaimed. “They live just over

there!” He jerked a thumb over his shoulder.

“I know,” Tom had said. “That’s their summer home. It’s closed now. Ned Hunter blew a party to them and some others here last night. A pretty gay party I guess. This morning Mrs. Dawson’s jewels, mostly diamonds, were gone.”

“Ned Hunter,” Jimmie repeated slowly.

“That’s it,” Tom agreed. “Perhaps Marie wanted to dazzle Ned for some reason or other so she brought her jewels along.

“Well,” Tom sighed, “She’s not got ’em now and won’t have unless we find ’em. Come on. Let’s have a look.”

Retracing their steps they had walked past the caddy-house, followed a circular drive and found themselves standing in front of the golf club’s main entrance.

11

As Jimmie placed one foot on the first stone step leading to the door, he paused to draw a deep breath. At that instant he seemed to hear a faint voice whisper, “Think it over well before you take the next step. Once you are inside that door you will be powerless to turn back, you will be led on and on ever into deeper mysteries and darker dangers, until——”

“Dumb!” he exclaimed low. “An imagination is a great nuisance.”

“And a great boon,” said Tom Howe, whose sharp ears had caught his every word. “A detective without an imagination would be worse than a barber without hands. Come on, let’s go in.”

Even then Jimmie was reluctant to enter. Often as he had been on the grounds, he had never before entered that door. Indian Hill was no ordinary golf course. It was the oldest, best known course in all that part of the country. For forty years it had been a rich man's club. In years gone by all the millionaires of the great city twenty-five miles away had belonged to this club. The great spreading elms before that building could have told dark tales of high finance played out here by men who had made fortunes and of those who had been ruined by contracts made during matches on those ancient greens.

12

The room he was about to enter was presided over by three persons, Mr. Utter, Manager of the club, Margaret, the young-old lady at the desk, and Hanada, the Filipino door-boy. Jimmie was not sure which one he feared most. Mr. Utter was large, serious and stern in his dealings with boys. Margaret reflected his attitude. It was not her golf course. It belonged to the members. "It isn't for me to say," was her reply to the most trivial request. "You will have to see Mr. Utter." As for Hanada, he almost always whispered when he talked. Jimmie was afraid of whisperers. But here they were, inside.

"Ah!" Mr. Utter's eyes opened wide at sight of Tom Howe. "I felt sure you would come."

13

"Yes," said Tom. "This thing interests me. Besides, most of your members live in the city. That practically makes it my case. Lucky I happened to be in your village on another matter."

"Yes, I discovered that fact. That is why I called you at our

local police station,” Utter replied.

“I suppose you know Jimmie Drury,” said Tom, laying an arm on the boy’s shoulder.

“Yes, Oh yes.” Mr. Utter did not trouble to look Jimmie’s way. “He is one of our caddies, a rather good one I am told.”

“He’ll work with me on this case,” said Tom, thereby producing a shock.

“What? A boy?” Mr. Utter nearly lost his superb poise. “You understand we are going to keep this a secret. A golf course like Indian Hill, a really ancient and superb institution, one of the haunts of millionaires, we——”

“I know,” Tom broke in. “And you’ve got a fine chance to keep it hushed up. It will be in all the evening papers. But not because Jimmie or I give out an interview. We’ve worked together on cases before. Jimmie knows his stuff and in his own field he can’t be beat. Now,” his tone was crisp, “Do we go up those stairs together or do I take a train to the city?”

14

Even now, crouching in that corner, waiting for Tom’s signal, the opening of that door, with considerable impatience Jimmie’s heart warmed as he recalled that speech of Tom’s. How he loved him for it! How he would work to prove himself worthy of it! Yes, life was strange. A half hour before he had been seated on the caddy-bench glooming about football. Now he did not care about that, at least not too much. He and Tom were off on another interesting case for after gasping like a fish out of water, the rather too pompous

Mr. Utter had stared first at Tom, then at Jimmie, then had said in some confusion, “You—you go up those stairs, to be sure. It—it’s all right about Jimmie.”

“But first,” he had added after a second’s thought, 15
“There is one matter about which I wish to speak to you privately. If you choose to disclose the facts to your ah, assistant,”—he glanced at Jimmie, “later, I shall not object.”

Taking his cue Jimmie had walked slowly up the broad stairs leading up to one more mysterious adventure, leaving Mr. Utter and Tom to talk in low, guarded tones until a quarter of an hour had ticked itself away, and then Tom had followed him up the stairs. So, here they were, Tom inside the mystery room and Jimmie outside in the shadows. What was happening inside? Was Tom making fresh discoveries? What would his conclusions be? Had Marie Dawson and her husband faked the robbery in order to collect insurance? Had one of the other supposedly rich guests entered the room and stolen the jewels? Or was Tom wrong? Was it after all an outside job? Jimmie fingered his candid camera nervously as he awaited the signal.

Of a sudden, here it was. Opening the door, Tom leaned out, smiled, and beckoned.

“They’ve gone to their private rooms to dress,” he explained. Then reading a question in Jimmie’s face he added, “I have told them you were coming to take some pictures.” 16

“Oh,” Jimmie sighed, unslinging his camera. “Then it’s all

right. I'll begin right here." Squinting through a range-finder, he aimed his camera at the door-lock.

CHAPTER II

CLUES FROM THE STARS

“I’ll tell you about that later,” Tom said as Jimmie aimed his camera at the lock. “By the way.” His voice dropped to a whisper. “How many shots do you have in your camera?”

“Thirty.”

“Good. If you get a chance, take two or three of Marie Dawson and her rich husband. I’m fairly well convinced that this robbery is not faked, but you never can tell. I’d like an opportunity to study their expressions at my leisure.”

“I’ll have a try at it,” Jimmie murmured low.

“All right,” Tom said, after Jimmie had completed two shots of the door-lock. “Now something else. See the glass top of that writing-desk? I want a shot or two of that.”

Stepping to the table he lifted the glass to a rakish angle.

18

“What’s the good?” Jimmie held back. “You can’t shoot at thin air. That’s plate glass, clear as fresh water.”

“Not quite,” said Tom, tipping it to a different angle. “See that sort of half-circle in the fine dust that settled on the glass

since it was last dusted?”

“That’s right! There is something!” Jimmie exclaimed low.

“Important too if only we get it,” Tom whispered. “It’s the mark of a man’s hand as he rested on it—just the lower part of his hand—on the glass. He was wearing a glove. Of course he’d do that. Didn’t want finger-prints to show. He left his signature all the same, if only we can read it.

“You see,” he went on, “There’s a smart fellow over in Europe who discovered that the little clusters of pores in the palms of our hands are different in each individual. He has done wonders with just such marks as this. Of course, it wouldn’t be admitted as evidence in court, but it may give us a clue that will lead to other discoveries. I’ll turn it at different angles. You take three shots. Then I’ll dust some powder over it and you take three more.”

“Perhaps it’s HIS palm,” Jimmie nodded toward Dawson’s dressing room.

19

“No,” said Tom. “I asked about that. They came in late. They have been here only this one night. They went right to bed.”

Three shots of the glass were made. When the powder had been dusted on, Jimmie imagined he could see real marks on the glass. The camera he knew would “see” these more clearly than any human eye.

“Well, have you taken your pictures?” asked a feminine voice. Jimmie found himself facing Marie Dawson. Even in street clothes she was very attractive. And yet the boy failed

to be impressed. There was about her an air of boldness or disdain, Jimmie could not tell which. It gave him a feeling of distrust. It seemed to say to him “Be on your guard, young man.” Nor was the attitude of her big, blustering husband the least bit reassuring. “A man and woman of the world.” He had heard that expression often. Knowing very little of its meaning, he felt nevertheless that it might fit this pair very well. “And yet,” he told himself, “I must not make snap-judgments. I’ll just wait and see.”

“There’ll be a reward for you my lad,” said Dawson. “If your pictures help catch the thief you’ll not need to caddy for a long time to come.”

20

“I want you to caddy for me some time,” said Marie, with a smile. “But please don’t take a picture of me making a bad shot.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll not do that,” said Jimmie, feeling more at ease.

Tom Howe made two or three excuses for detaining the pair. When at last they were gone he turned to Jimmie to whisper:

“Did you get them?”

“Three shots apiece,” Jimmie grinned.

“Great stuff! And I who knew you were trying, never guessed you had taken one picture. Jimmie my boy, you’ll be famous yet!” Tom exclaimed.

Closing the door softly, Tom took a turn about the room.

21

Then holding up five fingers he repeated his words of an hour ago “It’s an inside job. Five men and one woman. Which will turn out to be the thief?”

“You see, Jimmie,” said Tom, leading the way to the window, “We’re on the third floor. There are no fire escapes and no roofs below. You couldn’t even imagine a person entering by the window. Besides, there is evidence enough that he did enter by the door to this room.”

“But the thief may have gotten in from below and come up by the stairs,” suggested Jimmie.

“He’d have to get in first,” said Tom. “All the lower windows were locked. None has been disturbed in any way.”

“There’s the door!”

“Yes.” Tom laughed low. “And it stood ajar in the morning.”

“Ajar!” Jimmie exclaimed. “Well then——”

“Didn’t mean a thing,” Tom broke in. “That’s what old Utter wanted to tell me. There’s some sort of a trick electrical alarm attached to the door. It sets off a loud buzzer in the room where some of the grounds-keepers sleep. It doesn’t go off until the door is open six inches. It wasn’t open that far—so-o,” Tom drawled. “No one went out of that door. No one could with that alarm in good order, without setting it off, and no one came in either.”

“So you see, Jimmie,” he went on, “Leaving that door ajar was just a ruse to make people think it was an outside job.”

The fellow, whoever he was, didn't know about that alarm. There were just six people in the house at the time of the robbery. One of them took the jewels."

"Who—who were they?" Jimmie demanded, growing excited.

"The names are, George and Marie Dawson, Roger Hardy, Ned Hunter, Ogden Renard and Jack Nevers."

"Blackie Nevers, they call him," said Jimmie. "A slim man with jet black hair and eyes. He's like a clock spring. A fine shot at golf and with a pistol, they say. I'd hate to meet him in the dark, if he didn't like me. But he doesn't belong to the club."

"None of them do except Ned Hunter."

"And Ned is a prince of a fellow," Jimmie exclaimed enthusiastically. "Used to be a caddy. He's rich now but he treats you fine. All the fellows love him. One thing's sure, he didn't take the diamonds." 23

"This," said Tom, "is not going to be a case of throwing some people out at the start. We're going to assume that any one of them may be guilty. Come on, let's get down out of here."

As they made their way down stairs, out on the drive, and past the caddy-house to a spot where they could see the first teeing off green with the rolling field of green beyond, Jimmie was thinking of the six people.

Blackie Nevers was known about the course. He often played as a guest. Rumor had it that he had twice applied for

membership, and twice been rejected. Why? Jimmie did not know.

Roger Hardy had a spacious summer home just over the fence from the seventh green. It was known that he too would gladly have joined the club but for reasons best known to himself,—and a few others, he had never applied.

Ogden Renard was one of those middle-aged sporty persons who always wears knickers and suits imported from Scotland, and who never feels dressed without his cane. 24

“A queer lot to be playing round with your hero, Ned Hunter,” said Tom when Jimmie had told him all he knew about them.

“Must be working up some sort of a deal with this Hunter. I’ve been told that this is not so much a golf club as it is a social club where millionaires meet to sell one another steel mills, automobile factories, department stores, and other little odds and ends,” he concluded, with a chuckle.

“Boy!” he exclaimed. “It must be grand to belong to such a club and to be forever pulling off big deals,—that is,” he added quietly, “if they’re the right sort of deals. If I were Ned Hunter I’d want a rabbit’s foot for luck when I traveled in such company.”

“Oh, I guess they’re all right,” Jimmie replied, soberly. “Anyway I hope so.”

“Look here, Tom,” he exclaimed suddenly. “I’ve just got to get in on this thing in a,—well,—you might say—a big way.”

“That’s fine,” said Tom. “I want your help. But what of school?”

“I’ll not neglect school.”

“And football?”

“That’s just it.” Jimmie’s face clouded. “I’m out. The Doc says I’ll have to take a year off. Nothing very serious, but— So you see, Tom,” the boy’s voice rose, “this case is a break for me, sort of gives me a new interest in life, if you know what I mean.”

“I think I do,” said Tom.

“And Tom!” Jimmie exclaimed, “I’ve got an idea!”

“Let’s have it.”

“See that bird flying over the ninth green?”

Tom shaded his eyes. “Yes, sure I do. Queer sort of flier, sort of goes up and down as if he were pumping his way along.”

“That’s just it,” Jimmie’s voice picked up. “That’s how I know he’s a yellow-hammer. Over there’s another big bird circling high——”

“A crow?”

“Nope. A hawk. Crows don’t circle that way. Each bird has his own motions. A swallow circles, but not high up. A robin goes up into a tree like a boy climbing stairs.

“And folks are like birds,” Jimmie added. “They have motions you can tell them by even a long way off. The way they walk, sit down, get up, swing their arms, kick out with their feet, mop their brows, all these give them away.

“And Tom, I’m going to study those six people who were in the guest house last night when the diamonds were stolen until I’d know any one of them at a distance anywhere. Something tells me there’ll be more things happen. Nearly always they do. Big things like this don’t happen alone. It’s only a hunch, but some way I feel that if I study these people one by one, take pictures of them in all sorts of positions, take short shots of their movements on the greens, and all that, sooner or later I’ll catch the right person in the wrong place, and then I’ll have our man.”

“And the reward,” said Tom.

“Perhaps,” Jimmie agreed. “But Tom, what do you think of it?”

“Grand idea,” said Tom. “Of course, the same thing has been done by detectives before, but not with cameras.”

27

“Cameras,” said Jimmie. “That’s the big difference—you don’t have to trust memory. The camera preserves it all for you.”

Jimmie was quiet for just about a minute. Then he burst out, “But Tom, what’s that business of the door-lock? You scraped it. What for?”

“That was queer,” said Tom. “The fellow who opened that

door by sliding something thin under the door-jamb was no professional. Professionals carry steel tools for that job. This fellow used a paper-knife, a spatula, or something. It was plated, I think, with gold. It scraped off on the lock and stayed there. There were two sharp spots on the lock. They must have scratched two lines through the thin plating of the knife. Find that knife, or whatever it was, and you've found your man. I'll know whether the scrapings are gold tomorrow."

"There's so little of it," said Jimmie. "How can you tell?"

"I'll have these scrapings turned to gas in a tiny electric furnace, then look at the gas through the spectroscope. If the spectrum shows it to be gold, then gold it is. You see," he laughed, "The scientific detective takes his cues even from a study of the starry heavens." 28

"And now," he exclaimed, "I must get back to the city. I'll be seeing you." He hurried away.

CHAPTER III

THE SUSPECTED SIX

Jimmie's opportunity to begin his study of the "Suspected Six" came sooner than he had hoped. Scarcely had he finished his lunch, eaten out of a paper bag at the back of the caddy-house, when a long, red roadster swung in over the circular drive to stop in front of the club house. Jimmie recognized the car instantly and was all keyed up for a chance at caddying. As the door opened, to his surprise he saw not Blackie Nevers, but Ned Hunter alight from the car. His surprise did not last long, for Blackie slid his long legs out on the running board, to remain half in the car talking to Ned.

There seemed to be something of an argument going on. Jimmie could tell this from the expression on their faces. Blackie was a tense, nervous person. Twice he half rose from his seat to snap his fingers. Jimmie noted this gesture. It might prove helpful in the future. 30

"All right!" Ned Hunter's voice rose excitedly at last. "Tell you what we'll do. We'll play eighteen holes of golf. If you win the match, I'll do as you say. If I win, the deal is off."

"Done!" Blackie sprang out of the car. "Now where is that caddy of mine? They call him Tarzan."

“Here,—Here I am.” A stocky fellow half boy, half man, sprang forward.

Jimmie knew Tarzan and did not like him. He caddied very little on this course. His home was in the big city. Jimmie suspected that he came out only when asked to do so by some rich man. Then he was sure to get a good tip. He was what the boys called a “California caddy,” one who caddied only for men who can afford to spend their winters in California. He had won the name Tarzan by attempting a Tarzonian feat of leaping from limb to limb in a large maple tree. Having missed a branch, he had come down on his head, barely escaping death.

Jimmie was thinking of this and eyeing Ned Hunter with extra longing when to his joy he heard Ned say:

31

“Ah! There’s just the boy for this match. Jimmie, how would you like to go round with me?”

“I—I’d sure like to!” Jimmie was stammering for pure joy. His study of six characters was well on its way, for two of them would be well within his sight half that afternoon.

Jimmie had never seen Blackie Nevers play. On his first truly long drive, where par was four, he was astonished at the power there was in that slender, spring-like body. Blackie’s ball sped up and away, a full three hundred yards, to land almost on the green.

“Almost, but not quite.” Jimmie heaved a sigh of relief. Something about Ned Hunter’s movements, or perhaps the unaccustomed tenseness of his face, convinced Jimmie that

the deal he had promised should he lose the match, was a very large and important one, and that it was one which he was reluctant to enter into. That made the match an important one, and admiring Ned as all loyal caddies of Indian Hill did, he fairly ached in his desire for Ned's victory.

As for Ned, once the game had started, he did not appear to care. He always played golf with an ease and grace excelled by none. He swung at the ball as a truly great dancer moves about the floor, with ease and without apparent concern. Having seen Blackie's splendid shot, he set his ball, took two practice swings, then with no special effort sent his ball a bare two-thirds of the way to the distant green. 32

As he shouldered his bag of clubs, Jimmie felt disappointed and let down. Ned was not even trying. Or was he?

Blackie's next shot put him on the green, but that was all. To make the cup from where he lay would be difficult indeed. To his great joy, Jimmie saw Ned lay his ball closer in than Blackie's. Thus far there was no advantage. Nor was there when the flag had been replaced. Both players had made it in par.

The play that followed was an interesting and beautiful thing to see. Tense, eager, ever ready to throw his whole body into the shot, time and again Blackie outdistanced his opponent only to find in the end that, with all the indifference and grace of a practiced dancer, Ned had placed his ball on the green with the same number of strokes and with no apparent effort. 33

Such action as this was sure to irritate Blackie. It did. On the fifth hole he swung a little wild and went away into the rough. This cost him a stroke and lost him the hole.

On the next hole, however, Ned fell into a sand-trap. He too lost a hole, and they were again tied. It was thus that matters stood when they reached the seventh green. This was the most deceiving spot on the whole course. The green lay level and inviting, a short three hundred yards away. But it was laid out on a bunker all of twelve feet high. At the back of the bunker were broad sand-traps and beyond these a fence which put a player out of bounds.

Ned Hunter knew of all these things. He had played the hole a hundred times. Why was it then that he could act as he did? Roger Hardy's pretentious summer home lay beyond that fence. Hardy was a member of the "Suspected Six," as Jimmie was coming to call them in his own mind. Could it be that Ned had seen something disturbing about the Hardy home? Be that as it may, his shot for the green was just too strong. His ball glided over the green to roll down the bunker and out of sight. When he saw this Jimmie could have cried. Nor did he experience any relief when Blackie's ball dropped neatly on the green in easy reach of par.

