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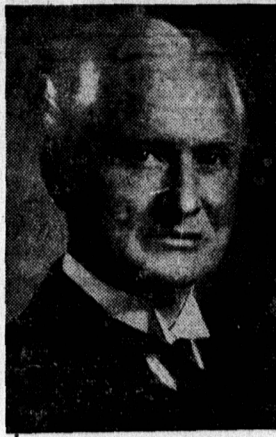
By Peter Benedict

"Take it easy," said the superintendent, and summoned the station sergeant to take down her statement. Also he gave her a chair, which vaguely surprised her, though she could think of no adequate reason why it should. She collected her thoughts, which were already dazlingly clear, and began to put them together carefully in words of as few syllables as she could manage to drag out of the ether. She was taking no chances on not being understood. She did not once hesitate; to be coherent once for all would surely be a point in her favour.

She began at the beginning, with her unlucky exploit in early rising, and described, with every detail she could remember, the man and the car in the shed, told every accurate word she could summon up of their very brief conversation, and was careful to mention when she had not the actual words, but only the sense of them. She did not leave out one word or one circumstance which could embroil her theme, or make it more transparently obvious that she was telling the simple truth. No story, surely, could ever be considered an invention, which went into such detail, and so strongly stuck to every detail afterwards. As she meant to do.

When she had reached the end, which was logically her telephone call to Mrs. Clarke, she could not forbear adding Mrs. Clarke's strictures on the police. Again Peter chuckled. She had meant it to sting, but she had not meant to be amusing; and her patience was beginning to crumple. She turned furiously, and gave him the most venomous look he had ever had from so wholly attractive a girl. She said heatedly: "This is all very funny, isn't it? I should think you must simply roar when you get a murder."

"I beg your pardon!" said Peter, astonished into meaning it. "I wasn't finding the case amusing—or your position, either." She saw a dig in this last, but could not be sure whether it was intended. On second thoughts she did not believe it was. He did not look an ill-natured young man. What he was doing there was more than she could guess, for he was obviously in no official capacity. He had not said one word until she had provoked him into this answer; but his eyes had been flashing alertly from her face to the superintendent's throughout her story, as if he could sense that great man's reactions merely by looking at him. Perhaps he could. She, unfortunately, could



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not. His face had not changed, as far as she could see, by the slightest displacement of its heavily regular features since she had begun.

"Does this man have to hear all about it?" she asked of him now, all the more angry because she had almost been melted out of her courage and coolness by that suggestion of friendliness.

"He has as good a right to hear it as I have," said the superintendent drily. "Do you wish to add anything to your statement?"

"No," said Peggy. "That's absolutely all I can think of. About the house in Church Fold your own men will tell you quite a lot. I expect. No, there's nothing more."

The statement was read to her, a process which took some time, though she listened jealously to make sure that not even a word had been misplaced, in case the sense might be slightly altered by the accident. There was nothing to which she could take exception. She signed it confidently.

It was made clear to her that for the present Superintendent Barker had finished with her. She stood up; it occurred to her for the first time in its full horror that she was bound for prison. She saw, in one lightning glimpse, the future unrolling; innocent she was, and would be proved in the end; but in the meantime there would be a police-court hearing, and almost inevitably the case would go for trial. She could see that.

For the present there could be no bail; later there might be, but for so grave a charge she doubted even that. There would be business with lawyers; a lot of money spent. Looking ahead further still,

she wondered vengefully in advance if one could recover from the government money spent in proving oneself innocent of a crime. She grew a little paler and graver. Peter Milne saw her eyes dilate in her vividly alive young face.

"Will my parents be allowed to see me? And can I write to them? I sent a message, but it was a lie. I said I'd soon be home."

"They'll be able to see you whenever they find it convenient to come," said the superintendent not unkindly. "And you can communicate with them right away."

"This way," said the station sergeant, and led her out.

"She's Telling the Truth" Phillips and Hyde were seen and heard and dismissed, and Peter Sherwood Milne made no attempt to leave the office. Indeed, he outstayed them. And the moment they were gone, Superintendent Barker asked them: "Well? What do you think?"

"I don't know what I think, it's what I know." He reached for another of his friend's cigarettes and lighting it, stated positively: "She's telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

"I'd like to think so, too. Smart girl, either way. But what makes you so decided?"

"I've seen some liars in my time," said Peter thoughtfully. "And much shorter than yours though my time has been, I don't mind saying that I've probably seen more, and more majestic, liars even than you have. And some of them were behind official desks. A dirty trade, law, anyhow! But at least you can study types and moods of dirt in it. And speaking personally, I never saw anything cleaner than that girl, or heard anything cleaner than her story."

(To be continued)

GRAHAM'S ROAD W. I.

The regular meeting of Success W. I. was held at the home of Mrs. Angus Green on Tuesday last, March 11th. Meeting opened the usual way and thirteen members answered roll call by naming a favorite book. Two visitors were also present. The minutes of last meeting were read and approved. It was reported that the class room floor of the school was scrubbed and the bill of \$3.00 for same, on motion was voted paid. The Secretary reported the following articles needed for use in the school viz. brush, thermometer, water fountain and globe and Secretary was asked to purchase same. It was moved by Mrs. Hugh Campbell seconded by Mrs. John MacKay that a treat be taken to the school children by the visiting committee each month. Mrs. James Williams, Miss McQuaid and Mrs. George MacLeod were appointed to collect in the district for Red Cross campaign and contributions for cancer fund

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be taken at the April meeting. It was decided to have a sale of home cooking at our next meeting. The program on reading and education prepared by Provincial Convener, Mrs. Frank Ross was read by Mrs. John MacKay. The modern trend in education demands a high standard in reading aptitude to meet the requirements of the present world situation. Parents should cultivate and develop in their children a taste and appreciation for good reading material and fine literature. Mrs. Fred Campbell was asked to take charge of programme for April meeting. Meeting closed with the King to meet next month at the home of Mrs. James M. Campbell. Collection taken amounted to \$3.45. Lunch was served by the hostess assisted by Messrs. James Williams and John MacKay.

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