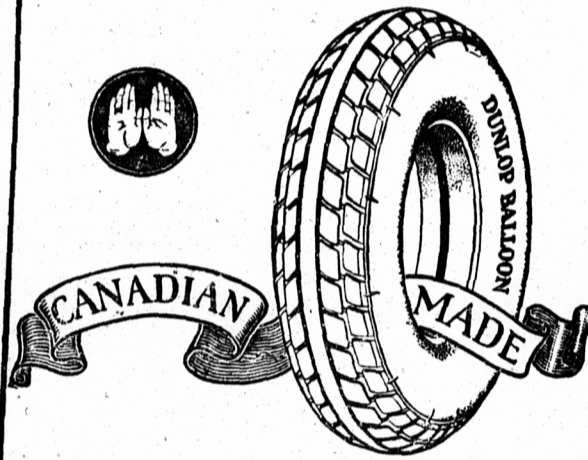


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Road Patrol Tenders

Separate Sealed Tenders addressed to the Undersigned and marked "Road Patrol Tender" will be received at this Office until noon on Friday, April 30th, 1926, for the Maintenance and Patrol of the Improved Highways of the Province.

Specifications, List of Sections and Form of Tender may be seen at the Office of the Department of Public Works, Charlottetown, and at the Residence of the Road Master for each Road District.

Parties tendering may tender for one or more Sections. The Department is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender.

L. B. McMILLAN, Secretary of Public Works.

Department of Public Works, Charlottetown, P. E. Island, April 9, 1926.

The Mystery of the Singing Walls

A Detective Love Story
By WILLIAM AVERILL STOWELL

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(Continued)

"The right of it's being my wife's house, the attorney retorted. 'Mr. Warburton died intestate, without a will. My wife is his nearest relative and this place belongs to her.'"

"Don't be a fool, Busby," Hammond shouted, his temper getting the better of him. "Can't you see that this girl is lying to save Osborn? Can't you see that the pair of them plotted this murder to prevent the old gentleman disinheriting her? You've got to see things straight, Busby, or by—"

"What you say is not true," she declared gravely. "You know perfectly well, Roger Hammond, that many years ago, Uncle made a will, leaving me this house and a third of his property, with the other two thirds to Robert and Beatrice Pratt."

"It's not so," the lawyer denied vehemently.

"You not only know this to be a fact," Anne went on, not heeding the interruption, "but you know that, during the past week, Uncle and Beatrice, and has made, or intended to make today, a new will cutting them both off with the income of a small trust fund."

"You know this perfectly well, because Uncle telephoned all of you to come here at 5.30 to announce it to you."

The wrinkled pockets under the lawyer's eyes had flushed scarlet and sagged down like turkey-combs on the dull lead of his flabby cheeks.

"I know no such thing," he fumed. "Mr. Warburton did telephone us to come here at 5.30 on business, but while he didn't say what that business was, I am sure it had nothing to do with any will."

Anne faced his tirade calmly, her golden eyes steady, unflinchingly. The girl's coolness seemed to exasperate the attorney and he took a step forward.

"If Mr. Warburton did propose to alter his will," he shouted, "the change he intended was to disinherit you, Anne Mason, for persisting in marrying this man Osborn. And, what's more, Busby, not only will Graham have to get out, but this girl herself has no right in this house."

The police officer rubbed the wrinkles on his ridged chin and screwed up his left eye at the angry attorney.

"I don't follow you, Mr. Hammond," he declared decidedly. "This place has been for years this young lady's home. And, will of

the old girl up to Sing Sing will tinkle your spine anyhow, and you had just as well confess and get it out of your system. But if you didn't do the actual shooting and there's only one way to save your neck and that is to turn State's evidence and soil the Beas."

At the mention of the death-chair, Higgins' face had gone green and his emaciated frame seemed to sag like a scarecrow when the supporting stick is removed.

"Honest to God, captain, I didn't do it," he whined, his teeth chattering as if he was shaking with age. "Perhaps Hammond's bump ed him off. I don't say as he didn't for I ain't sure. But I wasn't on the job myself, so help me God, if you promise not to let them Headquarters bulls get at me, I'll spill all I know."