34

Ned's ball had rolled down the side of the bunker to stop within a foot of the sand. He was in a bad spot. Jimmie held out the bag of clubs. Ned hesitated, then selected a broad, tilting niblick built especially for sand. With a quick snap he sent the ball spinning upward. For a split second Jimmie thought it would curve out upon the green. Then he stifled a groan as it straightened up to fall back and roll out on the

sand.

Ned shrugged his shoulders, then with the same club and after a single practice swing, he shot the ball up and over to a spot not six feet from the cup. He made it in four, but since Blackie had made a birdie on this hole, one under par, Ned was two strokes to the bad and had lost the hole. And yet as Jimmie watched him he thought “You’d never guess that he cares.” The slight slouch of his shoulders, his jaunty swing, —were still the same. 35

“You can’t lick him,” Jimmie said to Tarzan without thinking.

“Oh, yeah?” was Tarzan’s query. “You wait and see!”

The game from there on was nip and tuck—Blackie lost the ninth hole to regain his lead on the eleventh. Never had Jimmie seen a closer match. Three times in a row they played even, making their holes in par. Blackie continued with his long drives. Ever content with his rhythmic swing and a modest strut, Ned marched on down the field.

That Ned’s apparent indifference and his playing with such ease irritated Blackie more and more, Jimmie knew right well. Time and again Blackie went through the motion of snapping his fingers. Then too, he had a habit of dropping onto a bench to rest there, like a bird prepared for flight, then springing up without touching the bench with his hands. 36

“These are his characteristic gestures,” Jimmie told himself. “I’d know him from a distance in near darkness just from those movements.” When no one was looking he took snapshots of the player going through these motions.

He took three pictures of Tarzan too, though he hardly knew why. Tarzan was a fly-catcher. While waiting for the shots on the green he would sit down on the bench. He was very generous with the flag, allowing Jimmie to take it all the time, sure sign of a slacker. While Jimmie held the flag away from the hole for the shots on the green, Tarzan would allow a fly to light on his knee, then with a quick swing, catch and crush the fly with his bare hand. Once by mistake he took a small bee. That was another story. Jimmie laughed and Tarzan hissed:

“Smart guy, ain’t yuh?” Tarzan sneered. Jimmie made no reply.

Ned was still trailing his opponent by one hole when they prepared to tee off for the fifteenth green. This shot was a “dog leg,” crooked as a dog’s hind leg. You did not see the flag from the teeing off green. You knew it was off somewhere ahead and to the right behind a clump of trees. You shot straight ahead, followed through to your ball, sighted the green, then shot again.

37

Somehow Ned’s shot was bad. The ball curved off to the right and landed in the rough. Jimmie had no trouble in finding the ball, but he heaved a deep sigh as he saw that his idol was well behind that clump of trees. This meant that he would almost surely lose the hole, and so perhaps the match. The boy had not for a moment lost the impression that this game was being played for large stakes, perhaps the largest he had ever known.

Ned Hunter’s shoulders appeared to droop a little more as he

followed Jimmie to the spot. When, however, he stood by the ball and looked at a tall cottonwood tree that in Jimmie's imagination fairly towered over them, a strange light came into his eyes.

“Jimmie, a niblick.” His words came short and crisp. “The broadest and tiltingest one we have,” he ended with a chuckle.

38

As he passed him the club Jimmie's hand trembled.

“Boy, you're losing your nerve,” Ned warned. “Never do that. I'm going to hit this ball as I never hit one before. You go after the ball like a—well—never mind what—but you go after it hard.”

Jimmie was away before the club clicked, but his keen eye watched the ball curve high and wide, right over the top of that cottonwood tree. It was a magnificent shot. He wanted to stop and cheer, but he sped on.

As he rounded the last tree he saw, with unbelieving eyes, the white spot that must be Ned's ball, resting on the green. “What a shot!” he fairly shouted.

But what was this? Nearer the ball than he, Tarzan was approaching it with rapid strides. Dark suspicion crossed Jimmie's mind.

“What a shot!” he sang out.

“Mag-ni-fi-cent.” Tarzan stopped dead in his tracks. “I—I just wanted to see how it laid.”

Jimmie made no reply. He was wondering what Tarzan would have done if he, Jimmie, had not arrived on the scene. He had a notion that he would have found the ball once more in the rough where Tarzan would throw it. As for Blackie, he was standing with back turned, contemplating the clouds. The whole business made Jimmie angry and sort of sick. But he was only a caddy. There was nothing he could do except stand guard over the ball. One thing was sure. Ned had the hole cinched and that made the score a tie. It was any man's game. And the three remaining shots were to be made straight away in the clear.

“Congratulations, old man.” Blackie held out a hand to Ned after the hole was made. “Lady Luck is on your side.”

“And a fine caddy as well,” Ned grinned, but Tarzan scowled darkly.

The sixteenth and seventeenth holes were halved, all done in par. The eighteenth was a long straightaway shot. To get on in one was next to impossible, yet Blackie tried and all but made it. He gritted his teeth as his ball rolled into the sand just in front of the green.

With an easy, almost careless swing, Ned Hunter sent his ball three hundred yards. On his second shot Blackie made the green but too far off for a sure shot at the cup. Shooting a clean hundred and fifty yards with a No. 7 club, Ned landed eight feet from the cup.

“Keen!” Jimmie exclaimed. “The match is in the bag!”

“Never till the ball clicks in the can.” Ned strode forward.

To Jimmie's surprise he saw Tarzan hurry forward toward the flag. This was not like him. What did it mean? Jimmie was not long in finding out. Just as he passed before Ned's ball Tarzan sank his heel ever so lightly in the soft turf.

"He's heeled that ball!" Jimmie thought in a sudden burst of anger. This meant that a sure shot from Ned's club would be slowed down by the dent made by Tarzan's heel in the sod and the hole would be lost.

For once in his life Jimmie felt helpless and hopeless. He was not in a position to warn his player, nor would that be considered good golf. What was to be done? He made up his mind quickly. When Blackie had moved his ball into easy position for scoring, Jimmie turned to Ned and handed him a No. 5 niblick. 41

The words "No. Not that one," were on Ned's lips. Jimmie fairly poked the handle of the club into his hand. Then a light came into the player's eyes. Did he understand? Jimmie could not be sure. He held his breath as he saw Ned place the No. 5 before his ball, swing it back, then prepare for the shot. Blackie and Tarzan were staring with all their eyes. The club swung back, hung in mid-air for a split second, then descended. The ball moved forward, rose the least bit from the ground, sank down ten inches before the cup, then dropped in with a click that sounded loud in that stillness—right into the cup.

"Good!" exclaimed Blackie. "Couldn't have done better myself."

“You sure couldn’t!” thought Jimmie.

At that Blackie turned his back and swinging his club wide and high, sent his ball spinning away into the blue.

42

“Congratulations, old man,” Blackie turned to Ned. Jimmie thought his tone was a trifle flat, but it was at least a fair try at being a sport.

43

CHAPTER IV

THE FIGHT THAT FAILED

Some Indian Hill matches are finished on the eighteenth green, some in the players' locker room, and some on the lot back of the caddy-house where caddies gather between matches. Those finished on the lot sometimes result in bloody noses and black eyes. Hardly had Jimmie reached the lot when Tarzan snarled:

“Yeah! Smart guy, ain't yuh? You gives him a niblick instead of a putter. And does he understand? What'd yuh get out a it? Nothin'?”

“That's right.” Jimmie made a brave effort to remain calm. “And you would have received a five-spot for heeling that ball and being a crook. I don't sell out that cheap!”

“Who's a crook?” Tarzan roared in sudden anger. “Who sold out?” He advanced on Jimmie with clenched fists.

“No you don't.” A boy called Shorty sprang from the line of caddies. “I heard what Doc said about Jimmie. He's got a bad heart. He's not allowed to play football and he can't fight. If you want a licking, you big bully, come on.”

Shorty was so small that his gallant gesture called forth a

burst of laughter from the crowd. Tarzan was furious. “Get out of the way!” he roared.

“Now!” said Ole, the Swede, “Let me fight him. I ain’t had a match today an’ I need exercise. We’re a gang, we are, an’ if you guys from the city fight one you’ve got to fight us all. Besides, if Jimmie says you cheated, yuh did.”

The battle that might have followed would surely have been long remembered. Ole was short, but his shoulders were broad and heavy. He could shoot a full three hundred yards with a niblick and had three times won the caddy tournament. Fortunately,—or unfortunately—however you may happen to think of it, there was no fight, for at that dramatic moment Ned Hunter strolled into view. Fighting in the presence of a member means suspension, if not banishment from Indian Hill. No fight is worth that.

45

“All right for you,” Tarzan grumbled, then went shuffling away.

“Glad to get out of it,” Shorty whispered to Jimmie. “Ole would have whaled the dickens out of him.”

Ned Hunter beckoned to Jimmie. “I heard what was said.” He spoke in a low tone. “So that boy heeled my ball? I didn’t know it at the time. I thought you wanted a little fancy shooting so I played up to you. That match,” he went on soberly, “meant a great deal more than you will ever know.

“Jimmie,” he seemed a trifle embarrassed, “You’ve never visited my home. How would you like to have dinner with us tomorrow night? I don’t mind admitting,” he hurried on,

“That this is not entirely my idea. I have a—a—well,—a friend over there who wants to meet you.”

“Oh—ah,” Jimmie stammered, “Why—that—that would be keen.”

“Righto,” said Ned. “At seven.”

“At seven,” Jimmie repeated. He looked down for a second. When he looked up Ned Hunter was gone.

46

On his way home Jimmie found his brain all buzzing with new sensations and wild ideas. He had not dreamed that The Glen, a quiet little suburb where tired city people slept at night, could suddenly become so exciting. There was the robbery. Five men and a woman Tom Howe had insisted were all the possible suspects. Of course he might be wrong. But Tom was nearly always right.

“Blackie Nevers would do anything to get what he wants,” he told himself. “Any fellow who encourages a caddy to do dirty work couldn’t be trusted in any deal. He might be the man. He might have stolen the diamonds.” He went over in his mind Blackie’s characteristic movements, snapping his fingers, dropping onto a bench or chair without touching it with his hands, and there were others he could not at the moment recall. Blackie would play again. So would the others. He would hide in the bushes close to some hole,—the thirteenth would be a good one. He would study all those people and take candid camera shots. Then if he found them in the wrong place he would know them for sure.

Then there was that invitation to dine. Ned Hunter was

in “Society,” or very near to it. How did one act at such a home? Would he know which fork to use? He almost wished he hadn’t said “yes.” But who wanted to meet him? That was strange. It was a laugh—anyone wanting to meet him. He did laugh aloud, and felt better.

A moment later his thoughts took another turn and his face sobered. He was thinking of the fight with Tarzan so narrowly averted. Tarzan was a bad egg—yet he was somehow connected with Blackie Nevers’ crowd. They would meet again. Perhaps they would caddy other matches together. Tarzan would try more dirty work. He would not stand for it. Would there be another challenge from Tarzan? If Shorty and Ole the Swede were not there, what then? His heart kicked up a beat at the thought.

At last dismissing all this from his mind he hurried home to supper. Then, because thoughts of the golf course haunted him, he wandered back there in the moonlight. For one thing, he wanted to discover which green could be best seen from a safe hiding-place. After a careful study of the three spots he went back to his original choice, the thirteenth green. Close beside it, but not too close, was a rather large and dense clump of trees.

Having settled this question, he wandered to the crest of a narrow ridge. This brought the entire course into his view. Boy! Oh Boy! What a gorgeous place it was in the moonlight! Green sweeps and dark, haunting shadows. Beautiful and spooky, it made you think of all sorts of wild tales.

In a circle around the edge of the course were a dozen

splendid summer homes. Most of them were closed now. These loomed dark among the trees. Off to the right was lawyer Hardy's home, one of the suspected six. Blackie Nevers sometimes lived with his married sister, Mrs. Burns Martin, in the big brown house, far to the left. Blackie's sister was a member of the club. Fine people they were, too, Jimmie had been told. But Blackie—well—he was different.

The big brown house was closed, or Jimmie thought it was. Did he see a light there? Yes—well, no—it was gone. Perhaps he only imagined it. Couldn't have been Blackie, for he had driven off to the city.

49

Jimmie's mind was not very alert tonight. He was tired. It had been a long day of disappointments, mysteries, and excitement. He decided to go home and turn in.

His resolve to retire early was broken by a light gleaming from the little stone house on the corner of the old Judge Stark place. This, you will recall, had become the home of John Nightingale, star reporter of the Press, and of Mary, his red-headed wife, who at times still worked on exciting stories for the paper.

“Look here, you young so and so!” John exclaimed, dragging the boy into the house the instant his knock sounded on the door. “What does this mean?” He held up a copy of the Hornet, rival of the Press. Jimmie read in glaring headlines: MARIE DAWSON ROBBED OF \$50,000 IN DIAMONDS AT INDIAN HILL GOLF CLUB.

50

“They scooped us,” said John. “And it says there that Tom

Howe is working on the case, which I suppose means you are too. Both of you are our pals, Mary's and mine. Grand pals you are! You tipped us off to never a word."

"That story," said Jimmie, "was to have been hushed up. Tom and I took an oath of silence."

"Oh, well then," John sighed, "That's all right. Sit down. We're about to have a cup of coffee."

"No, I——"

"Oh, have one!" Mary urged. "Jimmie, you haven't been here for——"

"Anyway three days," Jimmie grinned. "All right, I'll stay. I can at least put you right on a few details of the story. For instance, it says Marie Dawson and her husband are members of the club."

"I'll say not," Mary exclaimed. "Not likely to be, either."

"I wonder why?" Jimmie stared.

"It's a long story." Mary put down a cup for Jimmie. "I once worked out a story about that. If our paper had been a scandal sheet I'd have had a half-page on it. But it's not." She sighed.

51

"Jimmie," said John, "Ned Hunter has always been thought of as a regular guy, straight shooter, unselfish, and all that——"

"He sure is," said Jimmie. "No one treats the caddies better.

Look at the time a skidding car ran over Snowball, our little black caddy. Ned picked him up, took him to a swell hospital, had him put back into shape again, and paid all the bills.”

“Then why is he hobnobbing with Blackie Nevers, George Dawson and the rest?”

“Are they really as bad as people think?” Jimmie asked.

“I have a hunch they are,” said John. “I’m not quite sure. I’m working on a story of their various activities right now. It may break any time. When it does I’ll let you know.

“They’re a queer lot,” he went on, sipping his coffee.

“Sometimes they appear to be an organization, a brokerage house selling securities. At other times not one of them has a desk in any office. Men like that bear watching.”

52

That was all Jimmie learned of the Dawson crowd that night. A half hour later he was once again on his way home.

As he passed the large clump of trees in the midst of which was “John’s Hideout,” he paused. The Hideout was still there, a queer, box-like cabin built of plywood, covered with canvas and heavily painted. Inside were three rickety chairs, a cot, and the old wood-burning stove with cracked lids. He had the key to the place. Scarcely could he resist the temptation to creep through the brush, unlock the door, light a fire, and sit down to think a while of Marie Dawson, Blackie Nevers, Tarzan, Ned Hunter, the “friend who wished to meet him,” and all the rest. But the hour was late so he passed on. Not, however before he had resolved that some day very soon he would sweep the old place out, cut a pile of wood, and make

this his hangout until the golf club mystery had been solved or had become only a memory.

CHAPTER V

THE TURN OF A KNIFE

Jimmie's home town was divided into two very different sections. North of the railroad tracks lived Jimmie with his parents, honest, hard working people of moderate means. Their home, like hundreds of others, was a modest affair with a plot of well cut green before it. His neighbors were store clerks, bank tellers, editors, radio announcers, dentists, and barbers,—good, kind, honest people.

South of the tracks, beginning with Golf Lane and extending over broad estates for a mile or two was the golf colony. Jimmie knew this golf course well—the homes, not at all. To be invited to dinner in such a home was an event not soon to be forgotten.

At exactly 7:00 P.M., dressed in his Sunday best, Jimmie walked up the circular drive leading to the broad, low, green-shingled home of Ned Hunter. His coat seemed a burden, his collar usually open but now carefully buttoned, appeared ready to choke him. But such are the dictates of fashion.

54

It was with a distinct desire to run away that he forced himself to ring the bell.

The bell was answered at once, not by a maid in cap and apron, but by a girl with tumbled fuzzy hair and a freckled face. She seemed little older than he.

“Oh!” she exclaimed, “You are Jimmie Drury, aren’t you? Won’t you come right in? Father is out for the moment. He’ll be here soon, I’m sure. I’ve never known him to be on time in his life.”

Jimmie stepped inside. The house was cool, quiet, restful, strangely like his own home. He began to feel at ease at once. But this girl? He did not know that Ned Hunter had a family other than his mother.

“Oh Granny!” the girl called. “Here is Jimmie Drury.”

“Goodness, yes!” A spry little white-haired lady sprang from a chair. “I’m glad to meet you, Jimmie. My son has often spoken of you.”

“Yes, and don’t you know, Granny,” the girl broke in, “we read all about him in the papers, how he helped to catch that terrible Bubble Man. How exciting that must have been!”

55

“And dangerous,” added the little old lady. “My stars! You might have been killed!”

“Oh, they wouldn’t let me do anything very dangerous,” Jimmie said with a touch of modesty.

“You play golf well, father says, and you know when a crooked caddy heels a ball.” The girl laughed low. “Would

you like to try our two-hole course? Dinner won't be ready for an hour yet."

"Yes. Oh, sure I would." Jimmie tugged at his tight collar.

"You can't play golf in all those clothes," the girl suggested. "Won't you take off your coat and tie? We're just folks, you know. I'll be back." She dashed away.

Scarcely was Jimmie's hated coat and tie resting on a chair where in his opinion they belonged, than the girl reappeared. She was dressed in an orange-colored waist and blue slacks, and carried a heavy golf bag with surprising ease.

56

"My name is Jane," she said.

"It would be!" Jimmie grinned broadly. Then they both laughed.

Jimmie took the bag of clubs then together they walked out on the lawn. For Golf Lane, the Hunter place was a rather modest affair. It covered half a block. The house was well back on the north end and half hidden by trees. This left a broad space for trees and lawn. Across this, from corner to corner, a driving course had been laid out. There was a perfect teeing-off green and a putting green at each end. Near the middle of this two-hole course was a spot where overhanging branches formed an arch twenty feet from the ground. One might give his ball a lift and go over the trees, or he might try for a long low shot. Having been invited as a guest, to shoot first, Jimmie chose the long, low shot,—in truth he had learned from constant practice that a long, low shot, rightly done, was a whiz on any course.

“Good!” the girl exclaimed. “You nearly went on in one.”

57

As she set her ball, then took a few practice swings, Jimmie watched her closely. He would, he assured himself, have known that this was Ned Hunter’s daughter had he been watching her on any green. Like Ned, she was tall and slim. More than that, she handled her club with Ned’s unconscious ease.

“Swing it,” he said aloud without thinking.

“Yes,” the girl laughed. “That’s really all there is to it. If you’ve got the swing in your blood all you have to do is to act natural.”

Then in a sudden burst of confidence she added, “Do you know, I think I’m going to have a perfectly gorgeous time, now I’m free.”

“Free?” Jimmie stared.

“Yes. Don’t you know? My mother died when I was quite young. I’ve been in schools and schools. But now I’ve been finished in a finishing school.” She laughed lightly. “And after that,” she added, “you can start to live.”

58

“You look,” said Jimmie, “As if you had been living for a long time.”

“Oh! Thanks.” Turning, she swung her club once in a matchless stroke that sent her ball rocketing over the tree tops to drop beside Jimmie’s own.

“No wonder your father took that big cottonwood so easily yesterday,” he exclaimed.

“Yes, but it wouldn’t have helped if it hadn’t been for you.”

“Then your father saw what Tarzan was about to do?”

“He doesn’t miss much.”

“Tell me.” Jimmie’s face was sober. “Why does he play round with such people as Blackie Nevers and the Dawsons?”

“I—I don’t know.” There was a suggestion of worry in her voice. “That is partly why I wanted to meet you. I want you to find out. Blackie seems to have some sort of hold on daddy like the hold the devil has on folks in story books. I want to know why. But, excuse me!” she exclaimed. “Please don’t ask me more about it. I—I talk too much.” At that she thrust her club into the bag, then went trudging away across the fairway for her second shot.

59

They played nine holes, shooting back and forth across the lawn, while shadows grew longer and deeper. Jimmie did his level best, which was not bad at all, but in the end this tall, fuzzy-haired girl had him beaten by one hole.

“You shoot a mean ball.” He laughed as they finished.

“I am glad you think so.” Suddenly she was serious again. “Because—” she hesitated, “Cross your heart and hope to die if you tell.”

“My heart is crossed,” said Jimmie.

“Well, I’m to play Marie Dawson. It’s a truly serious match—I—I’m afraid daddy has something important up on it, just as he had on his match with Blackie. I wish he wouldn’t do such things.” She reached a wistful note,—“But he is what he is. You can’t change him. And he is horribly proud of my game, so-o——”

“So you’ll play Marie Dawson and Tarzan will be her caddy. Watch your step!”

“That’s what I wanted to ask you.” She leaned forward eagerly. “Will you watch Tarzan for me?”

60

“Caddy for you?”

“Yes.”

“I sure will, and,”—he added with a touch of chivalry, “No queen was ever watched over more carefully than you shall be on that day.”

“Thanks, Jimmie.” She put out a slender hand. “Shake on it and wish me luck.”

Jimmie made the wish, then together they wandered across the lawn where a rich and rare dinner awaited them. Grandmother Hunter had been reared in the south. She had supervised the cooking of that dinner. Tender chicken, rare corn bread, sweet potatoes such as Jimmie had never before tasted, and such a creamy pumpkin pie! Jimmie was no glutton, but he did like to eat, and Granny Hunter had no cause to complain of his performance at that dinner.

An hour later Jimmie somehow found himself alone with Jane in the big, dimly lit living room. He was greatly surprised to find himself telling her many of the details of the robbery at the club. There are people whose very nature invites confidence. Jane was one of these.

“Do you mean,” she said, speaking in a low voice, “That you could tell who took those diamonds if you had a print of the lower part of each suspected person’s palms?”

“I think we might,” he admitted.

“That will be easy.” She seemed eager to help. “Easy to get their palm-prints, I mean. They will all be here for dinner some night soon. It will be daddy’s party but I am to help entertain. At school I had quite a reputation as a fortune teller. Hands,—you know. Not just lines, but fingers, thumbs, how you hold ’em close in and all that. There is a glass-topped desk in daddy’s study. I’ll ask them all to press their hands on the glass in just the right position so I can study their fingers. As soon as that is over, I’ll hurry them into another room and after that see that the desk is not disturbed.”

“Do you really want to do that?” Jimmie hesitated.

“Yes—yes, of course I do.”

“O.K.,” Jimmie sighed, he knew not why. “But be sure to make a note of the place each person occupied.”

After that they talked of other things. But in the end, perhaps because Jimmie’s mind was full of it, they began again discussing their clues.

“There will be other robberies,” he assured her. “There always are. One success suggests another try. There may be three in all. People appear to do things in threes. I’m going to haunt places where these robberies might be pulled off, the closed summer homes—you can see almost all of them from the golf course.”

“And if you see a light or something?”

“I’ll try to take a picture through the window first of all.”

“But you’d need a flash-bulb. They might shoot you.”

“I’ll take the picture with an infra-red screen, that is, if I can find an electrical contact. They’ll never know there was a light—you can’t see it.”

“Oh!” she breathed. “That’s too deep for me. I’d just shoot off a flash-bulb or two, get my picture, then beat it. I’ve done that on Isle Royale where we sometimes go in summer. Shooting wild life at night with a camera, moose, lynx, and bush wolves is great sport.” Digging deep into a cabinet she produced some truly wonderful pictures of wild creatures.

63

“But these would run,” Jimmie objected. “You can’t tell what a robber might do. You’d better not try it on any wild humans.”

“Oh, I don’t know.” There was a sudden flash of daring in her eyes.

“That man who took the diamonds must have used something

like daddy's paper-knife to open the door," Jane said a moment later nodding toward a desk where a gold plated knife lay.

"Yes, he did." Jimmie put out a hand, then thought better of his action.

"There would be two scratches on it?" she asked.

"Yes, two."

A short time later Jimmie was bidding them all good night. To his surprise, as he reached the curb outside the grounds he found Tom Howe waiting for him. "There's been another robbery," Tom announced. "Done last night. Discovered an hour ago. Hop in. Let's go."

64

Jimmie sprang into the car and they were away.

Ten minutes after Jimmie was gone Jane Hunter might still have been found standing beside the desk on which the gold-plated paper-knife lay. Her relaxed fingers rested on the knife. On her face was the expression half dread,—half anticipation, often found on the face of a card player as he is about to turn the card that seals the fate of his game.

At last, with deep breath, she gripped the knife and turned it over. At once her bosom heaved with a great sigh of relief. "Three scratches," she whispered. "And Jimmie said two."

The paper-knife, she knew, belonged to Colonel Ogden Renard. He was one of the suspected six—and the only one of her father's five friends or business associates she

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really liked. He was big, gruff, and jolly, always well dressed, faultless in his conduct, and ever ready for a joke. Just how long the knife had been in her father's possession she did not know.

“Anyway,” she shrugged her shoulders, “It doesn't matter. There are *three* scratches.”

For all this, without knowing why, she slid the paper-knife to the back of the desk where it fell into a crack and was quite out of sight.

CHAPTER VI

A SMILING BUDDHA

The instant Jimmie climbed into Tom Howe's car, Tom stepped on the starter, and they were away. They sped past the golf course lying still and grand in the moonlight.

"I tested out that metal I found on the door lock at the golf course," Tom said, after a long silence. "It was gold, all right. Fourteen carat."

"Do you mean to say you can tell how fine the gold is?" Jimmie asked in astonishment.

"Oh! Sure! The alloy shows up in the spectrum. Find that cake-knife, paper-knife, or whatever, with two scratches on its side, then prove it's 14-K gold plated, and you have our man."

"Sure," Jimmie laughed. "Fine chance! But say!" his voice rose, "I've got something surer than that. I think I can get palm-prints of the six suspects!"

"That will be great," said Tom, "If you really can get them. Those pictures of the print in the Marie Dawson room came out fine. I had them developed last night. But how will you get the others?"

Jimmie told him what he and Jane had planned.

“You told that much to a girl?” There was a note of disapproval in Tom’s voice.

“Sure. You would, too!” Jimmie defended himself. “She’s no ordinary girl. She’s Ned Hunter’s daughter.”

“And he’s one of our suspects!”

“Oh well, yes, sure. But Tom——”

“When there are six suspects, all must be counted until proof has eliminated them,” Tom said soberly. “Go ahead with your experiment at the Hunter party. It may work out. But after this, mum’s the word!”

“Mum it is,” Jimmie replied humbly.

The moment Tom’s car slid into a narrow winding drive deeply overshadowed by maples, Jimmie knew where they were going.

“It’s the Martin place!” he exclaimed. “Blackie Nevers stays here with his sister sometimes.”

“Is that so?” Tom said in a surprised tone. “Then we seem to be going round in circles. Perhaps it is to be one robbery for each member of our band, sort of a round robin,” he laughed. They pulled up before a long, low brick building surrounded by deep porches. A light shone over the door.

“We go in here,” said Tom, closing a door of the screened

porch without a sound.

The bell was answered by a maid. She had staring, frightened eyes.

“Tell Mrs. Martin that Tom Howe is here,” said Tom.

“Oh—Oh yes.” The maid seemed relieved. “You are to come right in, Mr. Howe.”

They were ushered at once into a dimly lighted living room. Mrs. Burns Martin, a slender, nervous woman, greeted Tom with an uncertain smile. Then, recognizing Jimmie, who had caddied for her, she said:

“Jimmie, are you also a detective?”

“Very much so,” said Tom. “In fact, if the case is solved I’m willing to bet it will be he who does it.”

“It is Blackie’s Chinese jade that has been stolen.” Mrs. Martin stood up. “Come this way. We have a safe in the wall of the study. It is a very old safe that locks with a key. We thought it secure enough. But last night while we were in the city someone opened it and carried away the jade.”

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“Jade?” said Jimmie. “I thought it might be diamonds again, or—or bonds.”

“Jade,” said Mrs. Burns Martin, “Is priceless,—that is, some of it. You have no idea. China is being destroyed by those terrible Japanese soldiers. Jade is becoming scarce. Some of Blackie’s pieces were more than a thousand years old. One

smiling Buddha was priceless. Blackie has spent all his spare cash for years collecting pieces, more than a hundred in all, and all very rare.

“Here is the safe,” she said, turning on a light.

“And here the key with which the robber unlocked it,” said Tom, picking up something from the carpet.

“Key?” Jimmie exclaimed. “That’s only a piece of wire!”



**“KEY?” JIMMIE EXCLAIMED. “THAT’S ONLY A
PIECE OF WIRE!”**

“Good stiff steel wire, bent in just the right way,” Tom replied. “It was all he needed. Anything taken beside the jade?” he asked.

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“That is the strangest part of it all,” said Mrs. Martin. “There were government bonds in a separate drawer. They were of small denominations and not registered. The same as money, really. There were quite a few of them but they were not touched.”

“Got scared off,” suggested Tom.

“No—o,” Mrs. Martin replied. “The robber made himself quite at home. Either before or after he robbed the safe he sat in that large chair.” She pointed to a corner. “He smoked six cigarettes.”

“Smoked? Are the butts still there?” Tom asked.

“On the smoking stand.”

A moment later those six cigarette stubs together with six burnt matches were safely stowed away in a manilla envelope.

“Didn’t appear at all nervous,” was Tom’s comment. “Never wasted a match. How did he get in?”

“By the front door. It was still ajar.”

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“It was our Lone Wolf alright,” said Tom. “I’d place a bet that he forced the lock with some thin instrument. We’ll have a

look.

“Yes sir!” he exclaimed a moment later. “Same technique—clever fellow, without a doubt, but no professional. He hasn’t the proper pride in his choice of tools. Wire for a key, paper-knife for opening a door, all of that doesn’t go in professional circles. We should get him in the end.

“But this jade.” He turned again to Mrs. Martin. “You don’t happen to have pictures of the various pieces?”

“Oh yes. And all taken in color,” was the lady’s instant reply. “Blackie had them taken to go with the insurance. The company was particular about that.”

“Insured? For how much?” Tom seemed to hold his breath.

“Twenty-five thousand, I believe.”

“No doubt,” said Tom. “Will you lend us a set of the pictures,” he asked.

“Gladly.” Mrs. Martin went into another room.

“Twenty-five thousand is a tidy sum,” Tom whispered. “The insurance will be claimed at once.”

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“Why? Who—” Jimmie did not finish.

“Here are the pictures,” said Mrs. Martin.

“Ah!” Tom held them to the light. “A rare collection, Jimmie,” Tom exclaimed. “Look at that Buddha. He seems to

fairly wink at you even in a picture.”

“Well,” he sighed, “I guess that’s about all. I’ll take one look about the place.” With a small powerful flashlight he searched every surface for fingerprints or hand marks.

“Our Lone Wolf is doing better,” he laughed as he returned. “Last time he left a palm mark. This time his record is perfect. Wonder how long he can keep it up.”

With that, after assuring Mrs. Martin that the case would be given every possible consideration, he bowed himself out. A moment later, with Jimmie at his side, he was again gliding along the shadowy drive.

“I always like a quiet place to think for a while after looking over a case,” Tom said, after a long silence. “Things come to you unexpectedly.”

73

“Come on over to John’s Hideout,” Jimmie invited. “I swept it yesterday. There’s a fire laid, and coffee on the shelf.”

“The very place,” said Tom. “Let’s ramble.” He stepped on the gas and they shot away into the night.

“Jimmie,” said Tom as half an hour later he planted his feet on the hearth of the glowing stove in the Hideout, “Tell me what sort of people these suspects of ours are.”

“I’ll tell you what I know.” Jimmie spoke in glowing terms of Ned Hunter, of his kindness to all plain ordinary folks, especially caddies, of his good clean sportsmanship, and the homey atmosphere of his green shingled house.

He spoke less approvingly of Blackie Nevers. "When I saw how crooked he was on the golf course," he concluded, "I was almost sure he was the man who stole Marie Dawson's diamonds. But now——"

"Now you don't think so?" Tom smiled faintly. "Don't be too sure."

"He wouldn't rob himself!" Jimmie stared.

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"He might. Don't forget that twenty-five thousand dollars insurance. Blackie is known, I am told, as a plunger in the stock market. If he happens to be in a tight place just now, the insurance money plus what he could raise on Marie's diamonds through some 'fence' would help a lot.

"Of course," he added after a moment's pause, "I don't say it was that way at all. For all I know your friend Ned Hunter may be the thief."

"But Tom!" Jimmie exploded, "You don't know——"

"Oh sure!" Tom held up a hand. "Skip it.

"Now let's see," he went on. "There are the Dawsons. I know their kind. They put up a grand front. He is big and stout. He tries to appear hearty, but doesn't always succeed. They are generous where they think it will count. But if you were a maid in their house you'd learn a thing or two."

"Yes," Jimmie agreed. "Or even a caddy when Marie is on the course. I'm going to caddy for Jane Hunter in a few days. An important match against Marie."

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“And you’ll keep your eyes open?”

“You just know I will.”

“Roger Hardy is a lawyer,” Tom suggested.

“Yes, a shrewd, and father says, an unscrupulous one, too. He says Hardy’s made his money out of estates and by handling receiverships,—whatever that means.”

“Very often,” Tom replied dryly, “that means stealing from the pockets of dead men. However, I can’t see a man like that picking the lock of a safe at midnight to steal a lot of Chinese jade. In the first place he wouldn’t know about jade, and in the second, he wouldn’t know about locks, and very likely he’s a coward. Our man, whoever he is, has plenty of nerve smoking six cigarettes before or after the crime.” He fished an envelope from his pocket to examine its contents. “Foreign cigarettes of a peculiar make.” He sniffed the tobacco. “Matches are from some advertising card. Paper is pinkish. I’ll have Davis, the fellow who works on such things, trace ’em down. We may have something there.”

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“And now—about Ogden Renard?” He stood up.

“Jolly old fellow. Very English in his manner and dress,” was Jimmie’s description. “He’s rather new to the golf colony. He doesn’t seem the sort,——”

“Who would pick a lock, though he might steal a Chinese jade,” Tom laughed, as he drew on his coat. “Keep a watch, son. In the end the thief will turn out to be the one you least expect. Very often that is the way it is.”

“How about the fire?” Tom asked.

“It’s O.K.” said Jimmie.

“Then let’s ramble,” said Tom. “I’ll drive you home.”

CHAPTER VII

HIS MAJESTY BUNKER BEAN

The following afternoon with a strapful of books under his arm, Jimmie paused to watch the football team at practice. Only last week that was *his* team. A lump rose in his throat when he thought of this. Last Saturday the team had been nosed out by a score of 20 to 21. If only he had been there! Just one opening, just one good clean run down the field, one touchdown, and the game would have been in the bag. He had done just that thing before, not once but several times. There was something resembling a tear in his eye as he turned away.

It was with real joy that he saw a neat yellow roadster pull up to the curb and heard a girl's voice say:

“Hello! Jimmie Drury! Come on out and shoot eighteen holes of golf with me.” It was Jane Hunter.

Jimmie flushed with pleasure. Any other girl from the golf colony would have said “Come out and caddy for me.” Not so Jane. She was Ned Hunter's daughter, and Ned was a real guy.

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“Anything new on the diamond robbery?” Jane asked as he settled down in the seat beside her.

“No—o—noth—nothing much.” Jimmie remembered Tom’s rebuff. There would be no telling secrets this time.

“The Martin’s house was robbed night before last,” she volunteered. “I read about it in the papers.”

This was true. In fact he had seen to it this time that his good friend John Nightingale of the Press had a scoop.

“They took all of Blackie Nevers’ Chinese jade. What a shame! It was beautiful,” said Jane.

“Yes, I suppose so.” Jimmie almost wished he hadn’t come. It is hard to keep secrets from someone you respect and admire.

This wish was brief and fleeting for here they were, ready to tee off on the finest course in the world.

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Jimmie’s heart swelled with pride as he thought of playing round the course with the daughter of a member. He insisted on carrying Jane’s bag. She agreed only on condition that they use the same clubs. She had her father’s clubs, the best that money could buy. The very feel of each club was a joy. Jimmie was happy again as with a wide free swing he sent the ball a full three hundred yards along the fairway.

They played as they had on Jane’s two-hole course, a very even game. On the first and second holes they were both one under par. Jimmie took the third at par, and Jane was one down. Jane took the fourth hole, and so on, to the seventh where something was to happen that would long be remembered by both of them.

The seventh hole of the course was a very deceiving one

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to a stranger. Par was three. With a straight away shot of 273 yards and all the chance in the world to get on the green in one, this seemed one of those gifts of the gods for those who have played golf not too long, nor too well. But let the player beware! This green, looking fair and kind as a beautiful lady, was located as we have said before, on a huge bunker with long sand-traps hidden behind it on either side. So high was this bunker that you climbed up it from the back by a wooden stairway. Still worse, just back of the bunker was a wire fence which meant “out of bounds” to the unwary who shot hard but not too well. It was rumored that even the great Bobby Jones had once gone down to defeat because of this seventh green.

Quite aware of all this, Jane prepared her ball with unusual care, took three practice swings, paused to rub her hands dry, then with a sudden quick sigh, let drive.

It was a beautiful shot, not too high nor yet to low,—a powerful drive too. The ball seemed to whistle through the air.

“Good!” Jimmie whispered. “You—no—er—it’s going— Good Grief!” He rushed forward in sudden consternation.

Instead of landing on the green the ball had given promise of skimming across it like a swift bird flying low. At the precise moment when it should have gone speeding across the green and out of bounds, a head appeared from the back of the bunker. For three split seconds both ball and head could be seen. And then, they disappeared together.

“Oh—o!” Jane sped away. Dropping the bag of clubs Jimmie sped after her. And all the time Jane was thinking “Right in the bean! And such a sharp blow. I hope—how I do hope it’s not serious!”