"Come across, you rat," the police officer growled. "We don't prosecute you, but if you want to save your skin, come across."

"Well, sir, this is the way it was," the butler explained. "Just before the Orme robbery, my girl, Kitty, she got something on Hammond. It ain't here nor there, but she wouldn't let me wanted it known to his wife and he was sort of grateful to Kitty and me that we didn't give him away."

"So, when I got in datch over the Orme job I sort of put the screws on him to be my attorney, and he talked the Board of Pardons into believing that I had been framed and they let me off."

"When I got out of Sing Sing and Kitty thought of Hammond and we went out to Greenwich and got married and we figured that, seeing as how we had been framed and they let me off, I ought to get a job. I can't say he was exactly tickled to see us, but after a little persuasion, he promised to help us."

"Soon afterward he learned from his wife that Mr. Warburton's butler was marrying one of the maids and leaving. The trouble was that I had never been a butler before, so I used the Ormes and naturally I had no use striking them for a commend. So I put it up to Hammond to write out fake references in the name of some phony folks named Rogers. It went over good because Mr. Warburton accepted the references without looking 'em up."

"What caused the trouble then?" Graham questioned.

"Well, everything was molasses until last week. Then they put a cop on this beat. And he lamped us as having done time, and tipped off the old geezer, Mr. Warburton looked up the Rogers and found out there never were such folks. And, when he began to question me Saturday, he tripped me somehow and I admitted that Hammond had forced the references."

"The old man was sore as a crab, and he sent for Hammond to come right up. I was listening out the door there, and he sure give Hammond a fine dressing-down, accusing him of planting Kitty and me to blackmail or rob him."

"Naturally, Hammond denied it, although he had to admit the phony references. But the old gent wouldn't listen to him and told him that unless he would go today to his lawyers and sign a confession and an agreement to give his wife an immediate divorce, he would split the whole business of the forged recommendations to the Bar Association and have him run out of his profession."

Graham looked up quickly from his study of his fountain pen.

"How does it come you are still working here?" he shot at the butler.

"After Hammond left Mr. Warburton fired me," Higgins replied. "He give me and Kitty three days' notice, because he thought we were nothing but a load of old Hammond. Kitty, she quit this morning, and went up to her folks in the Bronx. I was beating it tomorrow and was spending this afternoon packing my duets."

"I had just finished when you folks bring in the old gent. Naturally, seeing him all beaten up, I supposed Hammond had given him the works to stop him squealing. For I knew Hammond was up to his ears in debt from stuffing Broadway wrens and, if he got out from his wife's kale, he would be down and out. And that's what I meant when O'Neil and Mr. Osborn bring him in and I says, 'He's done for him.' Honest to God, gents, that's all I know about this job, and that's the truth."

"Did anyone see you, English, from 3.30 to 5?" Graham questioned.

"The butler started to speak, then he hesitated.

"I was in my room alone," he admitted. "No one seen me, but honest to God, Mr. Graham, I didn't kill him. Kitty and me weren't planted in this house for no bad purpose, I swear. We wanted to go straight."

"Straight for Miss Mason's jewelry," Jim snorted. "Or possibly the part of 'em and Hammond were in on a blackmail scheme to shake down Mr. Warburton, using Kitty called their bluff, they give him the works to stop him squealing."

The stiffling had oozed from Higgins' body as from a candy figure in a sun-filled window, and he swayed back against the big kneecaps buckling under him.

"I didn't do it," he blubbered. "Honest to God, I didn't do it."

"English, did Mr. Warburton have any unusual visitors today?" Graham inquired.

"Mr. and Mrs. Taylor called after lunch," the butler replied. "They come up here to the study, only stayed a few minutes and left."

The detective looked inquiringly at Dr. Darnell.

"Mr. and Mrs. Taylor are old friends of Mr. Warburton," the physician volunteered. "They live just down the street."

"Any one else, English?" Busby went on.

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Graham kept pacing up and down, his head on his chest, deep in thought. All at once, a wave of decision seemed to flow through him and he turned briskly to his burly assistant.