The face they had seen above the bunker was that of a very small child, somebody’s baby, strayed from home.

When at last all out of breath and filled with the darkest fears Jane reached the green and speeding across it reached the crest of the fifteen-foot high mound, she took one good look, then dropped to the soft turf to let out one shriek of joyous laughter.

At the foot of the bunker seated on the brown surface of the sand-trap was a diminutive bit of humanity, a boy of some two years. In one hand he held a child’s sand bucket, and in the other a golf ball. As he caught sight of Jane he gurgled:

“Ball—got a ball.”

“Well,” said Jimmie, “At least you didn’t go out of bounds.”

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What had happened? There was a dent in the bottom of the bucket. Had the child caught the speeding ball in the bucket? If not that, what then? No one will ever know but the child, and he was too young to tell. One thing they discovered at once,—it was Jane’s ball.

As she picked it up the child let out a wail: “Ball! Want ball!”

“All right. Here’s your ball.” Jane dropped it beside him. “But

where do you belong? And how did you get here?"

The answer to these questions came at once. From behind the wire fence and a tangled orchard came the call of: "Buster! Buster! Where are you?"

"Buster!" Jimmie exclaimed. "His name should be Bunker. His Majesty, Bunker Bean!"

"At least," laughed Jane, "He seems to love bunkers and he did come near being beaned.

"Here!" she shouted a few seconds later. "Here! The child is over here!"

Immediately a young woman with flushed face and startled eyes appeared on the other side of the fence.

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"Oh, I'm sorry, Miss," she exclaimed. "He ran away from his sand-box. I've looked for him everywhere."

"He saw the sand trap." It was Jimmie who spoke. "I suppose he thought that was another sand-box. But truly, you should be more watchful. This is a dangerous spot for a small child. We nearly beaned him."

"Oh! My precious!" the woman exclaimed. "It will never happen again." She held out her hands for the child.

"Here you are sonny." Jimmie reached down to pick up the child.

"Ball!" said the child. "I got ball."

“Give it back, Buster,” said the woman.

“No. It’s all right. Let him keep it. It’s only an old one,” Jane lied tactfully.

“Here you go,” Jimmie exclaimed. “Now! Up and over!” He tossed the child over the fence and he dropped into his mother’s arms.

“I’m sure obliged to you,” said the woman, showing rows of beautiful teeth in her smile. “My husband is caretaker for Mr. Hardy. I suppose I shouldn’t say it, but Mr. Hardy’s that hard to work for—I hope you won’t mention this if you see him.”

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“Don’t worry. We won’t,” Jimmie exclaimed. “I’ve caddied for Mr. Hardy. And don’t I know what he’s like!”

“Well, goodbye, and thank you again.” The woman disappeared behind an apple tree.

“Jimmie,” said Jane, “You treated her just as you would have had she been Mrs. Hardy.”

“Why not?” Jimmie demanded. There was a suggestion of gruffness in his voice. “She’s just a dub. Her husband’s one, and I’m another. Why shouldn’t I treat her as well as I know how?”

“This golf course,” he went on after a brief pause, “Is about the most perfect thing I’ve ever seen. I love it. Look at that green. Did you ever see a more perfect carpet of grass? Makes you want to lie down and roll on it, to stretch out on it, to look

up at the sun and dream.

“But it’s not mine and never will be, not the least part of it. It belongs to rich men. I’m one of the dwarfs that slave about the place, like the dwarfs of Richard the Lionhearted. I should have a brass collar about my neck as those dwarfs did. That’s what I should!”

85

“Jimmie! How you rave!” Jane exclaimed. “Snap out of it. We were playing golf. Where were we?”

“Your ball,” said Jimmie with a slow smile, “is lost. It was lost in this sand trap. In that case you drop another ball and lose a stroke.”

Jane dropped a ball, chose a club often called a “mongrel,” gave the ball a sharp whack and sent it upon the green within six feet of the cup.

“Good,” said Jimmie. “You make it in four, one over par, and we have made a friend.”

“What does that get us?” Jane asked carelessly.

“You never can tell,” said Jimmie.

And indeed you never can.

As they played on around the course Jane seemed pre-occupied and sometimes almost careless with her shots. Time after time she went into a sand trap or off into the rough. More than once Jimmie gave her an inquiring look but said never a word. He was thinking: “I wonder if that shot that just

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missed Bunker Bean got her goat? Or is she worried over her father's deals and the robberies?" To these questions he found no answers. When the game ended neither of them knew how the score stood. For all this it had been a glorious autumn outing and Jimmie had enjoyed himself to the full.

"Stay at the club for dinner," Jane invited. "Father's in the city. It will be lonesome at home."

Jimmie looked down at his wide open shirt collar, his school corduroys and sneakers. "Sorry," he said, "Nothing doing. That's too swell for me.

"But say!" he exclaimed, reading disappointment in her eyes, "Come to think about it, I have a date to eat broiled steak and baked potatoes at John's house!"

"Who is John?" she asked.

"A star reporter on the Press. Best ever. Mary's his wife. And can she cook!

"Of course," he added, "They're just good ordinary folks living in a caretaker's house on the old Judge Stark place."

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"Good ordinary folks are the best in the world," Jane said with conviction. "But Mary won't be expecting me!"

"She's always expecting you or someone else," Jimmie laughed. "She sets an extra place every time dinner is served. Come on. Let's go." And they went.

The dinner was all that Jimmie had promised. It pleased him to see the clouds lift from Jane's face as she joined in the merry chatter about news stories, robberies, football games, golf and hot soda biscuits. When the meal was over Jane insisted on donning an apron and drying the dishes.

"That's a fine girl," John said warmly as he and Jimmie strolled away into the twilight. "It's too bad her father is mixed up with that Dawson crowd."

"Have you found out that they are really crooked?" Jimmie asked.

"Not yet," John said. "Give me a week and I'll tell you. They're suspected of breaking the Blue Sky Law."

"Selling worthless securities?"

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"Something like that, Jimmie." John turned square about. "You know Auntie Renton, don't you?"

"Do I!" Jimmie exclaimed. "Rennie's the finest old lady in town. She——"

"Don't matter about that," John broke in. "She got quite a bit of money from an estate recently. Dawson has been seen going to her house. I wish you'd keep an eye out in that direction."

"I sure will," said Jimmie. "If anyone ever robbed Aunt Rennie I'd want to kill him."

An hour later Jimmie asked Jane to drop him off at the club.

“I’ve been working on something in the caddy-house,” he explained. “A sort of magic box.”

“Thank you for a very, very pleasant evening,” Jane said as they parted. “Someday perhaps I’ll tell you all it has meant to me, but not tonight.”

That last remark puzzled Jimmie. But not for long,—his mind was on his “sort of magic box.” He had been making it with the aid of tools belonging to Sandy, the pro.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAGIC BOX

After school next day Jimmie hurried home, gathered up his small speedy candid camera and rushed away to the golf course, but not to caddy. Sandy, the pro, had tipped him off to the fact that a foursome was to be played. All these men were on Jimmie's list of suspects in the golf club diamond robbery case,—Ned Hunter, Roger Hardy, Ogden Renard and George Dawson. This would afford him a grand opportunity for learning their characteristic movements and unusual habits. Long before they appeared on the fairway leading to the thirteenth green Jimmie was hiding behind the thick growing shrubs and trees. He would, he told himself, caddy for a member of this foursome at some other time. For the present he would watch them, unobserved.

As they approached a feeling came over him that not one of them could have committed the robbery. Dawson and Renard were large men and rather pompous. They were clumsy in their movements. Dawson lumbered along over the field. Renard swung a club as if it were a cane, in a jaunty fashion. An unaccustomed action such as a diamond robbery would seem to be all but impossible for either of these men.

Hardy was not large, nor old, perhaps not yet forty. Jimmie

had once watched him defend a criminal in court. His action had been stiff and formal. He reminded the boy of a college senior making a speech. He wore expensive clothes but they never quite seemed to fit. How could such a man be a robber? And yet, why not?

“Blackie Nevers seems to be the only one who fits the picture,” Jimmie told himself. “But Tom says that it usually turns out to be the fellow who couldn’t have done it. So—o”

He adjusted his camera with care. As Dawson, following his ball came rolling up to the green he took two shots of him. He would know that rolling stride anywhere. Having prepared for a stroke, suddenly, as if expecting a shot in the back, Dawson cast a look behind him. This too, Jimmie would learn, was one of Dawson’s common gestures. “Only men who have cause for fear look often behind them,” Jimmie thought.



JIMMIE ADJUSTED HIS CAMERA WITH CARE.

For all his jaunty stride Ogden Renard, once his shot was made, dropped solidly on the bench for a brief rest. He took out his handkerchief and mopped his brow. He would, Jimmie thought, mop his brow frequently if he were engaged in some questionable enterprise. So he had Renard's number.

Hardy, he discovered, had a way of running a finger under his collar as if it were too tight, which it very evidently was not. If Jimmie saw a man half in the dark who moved with a stiff, jerky motion and jabbed a finger under his collar, that man would be Hardy.

Even after this brief study Jimmie felt that he could recognize each of these men at a distance. He must not, however, allow himself to be over confident. He would develop the snapshots he had taken, would have them enlarged and then study them. The time might come when he could photograph one or more of these men at the scene of a crime. With the pictures he had taken and those he might take at a crucial moment, it would only be necessary to produce the picture and say: "This is the man." 92

During the past days he had been working at a sort of magic which would enable him, he hoped, to take pictures in what appeared to be utter darkness, and of course, quite unknown to those who might be working in that darkness.

As soon as he had finished at the thirteenth green he hurried away to complete his magic box. This box was to contain a camera loaded with a special infra-red sensitized plate that could be operated by a kicker from the outside. It 93

would also contain two 500 watt floodlights. The light from these lamps would pass through a deep red screen. So dark was this screen that not the least visible light shone through. Nevertheless, infra-red rays passing through it shone upon the subject to be photographed and in six seconds or less Jimmie could take a picture of a person who did not in the least suspect that he was anywhere about. If a person or even a whole group were in a perfectly dark room, Jimmie could hoist his magic box to the window, turn on the current brought to him by a long extension cord, silently open his camera, count slowly to six, shut off his light, close his camera, and walk away with a picture. Such is the magic of photography. Who could wonder that the boy thought of this as a magic box?

But would Jimmie find a real opportunity for using this magic box? He believed he would. But Jimmie was young, and youth is the time for dreaming dreams.

CHAPTER IX

PICTURES IN THE DARK

His opportunity for using the magic box came sooner than he had expected. On the following night after completing his home work and stacking up his school books, he tucked the box under his arm, slipped out at the back door, mounted his bicycle, and rode away to the golf course. Jimmie did not allow the fact that he owned no part of the Indian Hill grounds to trouble him much. He could enjoy its golden beauty of soft turf and colorful autumn leaves without worrying about where his next year's dues were coming from. Once he had said to Ole, the Swede:

“Ole, would you like to be rich?”

“Naw,” said Ole. “Too much bother.” Jimmie thought he might be right.

To Jimmie there was no time like the night of the full moon for seeing the grounds at their best. He had formed the habit of visiting them at a time when most people were lost in slumber. There were two reasons for this,—he truly enjoyed it, and, as he walked about the outer edge of the course, there was a chance that he might catch the gleam of a moving flashlight in one of those closed summer homes of the rich. And this, in turn, might mean the Lone Wolf. So, like a

hound, he was often on the prowl.

Tonight he stood long on the seventh green. The soft green of the turf gleamed gloriously in the moonlight. Looming up like haystacks or clusters of grain stacks, the trees cast dark shadows. From far away across the course came the low wail of a violin,—a dance was on at the club. Jimmie took it all in and down deep in his soul something seemed to begin to swell and rise until it all but choked him. Such glorious beauty belonged only in books and pictures, yet, here it was, all his own. And then of a sudden he gave a start. Had he caught a flash of light on the first floor of the great frame building that was the Hardy home?

“Yes,” he whispered, as his figure stiffened. “Yes, there it is. The Lone Wolf strikes again. This time perhaps _____”

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He did not complete the thought. Disregarding the narrow stairs leading down, he slid silently down the side of the bunker, vaulted the fence and found himself in a tangled mass of berry vines and fruit trees.

He had never been on the Hardy grounds before. To his chagrin he found that a tall stone wall surrounding a wide court entirely shut off his view from the side of the house on which he had seen the light. To make matters worse, the moon went under a large dark cloud.

Undaunted, he felt his way along the wall until he came to a large apple tree whose branches he knew must hang over the wall. Up and over he scrambled to drop with a low grunt into

the center of a dried up flower bed. He paused to listen. What he heard froze him to the spot. It came not from within, but from without, close at hand, a low, sniffing sound. This could mean but one thing:

“A dog,” he whispered.

He was smitten with instant terror. Once when he was but two years old a huge friendly dog had walked all over him. He had been frightened out of his wits. After that, try as he might, he had not been able to conquer his fear of dogs. Now, cost what it might, he must see that dog.

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Slipping a small flashlight from his pocket he shot its gleam before him. For an instant only it shone, but that was more than enough. Directly in his path coming slowly, silently toward him, was the hugest dog he had ever seen. An English mastiff, large as a man, with head and fangs that looked terrible in that uncertain light, he aroused such fear as Jimmie had never before experienced.

What was to be done? The branch from which he had dropped was well out of his reach. The wall was too high for scaling. There might be a door or a gate. If there was, he did not know the location.

Just when he had given himself up for lost and in imagination was feeling his bones crack between those massive jaws, to the right and some distance away, a pale light shone out and a voice called: “Here, Bounce! Here!”

With the thrill of a lifetime Jimmie saw that the young woman standing in that doorway was the mother of little

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“Bunker Bean,” the child who so narrowly escaped Jane’s golf ball at the seventh green. What a relief to learn that within this narrow confine he had a probable friend. A moment later he saw the rangy form of that giant dog enter the door. And then the place was once more in total darkness.

For several moments Jimmie stood where he was, watching the side of that palatial home. Catching no further gleam of light he decided on a course of action. He would make his way to the very door which the dog had entered, and knock. If he were admitted he would introduce himself and, together with the occupants of the keeper’s cottage would work out plans for further action.

Creeping along the wall he came at last to the door. He knocked softly. No answer. Again.

“Who are you?” came in a low voice.

“Jimmie Drury, a caddy on the golf course. You know me. I have something very important to say. Please let me in.”

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The light beneath the door blinked out. The door swung open. Jimmie stepped inside. The door closed. The light went on.

“Oh!” There was a tone of relief in the woman’s voice. “It was you who saved our baby on the golf course.” The voice said more than the words. It said,—“You are all right, you were kind to a baby. I’m not afraid of you.”

“Won’t you sit down?” the woman invited.

Jimmie sat down by the small kitchen stove. There was a fire. It was warm and inviting. The night was cool. The dog was sprawled out on the floor. With his massive head on his paws, he lay there with one eye on Jimmie. Jimmie was no longer afraid of him.

“Is there someone in the big house?” Jimmie’s own voice sounded strange to him.

“There’s no one.” The woman gave him a frightened look — “Tim,—that’s my man—has gone to town. The baby’s asleep.”

“There is someone in the big house,” said Jimmie. “At least there was. I saw a light.”

100

“Oh! Someone in the big house!” The woman started up. “Tim shouldn’t have gone. If anything happens he’ll lose his place here, and there’s the baby to be fed!”

“Do you have the keys?” Jimmie asked.

“They’re there.” She nodded toward the clock shelf.

“I’ll go over and see.”

“No—Oh no! Tim wouldn’t like it. Beside, it’s dangerous; you’re only a boy.”

“I’ve done such things before.”

“No. It wouldn’t do.”

For a time there was silence in the room. The fire crackled. The dog closed his eyes and began to snore.

“Tim has a revolver. It’s in there,” said the woman, nodding at a small cabinet.

Jimmie rose and opened the cabinet. The gun was an old-fashioned affair. Jimmie thought: “What a noise it would make.”

He stood there a moment. “I might slip up to the window and take a picture,” he said.

“You’d need to make a bright light. They’d shoot you!”

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“No light,” said Jimmie. “I’d use a screen,—infra-red. Take pictures in the dark.”

The woman stared at him. His words meant nothing to her.

“Is there a tool room?” he asked.

“It’s in here.” She opened a door.

Jimmie went in and rummaged about. He returned with a long extension cord. “That’s all I need,” he murmured.

In a very short time he had his magic box and the cord connected. Attaching one end of the extension cord to a wall-socket, he opened the door, and trailing the cord after him, vanished into the night.

Once outside, he felt his way to a bush close to a first floor

window in the big house. There he crouched for a time,— watching. The moon came out from under the cloud for a moment. He dropped to the ground. Had he seen a moving figure inside? He could not be sure.

The moon was gone again, the yard dark. He'd have a try. Creeping closer he held his box almost against the window, then silently turned the light button. The light inside the box was now on. No light shone, but the camera inside was taking a picture of the inside of that room, taking it with light that could not be seen with the human eye. What would it reveal?

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After a space of a few seconds he turned the light off, gathered up his cord and returned to the keeper's house. The light from the door to this house could not be seen from the big house window.

“Did you get it?” the woman asked.

“Can't tell.”

“Perhaps we should go over there.” There was a suggestion of daring in the woman's tone. “I hate to ask you but it means so much to Tim and me.”

“Come on. I'm ready.” Jimmie was on his feet.

“We'll take the gun and the dog.”

Jimmie lifted the heavy revolver from its place. The woman spoke to the dog. When he was on his feet, she grasped him by the collar. “There's few that ain't afraid of

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him,” she whispered as they crept out into the night.

All the sky was now overcast. They passed through utter darkness from one door to another. Once Jimmie stubbed his toe, barely escaping a fall, but made no sound. The rattle of the key sounded loud in the night.

“We will go in here,” the woman whispered. “It’s the kitchen.”

When she had closed the door without a sound she felt for Jimmie’s hand to guide him toward the next room. With his free hand Jimmie felt the cold smoothness of stainless steel cabinets. Without a light he could picture the gleaming array, —stoves, pans, refrigerators, and endless cabinets.

He heard a knob turn and knew they had reached the second room. The great dog brushing against him startled him. He all but dropped the big revolver. Suppose he had! What a mess that would have made! He gripped it more firmly.

They passed through the door. Where were they now? He had no notion. Of a sudden, out of the night came the boom—boom—boom of a large clock striking the hour.

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“Oh!” came in a tense whisper as the woman, with an involuntary start backed against him. “There must be some one. That clock has not been wound for weeks.”

“Must feel right at home,” Jimmie thought, “Winding that clock.”

It was a grandfather clock. When it had ceased striking they

could hear its slow, solemn ticking,—tick—tock—tick—tock.

“It’s in the next room,” whispered the woman. “There’s drapes between,—no door.”

“We’ll go to the drapes,” Jimmie whispered. “You part the drapes. I’ll aim the gun. Then you throw on the flashlight.”

“Al—all right. I’ll do as you say.” Again they moved forward.

A moment more and Jimmie felt velvet drapes against his cheek.

“Now!” he breathed.

“Now!” she repeated after him.

Jimmie caught his breath. The light flashed. It moved from corner to corner of the huge room where chairs and couches all covered in white stood out like so many ghosts.

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“There is no one.” The woman heaved a sigh of relief.

They advanced into the room. Jimmie felt the crush of soft oriental rugs beneath his feet. The black marble fireplace adorned with bronze statues caught his eye. He heard again the solemn ticking of the great clock. And then there came a sharp exclamation from the woman:

“The pictures! They are gone!” She was pointing the light at a large gaping picture frame.

“Were they valuable?” Jimmie asked.

“Worth thousands and thousands of dollars, Tim says.” The woman’s tone was solemn. “Mr. Hardy,—he don’t know much about pictures. He likes to show them, that’s all. But if he sees this,”—there was something like a sob in her voice, “If he sees they’re gone then Tim is done here, that’s sure. And there’s the baby!”

At that moment Jimmie hated the Lone Wolf. He might think he was robbing only the rich. But in striking at the rich he was hurting good, kind, humble people. Hardy could buy more pictures. But where was Tim to find a new job?

106

“He must not see them.” Jimmie counted the frames. There were six. “Tell you what you do. You hang sheets over them. If Hardy comes here he’ll think it’s to keep off the dust. We’ll have the pictures back,—you’ll see. He’ll never know.”

“Are you sure?”

“Dead sure,” Jimmie lied, manfully.

“I—I’m glad. We’ll put sheets over ’em, as you say. We’ll go back to my house now.”

Treading softly they made their way back. Jimmie welcomed the light and warmth of the keeper’s house.

A few moments later Tim returned. After that for an hour the three of them sat talking over cups of black tea.

Just when Jimmie was ready to bid them good-night,

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the curtains to a door parted and a sleepy-eyed child came toddling out. “Ball,” he said, dreamily. “I got ball.” He clutched Jane’s golf ball in one chubby hand.

“His Majesty, Bunker Bean,” Jimmie whispered as he stepped out into the night. “Who wouldn’t do things for him?”

CHAPTER X

JANE'S SEANCE

It was late when Jimmie passed the shadowy lawn of the Hunter home. He was a little startled when he thought he saw a slender ghostlike form moving in and out among the trees, still more startled when a dark shadowy form darted out from before him and vanished down the narrow walk.

The “ghost” was real enough for it was no ghost—it was Jane. With the niblick she was knocking luminous balls over the tops of tall shrubs.

This had been the night of her father's party. All six of the “suspects” had been there.

Jane was a clever hostess. Naturally kind and friendly, with all her joyous youth, she made everyone feel at home. She was not naturally deceitful. More than once she shuddered at the thought of her promise to get the palm-prints of all these people. She had made a promise to Jimmie, and that promise would be carried out. Beside this, she was anxious to know what the result would be. So the experiment must be part of that night's show.

She set her stage with great care. Over the glass top of the desk in her father's study she sprinkled an all but invisible

powder. She removed the large lamp from the flood-light and put two small blue bulbs in their place. These cast an eerie half-light well suited to her purpose.

One thing was in her favor. She was not pretending to read hands. She really knew them. All through her school days she had read about the study of hands. In all her spare hours she had read the hands of her fellow students.

When the dinner was over, when the clinking of glasses had stopped and the guests were in a mellow mood, she began her work. She started with the short pudgy hands of Ogden Renard who at this moment was in a very jolly frame of mind. She could not, of course, tell him he was naturally soft, and would have met with little success in life had he not inherited a large fortune. She did tell him such facts as she thought would please him.

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Soon they were all about her asking for character readings. Marie Dawson's fingers told of a love of ease, but her frequently clenched hands told of a determination to get that which she wanted most out of life,—riches, power, and the admiration of others.

Dealing out pleasant potions to all, she led them quite naturally to the last stage of the seance in the dimly lighted study. Had Jimmie been present at this little stunt of fortune telling he would surely have been greatly amused.

“Now,” she assumed a mock air of grave importance, “If you will all kindly rest your hands so,—with fingers up and back this way, I will give you each a one-minute character sketch

under the blue light of Mars.”

“Now,” she breathed, “That is right, exactly.”

“Ah, Mr. Dawson!” she exclaimed. “Your fingers tremble.”

“Too much coffee,” Dawson grumbled.

“Too great eagerness,” the girl corrected. “You may in the end miss that for which you strive too hard to gain.” Dawson’s smile became a frown.

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“And now, Mrs. Dawson. Your fingers bend back rather far and in an irregular manner. You get things easily, but too often they slip between those fingers.”

“Look, child! Is this——”

Jane did not allow her to finish. “But Blackie Nevers! Such steel trap fingers!” she exclaimed. “Just let any poor fellow spring that trap!” Blackie’s white teeth shone in an uncertain smile.

“But Jane,” her father started to protest. “Don’t you think ——”

“I only tell what I see.” Jane gave him a look. “And here is good Colonel Renard. But look! Who would believe it? Your fingers reveal tendencies toward a life of crime!”

The Colonel stared at her in stunned surprise. Was she studying his face? If so, it was not for long. “Oh! But tendencies,” she exclaimed, “They mean nothing. Men

overcome their tendencies and become truly magnificent.”

Roger Hardy’s short, stubborn looking fingers brought forth only a brief comment. “It would be just too bad if you ever got too much power.” For this she received a genuine smile.

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Her father was last. “Oh, you!” she exclaimed, looking at him with laughing eyes. “I know you all too well. I am not going to expose you before your friends.”

“Yes! Yes!” they all cried, in good humor once more. “Tell us.” But she did not tell.

When it was all over and her father had led them away to the lounge, she admitted to herself that the affair had gone none too well. She had, however, secured their palm-prints, or at least thought she had. As soon as they were gone, she quietly locked the door and hid the key inside her dress.

After it was all over and she had retired for the night Jane was restless and could not sleep. To cool her brow and quiet her nerves, she drew on slippers and a dressing gown and went out into the dewy night. There for the best part of an hour she knocked balls about the putting course. It was she who was Jimmie’s “ghost.”

113

But who was the shadow? Jane was returning to the house full of strange ideas. How glorious the night was. Clouds were gone. The stars were out. The air was cool and pleasant on her cheek. How grand life could be if it were all games of golf, auto rides, and hours of wandering beneath the stars.

“But there are always intrigues,” she thought, as she stamped her foot. “Life never can be perfect.”

She wondered about the palm-prints. Had she done her work well? And if so, which one would resemble the one Tom Howe had found at the club? She shuddered, she knew not why.

And then she stopped cold in her tracks. She too had seen the shadow. It had been near the study window. It darted away, and vanished.

Hurrying forward she dashed through the door to turn the key with trembling fingers. Once inside the house she felt better. Tiptoeing to the study door she unlocked it and walked in. She did not turn on the light but crossed the room to its only window. It was still securely locked.

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“Nerves,” she whispered to herself as she once more locked the study door. After that she tiptoed to her own room and retired for the night.

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CHAPTER XI

VANISHING CLUES

Jane did not go near the study until midafternoon. Her father had gone to the city. When she thought it was about time for Jimmie to be home from school, she phoned him and told briefly how things had gone and suggested that he come over.

Thrusting his camera in his pocket, Jimmie was on his way to Jane's. He was thinking: "If it only works! What a break!"

He was due for a shock for when Jane replaced the floodlight in the study lamp and turned it on, he stood staring at the table.

"Fine—Oh, fine!" he managed to say at last. "It is a very nice desk-top but it seems your maid has dusted it since last night's seance."

"The maid?" she exclaimed. "She couldn't. I have the only key."

"Look," said Jimmie, staring at the table sorrowfully. "It's as smooth and shiny as a bald man's pate."

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And so it was. What had happened? Jimmie thought of the "ghost" and the shadow. Jane thought of the shadow. Neither

said a word about it.

“Wait,” said Jimmie, “I’ll be back. I’m going to borrow Doctor Bloc’s ultra violet lamp. That may bring things out.”

He was back in half an hour with the lamp. When its strange light was thrown on the table-top, six spots appeared. Jane stared at these in surprise.

“You have them, all right,” said Jimmie. “Question is, can we bring them back?”

Setting his camera for long, slow-time exposures, he took two shots.

“The camera sees a great deal that the eye knows nothing about,” he said as he closed his camera. “Here’s hoping.”

“Here’s hoping!” she repeated after him.

As he started to leave the place he opened the wrong door only to find himself staring into a large closet. He closed the door almost at once, not however before he had seen something that took him by surprise.

After leaving the Hunter place he walked slowly homeward. He was deep in thought. The whole affair of this golf club mystery was growing more complicated every day. Who stole the diamonds? Was it Blackie? If so, who had taken Blackie’s Chinese jade? Was this also Blackie? Tom Howe thought it might have been. He, Jimmie, doubted it.

And what of the pictures in the Hardy house? Who had stolen

these? He had not the slightest notion. One thing stood out clearly in his mind, they must be found before Hardy discovered the loss. Little Bunker Bean and his parents must not be without a home.

The picture attempted in the dark at the Hardy home had not yet been developed. It called for special care and must be handled in the city. What would it reveal? Had he obtained a picture of the Lone Wolf working there in the dark?

And this latest discovery. Who had wiped the dust and the palm-marks from that glass table-top? Had Jane become frightened and done that herself? It was not like her. And yet she had said: "I have the only key."

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"There was a shadowy figure about the place," he told himself. "He——"

"Hello there!" A voice interrupted his meditations. It was Tom Howe's.

"How is it coming?" he asked. Jimmie told him all that had happened.

"Well," said Tom, "We're making progress. Ever try to untangle a hundred feet of fishline?"

"More than once. It's a tough job."

"Remember how at the end, all at once it all straightens out?"

"Do I?" Jimmie exclaimed.

“This will come out the same way in the end,” Tom assured him. “You’ll see.”

“Here’s hoping,” said Jimmie.

“You better let me have those films,” suggested Tom. “I’ll take them to the best man I know.”

“They’re plates,” said Jimmie. “I’ve got some here and one at home. Drive me over and I’ll give them to you.”

Fifteen minutes later as Tom drove away with the plates that might mean so very much or so little, Jimmie’s father came out of the house.

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“Get out the old bus,” he said. “I’ve a meeting to cover in the city.”

Jimmie got out the car and drove his father to the train. On the way his father asked, as Tom had, how things were going. Jimmie told him the whole story. His father could be trusted with any secret. Jimmie had learned this long ago.

“I’m glad,” said his father when he had finished, “To see that you have learned one of the secrets of happiness.”

“How’s that,” said Jimmie in some surprise. “What secret?”

“You know how to broaden your circle of interests,” said his father. “When Doc told you that football was out, you didn’t sit down and weep—you found a fresh interest—this golf club affair.”

“It was thrown in my lap,” Jimmie chuckled.

“Yes, and many a boy would have bounced it out again. Broaden your circle, that’s a fine rule of life, Jimmie. Have a wide circle of friends. Keep your mind fresh and alive with a variety of interests.

“I had an old uncle,” his father rumbled on, “who lived 120 on a farm. He and my aunt slept in the same bed, same corner of the room, same house, for twenty years. Then Aunt Mandy decided one house-cleaning time that she’d put the bed in another corner of the room. She did. And what do you suppose happened?”

“Can’t guess. What did?”

“A stranger stopped in the middle of the night to ask the way to Kirkland. Uncle Ben started out of the room. He fell over a chair, tried to walk out of the window, finally found the door, then gave the man the wrong directions. He sent him down through a corn field.

“You see, Jimmie,” he chuckled, “He hadn’t broadened his circle in twenty years!

“One more thing,” he went on, after a moment. “You 121 may act like a nut if you wish, but don’t be one. The world is waiting for a chance to help a simple, kindly appearing fellow who doesn’t seem to know what to do with his hands, his feet, and his money. But this same world is waiting with a brick for the fellow who thinks he knows it all. Don’t talk too big, nor look too wise.

“You may succeed or fail with this golf-course mystery. Success and failure wait for us all, just around the corner. Neither matters too much. A great poet says:

“If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same,

Yours is the earth and everything that’s in it.
And which is more, you’ll be a man, my son.

“Here’s the depot,” he exclaimed, putting a hand on the car door. “The lecture is over. Goodbye and good luck, son.”

“Begins to look as if I’d need it,” was Jimmie’s reply.

As he drove home his thoughts returned to the scenes in the Hunter home. Who had wiped that glass clean? Would the pictures taken under the ultra violet lamp show anything? And those things he had seen in the closet, what of them? There was a great array of costumes,—masquerade costumes, no doubt. But how strange they were. One was black as night, a sort of long, straight gown with a hat to match. The hat was like a section of stovepipe. Three of the costumes were much alike. All were made of velvet, the kind that is used for portiers in rich homes. One was gray, one maroon and one dark blue. All three were made to resemble portiers, all in folds. There were long capes to match. He could see how one might want one of these costumes. But why three? Oh, well, Ned Hunter was a bit queer sometimes. If he wanted them, that was his affair.

CHAPTER XII

THE PICTURES ARE BACK

The next twenty-four hours were destined to provide Jimmie with two sudden surprises.

After darkness had fallen he pedaled out over the dark streets leading to the golf-course to take his place on the seventh green for an hour or two of watching.

Young as he was, Jimmie had come to take pride in his achievements as an amateur detective. Then too, he had a great feeling of loyalty for Tom Howe. He wanted to help Tom solve this mystery. Tom was doing his best but his time, for the most part, was taken up with city cases. He did have men watching pawnshops and all manner of places where diamonds and Chinese jade might be offered for sale. Thus far it seemed the Lone Wolf had made no effort to dispose of his booty. When would he start, if at all? And would this lead to his arrest? Down deep in his heart Jimmie hoped this would not happen. He wanted some active part at the climax of the affair.

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Perhaps neither he nor Tom would have an important part. Since Blackie Nevers' jade was stolen the local police had taken an active interest in the golf colony. As he stood on the tall seventh bunker looking away into the night, Jimmie saw

the lights of a car slowly circling the golf course. This he knew was a squad car.

“Not likely to catch them that way,” he thought. “They’d hear the car and see it, and they’d be on their way. And yet, if an officer were to patrol those streets and lanes on foot it would take at least two hours to make the rounds. And what would a thief be doing all this time? Plenty.”

On this particular night the boy had left his magic box at home, in fact he had promised his mother he would not stay long. He kept his word, but the moments of that brief stay were packed with thrills.

He had not been on the green half an hour when to his great surprise he again caught the gleam of a moving light at the Hardy house. “What’s he after now?” he murmured as he dashed down from the bunker.

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Once again he vaulted first the fence, then the stone wall. As he dropped to earth beyond the wall, he thought with a shudder of the huge dog. His fear did not last long, for close at hand he heard a low, friendly whine.

“So you know me?” he whispered to the dog.

A damp nose touched his hand. He patted the massive head. Then together, boy and dog moved to a place of vantage. Jimmie cast a look at the keeper’s cottage. All was dark. They had retired early.

“Wonder if there is anyone in the big house after all?” Jimmie said aloud. The dog whined his answer. Then all was still.

From far away came the rauf—rauf—rauf of a dog. Fearing that his canine companion would answer, Jimmie put a hand to his collar.

A moment more and he had an answer to his question. 126
There WAS someone in that house! A flash from the lights of a distant car lit up the side of the house and that room for a second. During that second he caught sight of a skulking figure.

“The flash was gone too soon,” he thought. “I couldn’t tell who it was.”

He made a sudden resolve. Cost what it might, he would see the Lone Wolf at work. In his hand he held a powerful flashlight. Before him was a thick shrub. Hiding behind that shrub he would play the light on that room. It was a daring and dangerous venture but he was keyed up for anything.

Hardly a moment had passed before his bright light fell full upon the window. The room was not large. It was a broad window. At the back of the room were two doors covered by heavy portiers. There were no large chairs or couches behind which a man might hide. There had been no warning to frighten the intruder away, and yet to Jimmie’s astonishment he saw no one.

For a full moment his light played upon that room. Then, seized with sudden terror he snapped off his light, dashed to a tree close by the wall, went up the tree, over the wall, and was away at full speed.

Impressions made upon our minds in moments of

excitement and strain make pictures which remain upon the walls of our memory for a long time. It was so with Jimmie. Back in his own small room at home, in his bed, with the lights out, he could still see every detail of that room in the Hardy house. The narrow, highly polished table, the spindle legged chairs, the maroon colored drapes at the back,—all were there. One detail, however, was wrong, or at least, so it seemed to him. Against the wall, as he reproduced the image of that room in his mind, hung not a large empty frame, as he had seen it on that other occasion, but an oil painting. Strangely enough his mind recalled that picture as plainly and accurately as all the rest. It was the portrait of a beautiful lady. She was dressed in a silken gown of gorgeous hue that reached to the floor. Behind her, indistinct but beautifully drawn was a group of green trees.

“I saw that somewhere else,” he told himself. In vain did he try to recall where. He had not really seen it. Either the picture had been there, or his imagination had played him a mean trick.

At last overcome by weariness, he fell asleep. And still in his dreams he saw the beautiful lady in the grove of trees.

Strange as it may seem, the picture Jimmie was seeing in the galleries of his mind was real. It hung just where his mental image revealed it to be,—on the back wall in that room of the Hardy home.

He was not long in getting proof of this. Early next morning, just as he was pulling on his shoes, his mother called:

“Jimmie! Telephone.”

“Now what?” he grumbled, as he came thumping down the stairs.

“Is this Jimmie Drury?” came in a feminine voice.

“Yes, Jimmie Drury.”

“This is Tim’s wife, Mrs. Timothy Muldoon.”

“Oh—Oh yes,” said Jimmie, not understanding at all.

“You don’t remember me!” the voice chided. “I’m the mother of the baby you call Bunker Bean.”

“Oh. Now I get you!”

“We just wanted to thank you.”

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“For what?” Jimmie demanded flatly.

“For putting the pictures all back.”

“Oh—Oh sure!” Jimmie stammered.

“It was so good of you to see that they were all put back right where they belonged. It’s so nice to see them there on the wall. We found them first thing this morning.”

“But I—” Jimmie tried to break in.

“You don’t know how much it means to Tim and me and to Bunker Bean,” the voice went on.

“Oh yes, to Bunker Bean.” Jimmie was but half awake. Besides, he was astonished beyond words. The pictures were all back, pictures worth many thousands, stolen and put back! What could it mean?

“We hope you’ll come and see us,” said the voice at the other end of the wire. “And thank you very much.”

“Thas—that’s all right.” Jimmie mopped his brow as he heard the click of the receiver.

“Somebody’s nuts,” he murmured.

“What is it, Jimmie?” his mother asked.

“I don’t know myself, not more than half,” was his bewildered reply. “Something about pictures that come and go like the wind.”

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He lingered longer than usual over his bacon and eggs. He was thinking “Those pictures are back. Perhaps the whole thing is a practical joke. Someone may have taken all these things,—diamonds, jade, and pictures—for fun. Bum sort of joke. But who knows? Perhaps Blackie’s jade and Marie Dawson’s diamonds will be put back too. Then there’ll be no case. Or will there?” His head still in a whirl, he marched off to school.

He was to learn that whatever turn these cases might take, the next affair to claim his attention was to be very real and to offer a genuine threat.

That afternoon Tom Howe called to leave Jimmie’s picture,

the one taken at the Hardy place on his first visit. Since this had been taken in utter darkness with the magic box, Jimmie was greatly excited.