"Take him downstairs, Jim!" He indicated the shrinking figure of Dr. Higgins. "And even though the house is bottled, keep a close eye on him."

The butler was in a state of collapse, his parchment skin wax-gray, the sweat standing out like dew on his lined forehead.

"Let me go!" he moaned, checking his knuckles. "I didn't kill him. Honest to God, I didn't kill him. Busby took a step forward and raised his arm as though he would strike the trembling man, but, as light and shadow danced across her teeth, he checked himself and pointed to the door.

"Take him away, Jim," he growled. "He'll have plenty of time to answer to his complaints before they turn the current on him."

The huge assistant had grabbed the butler by the arm, and, yanking his loose-jointed frame across the entrance light of the room, shoved him unceremoniously through the flap of his coat. The As his gibbering protests gradual-ly died away along the corridor, Graham glanced over at Dr. Darnell, who, standing before the lower-lying studio windows, was gazing some house or doorway as Mr. Warburton had a good view of the street, which was empty."

Busby scratched his head and rubbed his nose with his forefinger. The assassin must have been sent, like a man deep in thought, running his slim, tapering fingers through his iron-gray hair, he passed connection between those attacks over to the fireplace.

"It was not what I expected," he declared, earnestly. "Of course, the immediate cause of Mr. Warburton's death was the bullet wound, but we were wrong in supposing that some one had previously at- tacked him with morphine."

"Cut out a piece of flesh from around those punctures above the wrist watch. And I was amazed to find that it did not test for mor- phine or for any alkaloid poison."

At Dr. Darnell's statement, Gra- ham looked up quickly, a shadow of astonishment on his face.

"Are you sure of this?" he asked. "Quite sure," the physician re- sponded. "Apparently, some other cause, probably the loss of blood from his finger, produced uncon- sciousness in the runabout. And, you know, Graham, the more I wonder whether my friend's death may have been due to professional thugs. The manner in which he was mutilated seems to point to such a conclusion, and you can't have forgotten that twice, in re- cent years, his life has been at- tempted."

The detective gazed thoughtfully into the dying fire, which kept bursting into sporadic little jets of flame, sending flickering elves of light and shadow dancing across the hearth rug.

"I haven't lost track of that angle of the case ever since I arrived," he agreed. "I don't know if Busby here remembers the circumstances because they were hushed up twice, in recent years, Charlie, Mr. Warburton was shot at as he was waiting for the entrance light of this house. One bullet passed through the flap of his coat. The other chipped the stone a foot from his head. Both were fired from a distance, because the bullets were slightly flattened. And the assassin must have been hidden in some house or doorway as Mr. Warburton had a good view of the street, which was empty."

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(To be continued.)

Very few people have weak eyes from looking at the bright side of things.

Some people who are in the social swim find it difficult to keep their heads above the water.



ANNE MASON



HIGGINS (ENGLISH ALP)



DR. DARNELL



ROBERT PRATT



JOHN OSBORN



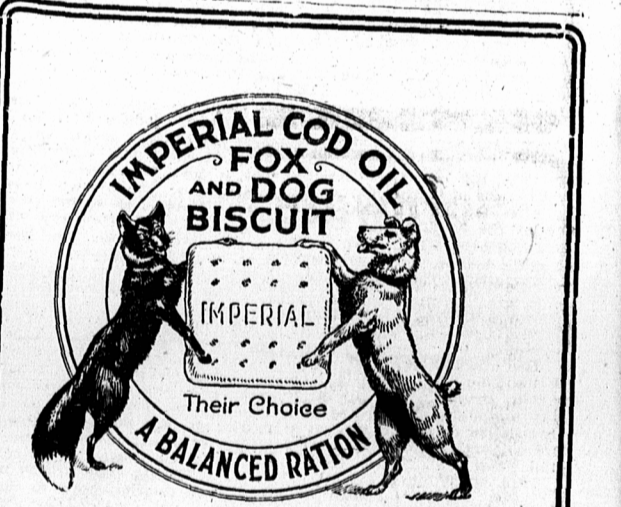
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