Once he held the picture in his hand, he stared at it for a full moment without saying a word.

“That’s some picture to be taken in the dark,” he said at last. “The picture of that beautiful lady came out fine, but where is the Lone Wolf?”

131

“Conspicuous by his absence,” said Tom, “Unless he’s right there.” He pointed at a spot on the picture.

“If that’s a man,” said Jimmie, “He’s the strangest person I ever saw.” As he stared at the spot he knew that something must have been resting on a chair when the picture was taken, but whether it was a person dressed in some grotesque costume and sitting with his back to the camera, or a pile of large sofa pillows, topped with a small one, he could not tell.

“It doesn’t help,” he grumbled. “That picture doesn’t help a bit.”

“Except to establish the fact that the picture of that beautiful lady was stolen while you were in the caretaker’s house,” said Tom.

“And that,” he added, “Since the pictures have been returned doesn’t help much either. I’m afraid you’ll have to have another try with your magic box.”

“I will,” said Jimmie. “You watch my smoke!”

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“But how about the palm-prints?” he asked.

“That requires more time,” Tom replied. “I’m afraid we can’t look for much help from that quarter. It’s too bad that glass was wiped clean. I wonder who could have done it?”

“And so do I,” said Jimmie.

CHAPTER XIII

A FLASH ON THE FAIRWAY

Many nights after that Jimmie haunted the bunkers and fairways of Indian Hill without catching a single gleam of light from the closed summer homes. The local police used to patrol the area. Three afternoons Jimmie hid himself in the bushes by the thirteenth green. He took “stills” and even moving pictures of the six suspects. In the end he was sure that should he be given the opportunity, he would recognize them under any circumstances. Marie Dawson and her husband, Hardy, Blackie, Colonel Renard, and yes, even Ned Hunter. How could anyone who knew Ned fail to identify that rhythmic glide of his? Yes, Jimmie would know them. But would the moment ever come when he might test this knowledge?

And then of a sudden things began to break. And when they did break it was like the rush of a hurricane, a tornado, or a typhoon.

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Once again Jimmie wandered out to the golf course in the dark. It was a cold, dreary autumn night. Dark clouds were banked across the sky. There was a threat of rain in the air.

“Boo! How cold!” he shuddered, as he tramped across the bunker at the seventh green. He was tempted to climb the

fence and enjoy an hour's warmth and a cup of hot chocolate in the home of little Bunker Bean. He wanted to talk about the mysterious return of those pictures. It was strange how they had been put back in their places. But the whole affair was not a joke. The diamonds and jade had not yet been returned.

Stubbornly he resisted his desire for comfort. He would stick it out.

Of a sudden he stopped to stare off to the right. Had he caught a gleam of light? Yes, he was quite sure of it,—the short beam of a flashlight, not in a home, but at the center of the golf-course. Who could be wandering over the course on such a night? Some boy cutting cross-lots, perhaps.

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Again he studied the circle of summer homes that bordered the golf course. He caught the gleam of auto headlights weaving in and out among the trees, but that was all.

Of a sudden he stood quite still to stare once again at the center of the field. There was that spot of light again, in the same location, not moving this time,—a faint spot of green in a field of darkness. A slight shudder ran through him. Was he being followed? Did the Lone Wolf have an accomplice? Was it known that he, Jimmie, was on the Lone Wolf's trail? Involuntarily he dropped to the green turf. At the same instant the light blinked out. It was strange.

Shortly after Jimmie left his home that night a slender, boyish figure with long coat buttoned tight, and cap pulled down, slipped through the side door of the Hunter home to disappear in the darkness. It was carrying a long, rod-like affair which

had at each end a sort of bulge or head.

A half hour later this same figure might have been seen to pass through the employee's gate on to the golf course. After walking slowly to the thirteenth green, this same person dropped down upon a bench to sit erect, motionless, watchful,—apparently waiting for some zero hour. 136

Since Jimmie saw no more of the light on the green and since the clouds had lifted a little permitting him to see the fairway for some distance, he forgot his fear and brought his thoughts to the business of the hour. Six summer homes lay within view. All loomed dark and somber in the night. Jimmie knew about all of these homes, whether they were permanently closed for the season,—whether they might be visited by their owners occasionally.

Largest, most imposing of these was the Sumner Fox home. This he knew was definitely closed. The owner had gone south.

Scarcely had he fixed this fact in his mind when a streak of light outside that very house brought him to his feet with an exclamation. At once he was on his way. For the time, the light at the center of the field was forgotten. Had he but known who that lone wanderer in the night was, things might have gone far differently. As it was, moving swiftly across the course, he arrived ten minutes later at the boundary of the Fox estate. 137

Here he found himself confronted by a high stone wall. This wall set him back another ten minutes. At last, having

stumbled along through the brush for some distance, he came to a tall shrub that offered a precarious foothold. After a struggle, up and over he went.

“If I only knew where the caretaker’s cottage is,” he thought. The Fox home was not owned by one of the “Six Suspects,” so he had given it little thought.

Dodging along from shadow to shadow through an orchard of young trees, he came at last to the side of the great house facing the golf grounds.

“It’s so big,” he thought, “I might be on one side and never know a light was shining on the other side, or the end. Fellow needs a lot of luck. He——”

Just then his heart skipped a beat. A light, not a sudden bright light but a slow, steady glow shone dimly in the room to his right.

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The clouds had thickened now. Outside he could scarcely see his hand before him. Hugging his precious magic box, he moved slowly to the right. Once he stumbled into a bird-bath, and once barely escaped falling into a dry pool, but at last he found his way to the low window. He was able to look in but saw only a dark object and a very faint orange-colored light. Someone was evidently working, using a large upholstered chair as a screen. What work was he doing? Jimmie needed but one guess. He shuddered at the thought of what might happen to him if——

But there was no time for this. He too must be at work. For his magic box he needed a light. There was a door only a few

steps from him. The entrance was screened. Probably he would find a bulb there.

Sliding along the wall he reached the door. Ah yes! An electric light, but just out of his reach. Feeling about he found a plant box. Tumbling the earth out of this he prayed that it might hold together while he stood on it.

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It did hold. But there was a globe to be removed. The screws that held it were corroded. Only with the greatest effort while tilting precariously on his plant box was he able to remove these.

With the globe off at last, he removed the bulb and screwed in a plug.

“If only the juice is on,” he murmured softly. It was. A purple spark greeted him on the test.

Carefully unrolling a coil of insulated wire, he retraced his steps to the window. Now to hold the magic box before the window and to turn the switches without a sound. If the slightest light escaped from the box he was sunk. Safe enough, he was sure of that. Given a few seconds, he would take a picture. No one inside could know.

But that faint glow inside? It might spoil his picture. To his great relief he saw the still glow fade.

“Now!” he breathed, “Now for a picture.”

What was going on inside? He could not know. Without a sound he turned on the light and opened his camera.

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“One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight.” He closed the camera,—shut off the light. Marvelous to think that two five-hundred watt lights had been burning not a foot from the window, a picture had been taken, but no one inside could know.

“Wonder what I got?” he thought. “Suppose I should——”

The thought was never finished for at that instant the whole place, in fact the entire surrounding territory was aglow with light. This lasted for but a split-second. It was there and gone.

Instantly Jimmie flattened himself on the ground, not however before he had seen something that set his heart beating madly.

Snatching his magic box from the end of the extension cord and leaving the cord where it lay, he went dodging madly from tree to tree until he reached the gate.

Then, on tiptoe, going like the wind, he sped away into the night.

He did not pause until he had reached the club house. There he startled Hanada, the Filipino doorman, by exclaiming:

“Hanada! The phone!”

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“Have to ask Mr. Utter,” Hanada droned.

Jimmie did not ask. Seizing the phone, he shouted:

“Police! Give me the police!”

“Police” came almost at once. “O’Malley speaking.”

“O—O’Malley,” Jimmie stammered, “The Sumner Fox home is being robbed. Take care. There are three men.”

“Three men! Thought it was a Lone Wolf,” O’Malley rumbled.

“Three men,” Jimmie repeated, and hung up.

By the time he had made his way back to the Fox home the place was a blaze of light. The robbers were gone and the police had the situation well in hand.

Jimmie would have known at once, even had he not seen the three men, that this was not the work of the Lone Wolf. The place had been turned upside down. Locked doors had been ruthlessly jimmied. All was in confusion. How much had been taken? No one could tell.

“Horning in on the Lone Wolf,” Jimmie told himself as he wended his way homeward. “Well, at least I have their pictures,—unless my magic box failed me. Tom Howe will know them. We’ll get them yet.”

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Would they? And if they did, could these three throw any light on the doings of the Lone Wolf? All this remained to be seen.

Shortly after Jimmie had reached his home a slender figure that seemed bowed down by weariness approached the Hunter home. Having reached it, this person detached something from a long slender affair and dropped it in the ash can.

Had anyone been near at the time he might have seen by the flash of an auto light that this was Jane, and that her face seemed strangely haggard and worn.

Once inside the house she retired to her room. There she detached a small camera from a long black tube. Setting the tube in a corner she hid the camera deep beneath the contents of a drawer. Then she retired for the night. And from the blackness of a pine tree a screech owl began his silly shouting in the night.

CHAPTER XIV

FANNING FLAMES

The following day was Friday, the day appointed for Jane's match with Marie Dawson. Because of an important football game to be played on the morrow, school let out early. After one long lingering look toward the football field, Jimmie trudged away toward the golf course. He found the business of being a camera detective growing stale on him and longed for the smell of leather headgear and sweating men.

"But that's not for me, at least not this year," he sighed.

When he saw Jane, he was surprised at the change that had come over her. "Some sort of trouble," he thought the instant he saw her.

"Here, Jimmie. Take my clubs," she said as she sprang from her car. Jimmie saw tense lines about her eyes and the corners of her mouth that had not been there before.

"Jimmie." Her words came crisp and short. "I've just got to win this match!"

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"Oh, you will." Jimmie grinned his assurance.

Sandy, the fine clear-eyed Pro, was standing near. He watched

Jane narrowly. At last he called Jimmie to the caddy-house and asked in a low tone:

“Is that girl playing an important match today?”

“I—I’m afraid so,” said Jimmie. “It has something to do with her father. She’s all keyed up about it.”

“Yes, and she’ll lose that match if she doesn’t get all unkeyed,” Sandy laughed low. “She’s a fine girl,” he added. “She’s got the perfect swing stroke her father uses. But when she’s tight as a bow-string, she can’t swing. Ask her to come in here. Tell her it’s something about a club.”

Jane responded readily enough. She liked Sandy. As she stood before him all tense and determined, he talked to her for a short time about a special club that had just come out,—a broad niblick for driving out of sand-traps. Then, very quietly he said:

“Miss Hunter, if you don’t snap out of it you are going to lose this match.”

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“Oh,—Oh, but I mustn’t!” she cried in dismay.

“All right,” said Sandy. “Do what I say and you’ll win.”

“I—I’ll do anything.”

“First thing,” said Sandy, “Relax. Like this.” He began sliding about the room relaxing more and more until his eye-balls rolled and he sank like an empty sock to the floor.

“I—I couldn’t—not now.” There was distress in the girl’s voice.

“Try it. Oh sure you can.” He smiled.

“All right, then, I will.”

For a full five minutes Jane practised relaxing until she was like a rag doll.

“Now,” said Sandy. “Sit right there and think of moonlit waters, perfect waxed flowers and glorious companions.”

He touched the lever of a phonograph and the melodious swinging strains of Beautiful Blue Danube floated out into the room. This was followed by Over The Waves.

“Now,” he breathed. “Take this club and swing it.” He put on another record of modern swing music.

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Slowly, gracefully, Jane began drifting about the room swinging that club. “Oh,” she murmured,—“Now I can win. And I won’t even have to try.”

“That’s it.” Sandy smiled. “Don’t try. Just be natural and swing it.”

A moment later at Sandy’s order, Hanada appeared with cups of good, strong, black tea.

“This,” said Sandy, as Jane drank, “will stay with you for two or three hours. It’s been proved by many tests in a great University. There are players who would drink a highball.

That would be a great mistake.

“Now,” he exclaimed, pushing her gently out of the room, “Go out and win for old Indian Hill, for your fine father, and for Jimmie and me!”

“I will.” She flashed him a glorious smile.

It was not, however, to be as easy as that. Marie Dawson was something of a golfer. She had set her will to win this match. And Tarzan was to be her caddie.

Ten minutes later the two contestants met on the first green. Marie Dawson in a Lincoln green sport suit, was looking her best.

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“My dear, you seem tired.” She greeted Jane with a slightly condescending smile.

“Psychology stuff,” Jimmie thought, gritting his teeth. “Trying to get her down.”

“Oh, you’re the boy who had something to do with that terrible Bubble Man.” She favored Jimmie with a patronizing smile.

“Yes,—a little,” Jimmie agreed.

“Such a horrible business for a mere boy to be mixed up in!” She made a face.

“You may have the first try,” said Jane, eager to be off.

It was evident in the beginning that Marie Dawson expected an easy victory. As Jane's first shot fell a full ten yards short of hers, she fairly oozed confidence. When however, as her father would have done, Jane laid her ball with the second shot neatly on the green while Marie sliced off into the rough, the match promised to be interesting, to say the least.

Jane made the first hole, but lost the next two. The fourth and fifth were halved.

It was on the sixth that matters began to develop. There was a stiff breeze blowing squarely across the fairway. Because of this, both players went into the rough. Seeing this, Tarzan, who as a rule lagged behind, dashed forward before the balls were fairly settled. Jimmie hurried after him with both eyes wide open. When he saw Tarzan's right leg stiffen for an instant, he knew what to expect. Racing forward he found the ball sunk deep in the turf.

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"Here's your ball, Miss Hunter," he sang out. "Some clumsy cow stepped on it. There should be a penalty for that."

Tarzan gave him a dirty look but said never a word.

When he had dug the ball out Jimmie whispered to Jane:

"Shoot it right over those box-elder trees. You can do it."

For a space of seconds she looked at him, then with a murmured "All right," she began swaying slightly. Jimmie watched her intently. It was, he thought, as if she were getting herself in time with the sighing, swaying trees. Of a sudden her club swung back and up. Then circled over the

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rough turf. Like a white bird the ball went curving over the trees.

“Gee! What a shot!” Jimmie murmured.

Attempting a shot between two trees Marie grazed one of them, hit the other, and her ball bounded away into the rough. She lost that hole by three strokes. As she came up to Jane she made some remark that caused the girl to blush and bite her lip, but she answered never a word.

When Jane was about to tee off for the seventh green she seemed nervous.

“Bunker Bean’s not there,” Jimmie whispered. “I cautioned his mother about that yesterday.” At this Jane’s figure stiffened, then relaxed. With a beautiful swing she laid the ball within ten feet of the cup. One more shot and she had made a birdie, which put her ahead by a hole.

The next shot was not so fortunate. She went off into the rough, very deep rough at that. Jimmie watched the flight of that ball with eager eyes but when he arrived at a place near the spot where he thought it was, he could not find it. A minute passed. Two minutes. Three. Still no ball.

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Eager for every advantage Marie Dawson sang out “You’ve got just two more minutes to find that ball.”

Jimmie set to with a will. He would find that ball! Another minute passed, and still no ball.

“Sixty seconds more!” There was triumph in Marie’s voice. A

lost ball meant one lost shot. She would win the hole.

“Oh well,” Jimmie sighed. “Steam roller.” At that he fell flat on the ground and began rolling like a crocodile with his feet tied. And could he roll! No one could have gone faster. Ten yards to the right. Reverse! Five yards back,—and:

“Here’s your ball.” He sprang to his feet to point. The ball had prodded him in the ribs.

“Yuh rollin’ like a pig!” Tarzan hissed at his first opportunity.

This incident may well have been the turning point in the match. From that point on Jane played splendid golf, retained her lead, picked up an extra hole, and came out an easy victor. 151

“I can’t thank you enough,” she said to Jimmie when it was all over. “It meant so very much.” Once again her shoulders drooped.

“It’s all in a day’s work,” Jimmie grinned. “Excuse me,—Tarzan lost a ball on the fifteenth hole, a brand new one. I think I can find it. I’ll be seeing you!” He was away.

Had he but known it, Jimmie had for an hour been fanning red hot flames of anger.

CHAPTER XV

BATTLING TARZAN

It seems that Tarzan too hoped to retrieve that ball, lost on the fifteenth green. His tip that day had been a small one. Perhaps he thought, “If only my player had won, things would have been quite different. Oh well, the ball would help.”

They met on the fifteenth green, Jimmie and Tarzan. Shorty was not there, neither was Ole, the Swede. They were alone. Tarzan forced a savage grin.

“Yeah!” he snarled, “Smart guy, ain’t yuh, rollin’ on the ground like a pig!”

“I’d rather be a pig than a crook. Selling out for a dollar!” Jimmie replied angrily.

Showing his teeth like a snarling dog, Tarzan lunged at Jimmie. There was going to be a fight. Jimmie knew that. Perhaps his last fight. His heart did not matter now. He saw red. He wanted to fight. It would be a terrible fight, no rules and no referee. He didn’t care. Shorty was not there to take a hand, nor the big Swede. No matter. There was to be a fight and he was glad.

One instant his eyes took in the lovely green, the rolling

fairway, the trees waving in the breeze, his golf course, the finest in the world. The next instant he was struck and all but bowled over by Tarzan's solid bulk. His good right hand shot out. It found Tarzan's right eye, found it with such force that his hand felt numb after it was over. After that Tarzan could see out of but one eye.

Roaring like a mad bull, Tarzan leaped at him again. "Smart guy!" he bellowed. "I'll show yuh, rollin' like a pig!"

This time Jimmie went down. He was up like a flash. Tarzan had gone right over him. Before he could turn, Jimmie was on his back, clinging to his shoulders, poking his sharp knees into the tender spots in his spine. Tarzan roared with rage and pain. Then like a wild boar attacked by hounds, he shook himself free.

Jimmie's breath came in pants. He felt dizzy. But he must not give in. Shaking himself free of this weakness, he met one more charge. This time he went down flat. He threw out a hand. It struck Tarzan a burning blow in the face. His thumb was rammed into Tarzan's mouth. Tarzan closed his teeth on that thumb, biting to the bone. Jimmie did not even feel the pain. With heroic effort, he threw the larger boy from him, turned him completely over, and landed, knees down, on the spot where his breath came from.

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Tarzan gasped—Jimmie's thumb was free. With a tiger-like movement he sprang at Tarzan's throat. Jimmie had a grip of steel. It stood him in good stead now. His hands closed on his opponent's stout neck.

Ten seconds later Tarzan was writhing like a dying snake.

“You started it,” Jimmie hissed. “Now beg. Beg, or I’ll kill you.”

Tarzan struggled in silence. His face was turning black.

“Put up a hand,” Jimmie panted.

The hand came up shakily. Jimmie’s grip loosened.

After three panting breaths Tarzan sat up. He stared about him dizzily. Then, dragging himself to his feet, he went slinking away across the fairway and out of sight.

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Whereupon Jimmie sighed deeply, stretched out on the green, and immediately felt the world tilt to an angle of forty-five degrees, go into reverse, tilt in the other direction, and then do a perfect imitation of a rowboat being rocked by a violent storm. Jimmie was a very sick boy. It was his heart. Tarzan had known of his heart, yet he had attacked him when there was no one to help.

Jimmie could not move. He wondered if this would go on forever, if it would stop, and he were about to die. Anyway, it had been a grand fight.

Of a sudden the earth settled back on its axis and the lovely green lay still beneath Jimmie’s prostrate form. This was better. Still he could not move, nor could he lift his heavy eyelids. He could hear, for presently a voice came to him:

“Jimmie, why are you here?” It was Jane.

“Jane,” he thought, as a great sense of relief flooded his being. “Wonder why she’s here?” Perhaps she had guessed what was about to happen. Perhaps she had merely chanced upon him while taking a walk. What did it matter, so long as she was here? 156

He heard her footsteps, felt her stop close to him. He wanted to open his eyes and say; “I’m all right.” He did not because he could not.

He heard her footsteps again. She was running. Her footsteps died away. Presently they began again, this time coming closer and closer.

Of a sudden a deluge struck him in the face. It washed his eyes open and brought back his senses.

“Jimmie, what happened?” she cried.

Ten seconds more and for lack of a better cushion Jimmie’s head would have been in the girl’s lap. But Jimmie would have none of that. With a heroic effort he struggled up to a sitting position.

“I—I—well, you see,—” He could not finish.

“Jimmie, what could have happened?” she repeated. “There’s blood on your hand. You’d better lie down again.” 157

“He—he—bit me.” Jimmie did not lie down.

“You mean you’ve been fighting?”

“Oh sure. It was a grand scrap. Tarzan.” Jimmie’s thoughts were clearer now.

“You mean you fought that big brute?”

“Yes. I whaled the tar out of Tarzan,” he exclaimed. Then realizing what a bad pun he had made, he laughed loudly, and felt better still.

“Jimmie you shouldn’t have done it. You might have died.”

“I know that, and I knew it then,” Jimmie exclaimed. “But I did it then, and I’d do it again. What’s the good of living if you have to take what you don’t like from a fellow that’s too mean to live?”

“I hate fighting,” he said in a changed mood a moment later. “Only beasts fight. It’s really no good fighting. The only real way to beat a fellow is with your brains, not with your fists. But then,—” He shrugged his shoulders, then struggled uncertainly to his feet. “It sure was a good scrap.”

“Here. I’ll be your crutch.” The girl took him firmly by the arm. “Wounded soldier,” Jimmie murmured. And so together they marched off the field of battle.

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“Jimmie, this time you must have dinner with me at the club.” Jane’s words came short and crisp. “There is something I just must tell you.” Tense, deep lines had returned to her face.

“All—all right,” Jimmie agreed. He remembered that he had taken his coat with him. It was at the caddie-house. “I’ll have to get myself fixed up first.” He looked at his thumb where

Tarzan's teeth-marks still showed. "Little first aid. Might get hydrophobia," he laughed. "Sandy'll fix me up."

Sandy did fix him up. A half hour later, all scrubbed up, with a neat bandage on his thumb, he marched into the broad cool dining room of the club.

He could not help looking about him. Seated at one table were George and Marie Dawson. They looked at him in a strange way,—a way that made him a trifle uneasy.

Not so Colonel Ogden Renard. From his corner he beamed at Jane and Jimmie alike. In a short time he rose and came over to speak with them. He congratulated Jane on her victory and upon her choice of a caddie.

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"I understand you are something of a fighter as well." He gave Jimmie a sly wink as he said this in an undertone. "Capital, I should say, my boy!"

"You would never know that Marie's loss was the Colonel's loss as well," Jane said in a low tone when he had returned to his own table. "It *was*, all the same. Renard is the right name for him. He's an old fox.

"And Jimmie." She leaned forward, all tense again. "It is he that I wanted to talk to you about."

"To me?" Jimmie started.

"Yes. I want you to do me a favor."

"Anything you say."

“I want you,—” She was all but whispering now. “I want you to see Colonel Renard tomorrow morning. Tell him you have been tipped off to the fact that his summer home over on Lampert Lane may have been broken into. If he goes over there see if he won’t take you along. And if he does, keep your eyes open.”

“Trust me for that,” Jimmie grinned.

“And mum’s the word.”

“Mum it is.”

“Father has been keeping these people here to avoid a scandal for the club,” she went on in a very low tone. “They threatened to sue the club when the diamonds were stolen. They all like to strut. How I hate it!” Her eyes blazed their contempt. “It’s all a big sham. Not the club. That’s grand. But these people all trying to crowd in where they are not wanted and don’t belong.”

After that for a time they were silent. That was a wonderful dinner. Turkey with dressing and cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie a-la-mode, and cocoa all white on top with whipped cream. Much of its goodness however was lost on Jimmie. He had too many things to think about. Who was the Lone Wolf? Blackie Nevers, like as not. But always it was the unsuspected one who turned out to be the villain. Hardy? Dawson, or Marie his wife? A woman? Oh, no! And yet Marie Dawson would stop at nothing. Like Blackie, she was a cheater. She would have been happy if Tarzan had succeeded in his cheating today. How Jimmie hated cheaters!

The Lone Wolf might be Ogden Renard. Perhaps he would know more about that after tomorrow. Fortunately tomorrow was Saturday and he was free for the day.

“Of course,” he thought at last, “It might be Ned Hunter. But then again it simply couldn’t.”

“A penny for your thoughts,” Jane was trying to be gay.

“Not for a million pennies!” Jimmie’s face was crimson.

As it turned out, Jimmie never made that visit to Colonel Renard’s house. Things began to move far too swiftly for that. Renard was away in the city all that fateful Saturday, and after that it was too late.

CHAPTER XVI

APPROACHING THE ZERO HOUR

When they drove away from the club it was well after dark and Jane was still keyed up and tense. “As if something startling or terrible had happened,” Jimmie thought. And she had not told him one word about it.

“Look!” said Jane as they reached the edge of the town.
“That’s the Dawson car.”

“Going toward Rennie’s,” said Jimmie, straightening up. “Do you mind following?”

“Not a bit.” She turned the car sharply to the right. “But who is Rennie?”

“Rennie,—” there was a mellow note in Jimmie’s voice, “She’s about the funniest old lady that ever lived. She’s terribly old now, almost eighty, and she lives all by herself over on Maple Drive.

“When I was rather small,” he went on, “In fact, less than a year old, they thought I was going to die, they say. I don’t quite remember!” he laughed. “Rennie lived just across the street from us then. She was over at our house every day. Sometimes she was there half the night. And once,

—” In spite of his effort to control it, the boy’s voice faltered. “Once when I was the very worst, mother found her crying.”

“Silly thing to tell,” he ended abruptly.

“No,” said Jane, “It is not silly.”

“Well anyway,” Jimmie went on after a time, “Rennie—her real name is Mrs. Renwick—is a fine old lady. When she thought I was going to die, they found her crying. And then when I was in Junior High and had a morning paper route starting at 4:00 A.M., I used to finish up at Rennie’s house, half frozen and completely starved. And many’s the time Rennie said: ‘Hot cakes and maple syrup, Jimmie. Take off your overshoes and come right in.’

“Oh, I tell you,—” Jimmie exclaimed, “If ever anyone did a thing to hurt Rennie, I’d want to just kill him. I,—”

“Look,” Jane broke in. “The Dawsons are driving into that small yard.”

“That’s Rennie’s.” Jimmie was growing excited. “Drive right on by, past that clump of trees up ahead. We’ll park the car and walk back.”

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“Why?”

“I—I can’t tell you, not now, only please do it.”

“O.K., Jimmie.” Jane drove on.

By the time they had made their way back on foot the

Dawsons were inside.

“We’ll go round here,” said Jimmie. “The curtain’s up. We can see what goes on.” Dropping down in some tall grass they watched. Rennie’s eyes were poor, so she used a large indirect flood-light. Jimmie thanked his stars for this. Under his arm he carried a small moving picture camera. It was loaded with two hundred feet of a specially sensitive film. It would record a picture in just such a light and he thought he was going to take a picture.

In fact, as Marie Dawson turned her sweetest smile on Rennie, he reeled a few feet of film. When George Dawson put on his most pompous, prosperous, big business man’s look, he took a few feet more.

When at last Rennie rose and went out of the room to return with a large bundle of bank-notes, the little camera began singing in earnest.

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The whole story was recorded in two minutes’ time. All too eagerly George Dawson drew a bundle of papers from his pocket. These he smoothed out for Rennie to see and—quite unknowingly—for Jimmie’s camera to record.

Marie smiled her best smile, George Dawson swelled up like a turkey gobbler. The papers were passed to Rennie. Rennie’s bank-notes disappeared into Dawson’s large inside pocket.

The visitors rose to go. There was some handshaking. The door opened and closed. Jimmie and Jane flattened themselves in the grass. A car turned and whirled away.

“Good!” said Jimmie. “They went the other way. They didn’t see your car.”

“What does it all mean?” Jane asked.

“I don’t know,” said Jimmie. “All I know is I was asked to keep a watch out for something like this. I have done more. I’ve made a permanent record of this one-act play. Come on. Let’s go.”

They drove to Jimmie’s home in silence. Jane told Jimmie nothing more. Jimmie was quite as noncommittal, yet in the mind of each there was a feeling that something like a zero hour was fast approaching. The next day would be Saturday. And it was on a Saturday morning that this whole cycle of events had started. Jimmie shuddered, after bidding Jane good-night, as he hurried up the steps of his home.

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CHAPTER XVII

SOME REVEALING PICTURES

That same night John Nightingale, the young reporter, and his wife Mary received two surprising visits. One was made by a slender, fuzzy-haired girl, none other than Jane Hunter. To their great surprise they found her so nervous and apparently exhausted that Mary insisted on her joining them with a cup of black tea before they asked the reason for her unexpected visit at so late an hour alone.

Her answer, when it had all been pieced together, was one of the most astonishing stories they had ever heard, and as reporters, they had heard many a strange tale.

She built her story around four objects,—a gold-plated paper-knife, two silver-plated table knives, and one small picture.

“When I saw the scratches on the gold-plated paper-knife I wondered,” she said with a nervous twitch of her head, “But there were three scratches, not two. Then I heard of the theft of Blackie’s Chinese jade. When I found these knives with the plating scraped off, I thought I almost knew. But, when I saw this picture,”—she paused for breath. As the tale unfolded more and more, she paused to say more than once, as she twisted her fingers in a most distressing manner:

“I had to tell this to someone. Just had to! You folks seemed so happy here and are so kind, I wanted to tell you. But you won’t whisper a word about it, not a word, until I say you may?”

“Not a word,” John said soberly.

“Not a single word,” said Mary.

When at last the story was ended and Jane, as if dreading to step out into the night, sat staring gloomily at the door John said in a voice that was not only friendly but cheerful:

“Miss Hunter, there are times when I am forced to believe that there is ‘A Destiny that shapes our ends,’ a guiding spirit that directs our lives. This is one of those times for of all the millions of homes in our land, you could not have chosen another whose occupants were so well prepared to give you aid and comfort.”

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She looked up at him in sudden surprise and wonder.

“I want you to believe me,” he went on, “when I tell you that there is much more to this affair, very much more than you can see tonight. As a reporter, I have been working on a story about the entire affair. The story you have told me—and the evidence seems to prove you are right,—fits perfectly with the report I have been preparing for my paper.”

“Your paper? O! My God! What have I done!” She sprang to her feet. “You wouldn’t put it in the paper!”

“Not for a million.” John placed a hand on her arm. “Calm

yourself.” She sat down.

“I only wanted to say,” he went on after a moment, 170
“That the side of the picture you have seen is the dark side. From your point of view there is a brighter side. It is this side I have been studying. Now that I have both sides clearly before me, I am sure that with a very little luck we can turn the dark cloud inside out. And after that,” he laughed merrily, “After that you may smile! Smile! Smile!”

“Thank you!” She sprang to her feet and seized them both by the hand. “I love you and I trust you. Tonight I shall sleep. Good night!”

The door opened, her motor purred, and she was gone.

“What a strange world,” Mary sighed.

“What!” John cried as the phone rang. “Is there more to it still tonight?”

The answer was:

Very much more!

On the phone John heard, “That you, John? Good. May we come over, Tom Howe and I? I’ve got something to show him, a moving picture show. He says you should see it too.” It was Jimmie.

“Sure,” John laughed. “The coffee’s on. It’s always early ’till morning, and then it’s the next day!”

“Our first picture is a still,” Jimmie began, a half hour later, as in Mary’s darkened living room he focussed a projector, borrowed from the school, upon the wall. “This picture was taken in what we call darkness. But even in what is darkness to the eye, there is light for the camera.”

“O.K. Professor,” Tom drawled, “Let’s have the picture.”

Jimmie let him have it and with the first look, Tom was on his feet.

“Jimmie!” he exclaimed, “Where did you take that picture?”

The picture in question showed two men with hard faces looking down at some object at their feet. A closer look revealed that this object was a safe, with a third man on his knees before it.

“Those men,” said Jimmie, endeavoring to steady his voice, “were robbing the Sumner Fox place when I took the picture. Do you know them?”

“Know them!” Tom exclaimed, “I’ve known them too long. I’ve been looking for them these six months.”

That’s Dutch Schatz at the right. At the left we have Fingers McMannus. And the man at their feet would be Shady Skinner. They’re a nice trio. It’s good they didn’t catch you taking the picture. It seems they’ve read about the work of the Lone Wolf and came out to make a try at the golf colony. They’re wanted in three states. And if we catch them on this trip, you’re due for a reward. Not a large one, but enough to get your mother a fur coat.”

“For Christmas!” Jimmie exclaimed. “Boy! OH Boy! Wouldn’t it be great. Here’s hoping!”

“And now,” he said, after a quick change of pictures, “we shall have a little moving picture drama.”

In his basement studio he had developed and dried the picture of Rennie and the Dawsons in double-quick time. Now, as his astonished friends watched, the little drama played in Rennie’s small living room was done all over again.

As the last movement was recorded and the end of the film clicked out, Mary did a strange thing. Throwing her arms about Jimmie she kissed him on the cheek, at the same time exclaiming:

“Jimmie, you’re a darling!”

“John,” Jimmie exclaimed, “Do you stand for that?”

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“Yes,” John agreed, “Under the circumstances, I must. Day and night now for some time Mary and I have been working on something that should bring happiness to some very fine people. This picture of yours gives us the finishing touch.”

“I—I don’t understand,” said Jimmie.

“And you won’t, at least, not for a few hours,” said John. “We are sworn to secrecy. But my guess is that within forty-eight hours, or less, you will be putting on another picture show before a very select and very much astonished audience. I can’t say that it will please them. Some of them won’t like it at all. And that,” he concluded, “will be about all for now.”

Turning to Mary he said, “How about coffee for Tom and me and something rich and nourishing for Jimmie?”

“And for me,” said Mary.

“Jimmie,” she repeated warmly, “You are a darling.” Then she added, to Jimmie’s mystification by murmuring,—“That poor dear girl!”

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LONE WOLF AT LAST

To Jimmie the early hours of that Saturday seemed strange indeed. There was, he felt, a feeling of mystery and suspense in the air. The very breezes that sent the dead leaves scurrying here and there appeared to whisper.

No one was about, that is, none of the “suspects.” Even Jane did not come out to the golf course.

He had hoped to find Colonel Renard and to find an answer to a question that had been raised in his mind, and that was, why did Jane think his summer home had been broken into? Strangely enough, more than once this question seemed connected with another,—what had caused that bright glare of light the night he took a picture of Dutch Schatz and his pals at work? This question too, remained unanswered.

It was a dismal day. Clouds covered all the sky. Blackbirds in great flocks flew high over the course. The season was over. There was nothing more dreary, he thought, than golf played out of season. He would not come out again.

Once back in the cosy caddy-house that smelled of new leather bags and varnish, he felt better. For an hour, after he

had eaten his lunch, he sat dreaming and puzzling over many a curious mystery. In his mind candid camera shots, a gold-plated paper-knife, a sudden flash in the night, and a score of other things were strangely blended.

He had hoped that Jane and her father, or at least the Dawsons and some of their crowd would appear on the course, but no one came.

He returned home in time to learn that The Glen school football team had won the deciding game of their series and that they would retain the "Little Ten" championship. He was glad of this and yet it had been done without his help. He had been obliged to spend his time in other ways. And what had he accomplished? Very little, it would seem. And so the gray day darkened into night.

Scarcely knowing why, an hour after dark he mounted his bicycle and rode once again to the golf course.

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There, seized with curiosity regarding the Renard place, he wandered across the fairway to at last climb a fence and enter the Renard estate. The house was of brown stone, not very large, but well built. He realized now for the first time that it was not far from the Fox home that had been robbed by Dutch Schatz and his pals. He recalled the sudden flash that had shown them to him on that night. "What had made that flash," he asked himself once more.

He recalled Jane's suggestion that she might go robber-hunting with a flash-bulb. Supposing she had? And what if she had tried it out on Dutch Schatz? Jimmie shuddered.

But why did Jane think there had been an attempted robbery at the Renard place?

Why? His thoughts were interrupted. The place was, he knew, definitely closed for the season. There was not even a keeper there. And yet he had caught sight of someone moving in the living room. 177

Dropping down behind a bush he studied the sky. The clouds were scattering. One was over the moon but it was only a matter of a moment or two before the moon would be shining brightly into that window, and then,——

Slowly, ever so slowly it seemed to him, the cloud glided on. Now it had covered half its course, a third, a quarter—and now,——

Like a light suddenly turned on, the moon bathed all in a silver glory.

As for Jimmie, he had eyes for but one spot. In the center of that large room a figure was moving slowly.

“The Lone Wolf at last,” he breathed.

His heart raced. Now for the test. For days he had studied the actions of six people. He had snapped pictures and had studied those. Now the moment had come. Would he recognize that person by his movements?

A moment passed. As if deliberately placing himself on display, the person inside the room wheeled about and recrossed the lighted space. 178

As for Jimmie, he never moved a finger, merely stood there staring. He had risen from behind the bush, stood now in full view in the moonlight, a dangerous position, yet he seemed unconscious of it all.

As he stood there, his lips parted for words that did not come, his eyes opened wider and wider. He knew that figure, yes, he was sure of it. Who could mistake it?

He did not rush up and bang on the door demanding a surrender. Nor did he dash away to call the police. Instead, he turned slowly, walked to the fence, crept through, and walked slowly down the fairway. His stride and his posture at that moment were like that of a broken hearted old man. He had seen the Lone Wolf, and now,——

Of a sudden, like one who escapes from a thing he hates, he began walking rapidly. He was all but running when he reached the caddy-house door.

And there it was that he ran squarely into Tom Howe.

“Jimmie Drury!” Tom exclaimed. “The very person I was looking for. One of my men has just phoned me that the Morrison home is being robbed. It may be Dutch Schatz and his gang. It’s your chance. Come on.”

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“No, not,——”

Jimmie was about to say: “Not the Morrison house but Colonel Renard’s.” He caught himself just in time. “Let them find it out if they must,” he thought. Climbing into Tom’s car, he went racing away.

CHAPTER XIX

JIMMIE MAKES A HOLE IN ONE

To Jimmie's surprise Tom's car did not carry him toward the Renard place but in just the opposite direction. They were going to the Morrison place, sure enough. Never had Jimmie's thoughts gone into such a tail spin. But he must collect his senses. If there was a robbery going on the situation was sure to be a dangerous one.

"Tom," he said, his own voice sounding strange to him, "If there really are robbers at the Morrison place, it's not the Lone Wolf."

"There is a robbery," said Tom. "My man never misses. Six state troopers will be there almost as soon as we are. I'll go right in and scout around."

"May—may I go with you?" Jimmie asked eagerly.

"Well, I guess so." Tom hesitated. "I've got the keys, they were at the club. Here, take this one. It fits the back door. I will go in at the front. Watch your step. They are dangerous. If we can scare them out the troopers will do the rest."

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"I—I'll watch," Jimmie replied huskily.

Fifteen minutes later Jimmie was inside the house. It seemed strangely big and silent. Still there were men here he was sure of that. Without a sound he glided down a short, narrow hallway. There were heavy drapes at the end of it. Slowly, inch by inch, he parted the draperies. At last he peered into the space beyond. A strange sort of room was this. Was it called a library, den, or museum? He could not tell. Two sides of the room were lined with books. Above the shelves were all manner of creatures, mounted and stuffed. An eagle spread his wings. The head of a rhinoceros loomed savagely out of the half-darkness.

Suddenly Jimmie stepped back. He had heard a sound, a low, indistinct sound, perhaps a step, a chair moved, or a door stealthily opened. He wondered if Tom was in there.

For a space of seconds he remained poised for flight. A tall grandfather clock in the room beyond ticked slowly, majestically,—tick, tock, tick, tock. There was no other sound.

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Once more he parted the drapes. Beneath the rhinoceros head was a black object, a safe. There were two more doors to the room, one to the right, the other to the left. These also were covered with dark drapes. Strangely enough, he was reminded at that moment of the costumes made of drapery he had seen in Ned Hunter's closet. With such a costume one might fade into the draperies and not be seen. The thought gave him a creepy feeling. To dispell this he moved a step forward, half into the room.

To his surprise he found himself standing beside half a dozen

rifles stacked butts down, bayonets up, on the floor, just as they appeared in Civil War scenes.

He laughed under his breath. Should anything happen he would be well armed. But these guns were heirlooms, rusty, and old. One might do some damage with a bayonet, at that.

A glance told him that this side of the room was entirely taken up with relics from battle fields. There were cabinets of pistols, swords and tattered flags. Close beside him and back of the stacked rifles was a pyramid of cannon balls. The ones at the bottom were larger. The top one was the size of a baseball. He was about to yield to an impulse to lift it when he suddenly froze to the spot. He had seen a face. A hard, cruel face. It had appeared at the door to his right. For the moment the man was looking in the opposite direction. He was staring as if expecting something to appear from beyond. If he looked to his left would he see the boy? Jimmie doubted that. His corner was almost shrouded in darkness.

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Just when Jimmie was preparing to back away to safety, another pair of drapes parted and Tom Howe's head appeared. At the same instant a hand slipped from behind the draperies where that other face remained, cold, motionless, alert. In the hand shone a blue automatic. For the moment it was pointed toward the floor. When would it be lifted to the level of Tom's heart, and fired? Jimmie decided to remain and see the thing through.

"If only Tom could see that man," he thought with a touch of despair. "But he can't."

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The tall clock ticked the seconds away. A fly buzzed. From a distance came the honk of an auto horn. Jimmie wondered what was passing through that man's mind. He was without doubt Dutch Schatz or one of his gang. Why did he not lift the gun?

“Perhaps he's thinking that Tom is the caretaker and will go away.” There was comfort in this thought. But would Tom go away?

Of course he could call out a warning to Tom. But then the gun would swing up and flash fire. It wouldn't do.

He could slip behind the curtain and—but no, he would not desert Tom.

Once again his eyes fell on the pile of rusty cannon balls at his side. A plan occurred to him,—it was a desperate chance to take. He would pick up that smallest cannon ball. If that gun raised an inch or two he would risk trying to hit the man's wrist. No boy in school could throw a ball straighter or harder than he. But if the ball made a noise as he lifted it? If another rolled off the pile? These men, like soldiers in the trenches, shoot at sounds. Well, he'd have to risk that.

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Slowly, cautiously, with a prayer on his lips, he put out his hand. That steel ball felt hard and cold. He fairly shuddered. He'd get a good grip now. How heavy! What if it were glued down? No. Now he had it. Slowly, silently, he lifted it to a position for a sudden throw. Then again there was silence, save for the ticking of the clock. The fly had ceased buzzing.

The distant auto horn was silent.

Then Tom Howe moved forward a step. Ah! Fateful step! The drapes pushed back his coat. Something gleamed,—it was his officer's badge.

Like a thing of steel the hand that held the gun snapped up. Now! As he sometimes swung his golf clubs, all but unconscious of the direction the ball might take, Jimmie sent the heavy ball through the air.

Suddenly there was a crash. The gun clattered to the floor and went off with a bang. Jimmie sprang forward to leap, clawing like a panther, on the man's back, and on top of him piled Tom.

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The fight was over in a second. With his handcuffs on the gangster's wrists, Tom sat up. "Good work, Jimmie!" he exclaimed. "He——"

"He—he might have got you," said Jimmie. His teeth were chattering now that it was all over.

"But he didn't. It's all in a night's work," said Tom.

From outside came the sound of men running, three shots, then silence.

"Guess we can trust those troopers to take care of the rest." Tom stood up.

"Jimmie," he exclaimed, "The papers will be saying in the morning that you and I have solved that golf colony robbery

mystery. But we haven't. Not by a whole lot. At least not yet. There's more work to be done before the night is over. There's a card game going on over at the club. We'll be dropping in on it shortly.

“Come on, get up,” he said to the prisoner. “Let's get going. And no funny stuff. Remember, I've got two guns. Both good ones,—yours and mine. And I know how to use them both, too.”

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At that they marched out into the night.

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CHAPTER XX

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COURTS

When temporary board and lodging had been arranged for Schatz and his pals in the County jail, Tom returned to his car and said:

“Come on, Jimmie. The night is still young.”

To Jimmie who was once more sunk in gloom, the night seemed very old, but he was ready for anything.

As they drove on in the night Jimmie suddenly decided to confide in Tom. With very few words he told him what had happened at Colonel Renard’s home. “And to think!” he exclaimed, “It was him, of all people!”

“Jimmie,” said Tom, “don’t let that get you down. You know only half of the story. You’ll know the rest very soon I hope. And when you do, you’ll smile.”

They drove first to Jimmie’s house where the boy reported to his parents, then gathering up his moving picture show, returned to the car.

They next went to John’s house, where John and Mary climbed into the rumble seat. After that they sped away

toward the club. Full of wonder as Jimmie was, he never asked a question.

As they were about to enter the club house door, leading to the lounge, where card games were in progress, a portly figure joined them. With a start Jimmie recognized a local policeman.

“Hello, Casey,” said Tom. “I don’t think we’ll need you. I just wanted you along to lend dignity to this affair.”

“Dignity it shall be,” rumbled Casey.

As they filed through the door Jimmie felt a strange shudder run through him. Something tremendously important was about to happen. Just what it would be he could not so much as guess.

“Good evening, ladies and gentlemen,” Tom said as he led his party into the room where two card games were in progress. “Sorry to interrupt you but there are a few matters I wish to clear up.

“You recognize my companions, at least some of them. You all know Jimmie.” There were various sounds, some friendly, some otherwise, at this. “You also know officer Casey. The other gentleman is John Nightingale of the Press, and Mary here is his wife.”

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An awkward silence followed, as the newcomers found seats. Allowing his eyes to circle the room Jimmie saw all six suspects,—the Dawsons, Blackie, Renard, Hardy and Hunter. Besides these were two stout ladies whom Jimmie thought

might be related to some of them, and Jane. Jane had not been playing. She sat in a corner staring at Jimmie as if seeing him in a new light for the first time.

“You shall not be kept long,” said Tom. “Jimmie here is going to put on a picture show for your entertainment.”

“A picture show!” Marie Dawson’s lips curled with scorn. “George, can’t you put a stop to this nonsense?” George Dawson made no reply. Perhaps he suspected there was more to this than appeared on the surface.

“I am sure you will be interested,” Tom assured them. “Jimmie, will you set up your projector? That blank wall will serve as a screen.”

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Jimmie was ready in a very short time.

“Our story tonight,” said Tom, “Begins with a diamond robbery. It ends with the possible theft of some papers from Colonel Renard’s home this very evening.”

“Papers! Those papers!” Colonel Renard started as if he had been shot.

“I thought you might be interested,” Tom said quietly. “But let us begin with the diamond robbery. From the start, Jimmie and I were agreed that it was an inside job, that one of six persons, all here tonight, stole those diamonds.”

A stir went through the room as he said this.

“Jimmie,” he went on, “decided to make a study of these six

people, how they walked, talked, swung their clubs, and all. He even took pictures of you all so that if ever he caught this Lone Wolf, as we came to call him, in some other robbery, he wanted to be able to identify him at a glance. The plan worked. Tonight he saw the Lone Wolf in Colonel Renard's summer home."

Again the Colonel, whose cheeks had lost their rosy hue, started to his feet. The others were now staring intently all but Jane who sat looking down at her hands.

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"Perhaps," said Tom, "You would like to see yourselves in action. Jimmie, start the pictures." He snapped off the lights.

The picture show of golfers walking, sitting, swinging their clubs, snapping fingers, mopping brows, and all the rest, was interesting and at times highly amusing. As the pictures ran on, Tom pointed out the telltale movements of each individual. It became quite evident that no one of them could have been in the Colonel's house at that fateful hour without being known by the sharp-eyed young detective.

"And now," said Tom, "The question uppermost in the minds of most of you is, who is the Lone Wolf? We shall not keep you in suspense. Jimmie, the picture!"

A strange hush fell over the room as Jimmie adjusted a film. Then the projector began to purr and out on the screen, swinging his golf club in a carefree manner strolled *Ned Hunter*.

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"Oh! But I say!" the Colonel exploded.

“He stole my diamonds. The ungrateful——”

“Stop, Mrs. Dawson,” commanded Tom sharply. “The show has just begun.

“It is true,” he went on in a quiet voice, “That Mr. Hunter, perhaps the best loved man in The Glen, or on the Indian Hill course, did take your diamonds, though it’s a question whether it should be called stealing. He also took some rare pieces of Chinese jade from Blackie Nevers, and some rare paintings from the Hardy home.”

“What!” It was Hardy’s turn to explode.

“Your pictures were returned, Mr. Hardy,” Tom assured him. “Though why they were I cannot say.”

“Perhaps, as I have said,” he went on, “Some papers were taken from the Colonel’s safe.”

“No,” came an inaudible whisper. Who had said it? No one in the darkness could have told.

“That,” said Tom, “Is one side of the picture.”

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Jimmie stole a look at Jane. For the first time she raised her eyes. He read expectation and even hope there, and was glad.

“There was a time,” Tom went on, “When Mr. Hunter and his mother were quite well to do, not to say rich. Five of the persons in this room changed all that. Need I name you?”

Again there was a stir. Chairs rattled.

“I shall not, at least not now,” said Tom. “Your methods were legal, as far as that goes, but they were also crooked as sin.”

Dawson started to his feet.

“Sit down!” Tom snapped. “We put three men in jail tonight, but there is plenty of room for more.” Dawson sat down.

“Mr. Hunter and his mother trusted you,—Dawson, Nevers, Hardy and Renard.” He pronounced each name distinctly. “Yours is an incorporated group. Each man is bound by the acts of the others. You sold mortgages to Mr. Hunter and his mother. The buildings were overrated. In two years’ time the values shrank by half. You were not satisfied with this.” Tom’s words came with biting sarcasm. “Mr. Hardy, you were appointed receiver for the buildings. You replaced good, almost new equipment, gas stoves, refrigerators, heating plants, with other equipment and received a large slice of graft as your share.”

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“That,” snapped Hardy, “cannot be proven.”

“No,” Tom smiled, “Perhaps not. But I doubt if it needs to be. Jimmie, another picture.”

The projector hummed and a moving picture of Marie Dawson, George Dawson and the white-haired Rennie began to move onto the screen.

Marie Dawson gasped. Out of the corner of his eye Jimmie saw Dawson’s lips quiver.

“For several days,” said Tom, “You five men have been

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cramped for funds. You were crowding Ned Hunter for funds. As a desperate gamble he promised money if he lost a golf match. Thanks to Jimmie he did not lose. Again when Jane played, he made a promise. She also won. That,” said Tom, “undoubtedly was a strange situation. You were pressing Mr. Hunter for funds. The only means he had of getting money was by selling diamonds and jade which he had taken from you. He did not wish to do this because if the police had discovered the goods in some shop, he would have been sent to jail. Fortunately, he never sold them.”

“At last you tried an old trick, selling worthless stock to an old lady who trusted you. See,” he pointed at the screen, “The name is plainly printed on the bonds. Any broker knows it’s worthless. The money she is paying you shows plainly a whole bundle of hundred dollar bills.”

George Dawson made a strange sound in his throat.

“Oh, I know,” said Tom, “you meant to redeem those bonds with good ones when you were in the money again. And I know you are in the money right now. Only a few hours ago you sold some property that will enable you not only to pay back the money to this white-haired old lady, but also that which you stole in what might be called a legal manner, from Ned Hunter and his mother.

“But that,—” His words came out with a snap. “That won’t save you. You’ll go to jail unless,—”

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For a full moment there was silence in the room. Jimmie looked up at Jane and smiled shyly. Did she smile back? He

fancied that she did.

“Unless what?” came in a hoarse, dry voice.

“Unless you take back the diamonds and the jade and papers, if any, and give back in turn every dollar you stole from Ned Hunter and Mrs. Renwick.

“For you see,” Tom went on after a brief pause, “While Mr. Hunter stole—his first offense, I am sure—he stole from those who had first stolen from him. If everyone in this room agrees to give back what he has that belongs to another, I figure that justice will have been done without benefit of courts. And there shall be no charges. What is it? Do you agree?”

“Agreed. Agreed. Agreed,” came from every corner of the room.

“O. K.” said Tom, snapping on the lights, “That settles it.

“Jimmie, pack up your pictures and let’s be going.

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“The game may now proceed,” he said, bowing to his involuntary hosts.

“And may the best man win.”

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CHAPTER XXI

A "CRIME CAREER" ENDS

Since no one was in a mood for bridge after that the party began to break up at once.

Jimmie was about to climb into Tom's rumble seat beside John, when someone called:

"Wait just a moment."

It was Ned Hunter. "Jimmie," he said, resting a hand on the boy's shoulder, "Jane and I would like to have you ride back to town with us, that is if your friends do not object. How about it?"

"I'll be glad to," said Jimmie. "There are a few things I still don't quite understand. Perhaps you'll tell me about them."

"Gladly. Just anything at all." There was an unnatural hoarseness in Ned Hunter's voice. "You and your friends have lifted me from the depths. I am deeply grateful."

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"I'll go with Mr. Hunter, if you don't mind," said Jimmie to Tom Howe.

"O.K. We'll be seeing you," was Tom's reply.

As they drove away Mary began singing “Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and smile, smile, smile!”

Somehow that song brought a lump to Jimmie’s throat. Life surely was strange.

A half hour later Jane, Ned Hunter and Jimmie sat down to sparkling glasses of gingerale.

“In the first place, Jimmie,” Ned Hunter said, “I don’t want you to feel that Dawson and his crowd are fair representatives of big business. They are not. The great majority of truly big men are honest and fair in their dealings, and generous. You know that from caddying at the club.”

“Yes I know,” said Jimmie. “But why——”

“Why did I go along with this crowd? Because I was new to the world of money. Mother and I inherited our money. I supposed these men were honest. I trusted them. They got me in their power. After that I had to go along with them until this moment. Now, thanks to all of you I am free.” He heaved a sigh of contentment that came from the very depths.

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“There’s one thing I’d like to know,” said Jimmie. “Who could have spoiled our experiment with palm-prints on that glass-topped desk in your study?”

“I’m afraid I must plead guilty.” Ned Hunter seemed a little embarrassed. “I was sorry to spoil the test, but you see I had read about this in a scientific crime paper a short while before. Knowing Tom Howe’s skill, I suspected that little seance of

yours, Jane. I had a key to the study, so not wishing at that time to be exposed, I went in and dusted the table.”

“But there was someone prowling about the place that night,” said Jane.

“Yes, I saw him,” Jimmie exclaimed.

“Must have been a coincidence,” said Ned Hunter. “Some tramp, perhaps, or a scout from your Dutch Schatz crowd. One thing is sure, he had nothing to do with that desk.”

“Mr. Hunter,” Jimmie exclaimed, “Why did you put the Hardy pictures back?”

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“Sentiment, my boy,” Ned smiled. “At least you might call it that. That was the turning point in the whole affair. I was in the room when you and the caretaker’s wife were looking for me.”

“In the room!” Jimmie exclaimed. “You couldn’t have been!”

“Oh, but I was. You see,” Ned Hunter explained, “I had a set of costumes made for every occasion. That night I was wearing one made of light gray velour that blended in with the portiers of that room. I made myself become a part of the portiers, that was all.”

“Keen!” Jimmie exclaimed. “And I suppose that on another occasion when I took your picture in the dark with my magic box, you looked like a pile of sofa pillows.”

“Beyond doubt, my boy,” Ned laughed. “But as I was

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about to say, I heard what you people said that night. I realized that I was,—that in striking at a so-called big man of many false pretenses I was bound to harm some good, simple, kindly people, and a woman and little Bunker Bean. I took the paintings home, but I brought them back. And that,” he sighed, “was practically the end of my crime career.

“I did enter the Renard house after that but in that case I was merely searching for papers that would prove that I had been robbed by these unprincipled crooks.”

“But surely,” Jimmie exclaimed, “you didn’t tell Jane you were going to do all this?”

“No,”—Jane straightened up, “I went hunting crooks one night with a flash bulb and my camera. I took daddy’s picture. And when that picture was developed I knew who was the Lone Wolf. It made me feel terrible. I told Mary and John about it. They advised me not to worry. And I never shall again.”

She began to hum: “Turn the dark cloud inside out and smile, smile, smile.”

“So that was the big flash of light that showed me Dutch Schatz and his pals that night?” Jimmie said with a deep breath. “I hate to think what would have happened if you had tried your experiment on the wrong place that night.”

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Jane’s reply was the one you’d expect a woman to make, —“Yes, but I didn’t!”

At this they all laughed.

“And so,” said Jimmie as he rose to go, “We come to the end of a perfect day.”

“Perfect. Quite perfect,” they all agreed.

“But Jimmie, you’ll not forget us?” said Jane.

“Never,” said Jimmie. “When you decide on another career of crime, let me know.”

“Oh! Don’t say that!” Jane exclaimed. “That will never happen. And we truly want to see you often.”

At that they bade one another good-night.

Jimmie’s adventures with his camera were not at an end, however.

THE END

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- Silently corrected palpable typos; left non-standard spellings and dialect unchanged.

[The end of *What the Dark Room Revealed* by Roy J. Snell
(as David O'Hara)]