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THE GREEN SHADOW

by HERMAN LONDON

THE MOVING PANEL

The hour was 2 in the morning. The respectable portion of Bank street, which meant the larger proportion, had retired long since. Only here and there an isolated light gleamed rakishly in an upper window. No. 262 was dark from attic to basement, and not only dark but absolutely still as well.

Presently the stillness was broken. A slight sound, like a gnawing on metal, came from one of the windows in the rear but it was too small to disturb any one. With now and then a brief pause it continued for several minutes, and then it was followed by another sound, a sort of wooden squeak like that produced when a tightly fitted window is being slowly forced open. Soon this sound also ceased and there came an interval of silence.

Had there been eyes in the darkness, a shadowy form might have been seen outside the window, waiting and listening to make certain that the road was clear. Everything being reassuringly still, the shadow passed silently across the sill and came forward with a sureness of movement which testified to a previous exploration of the premises. Now there came an intermittent flashing of light from an electric torch, and one of these flashes revealed two sliding doors. At a touch and a gentle pull they slid open soundlessly, and the shadow passed through.

Darkness again, and a pause. Alert ears and sharp eyes raked the silence and darkness. Then the white light of the torch fell over the still spaces, and behind the torch stood the Picaroon.

His shoulders were bent and he moved with a little limp. He wore a soft hat that had lost its shape and a suit of unbecoming and neutral hue that did not fit very well. There with heavy shell rims over his eyes. We gave the impression of being mill-mannered and soft spoken. His appearance, if not his actions, suggested the impetuous scholar or the soap-box philosopher. In this queer get-up with its complement of odd manners and mannerisms, Martin Dale would scarcely have been recognized even by his friends.

With a hurried air he surveyed his surroundings in the light of the torch, noting the handsome rugs, the books the pictures, the chairs, among the latter the luxuriously upholstered one in which the Alexander Ferryman had sat last night while Dale questioned him concerning Dr. Moffett.

Last of all he turned his flashlight on a point in the hand-carved oak paneling that at a casual glance looked like a flaw in the otherwise-perfect finish. Martin Dale had noticed this little peculiarity last night, and peculiarities, whether large or small, always excited his curiosity. This curiosity was now about to be gratified by the Picaroon.

He stepped closer. The upper part of the wainscoting was a border of skillfully carved oak leaves. At one point this border had a broken appearance. It might mean that the slow ravages of time and weather had wraped the woodwork, or it might mean something entirely different. In any event, it appeared to have escaped Axelson's notice, or he would have seen about having it repaired.

For that matter, the Picaroon's keen eyes had a habit of noting details that eluded the average person.

Now he ran his hand along the strip, his mind divided between admiration of fine workmanship and a desire to know the meaning of the solitary flaw. Into the narrow and irregular crevice he inserted the blade of a small penknife, and pried gently. A portion of the decorative strip yielded with an elastic vigor which suggested that a steel spring was at work somewhere. An opening appeared which proved big enough to

admit the Picaroon's hand. He explored the aperture, which widened downward, and suddenly a tingling sensation was communicated to his fingertips.

His hand came out, and with it came a rope of pearls. He stared dumfounded at their pale, bluish-gray radiance. A familiar thrill was singing in his brain as he lovingly fingered the exquisite pellets, perfectly matched and magnificent to the eye. He gazed at them, not greedily, but as a true lover of beautiful things. They dazzled him charmed him, lulled his brain into a pleasant stupor with their soothing sorcery, filling him with a desire to possess them and call them his own, if only for a little while.

It was a familiar desire, one he had rarely been able to resist. But this was not an ordinary occasion in the Picaroon's life. He had not come to Bank street in search of loot, but rather in the hope of finding some clue no matter how slight, which might eventually enable him to frustrate Dr. Moffett's villainous designs.

The little breach in the wood paneling, noted and filed away in his mind the night before, had played on his imagination in the interim, looms with greater and greater suggestiveness. A hiding place for articles of a very private nature, perhaps? That had been his first thought upon noticing the irregularity.

But he had not expected to find anything like this. An even bolder hope had electrified his fingers as he inserted them into the hidden recess. It was exactly the kind of recess to which Dr. Moffett who with Axelson's connivance appeared to make surreptitious use of the house, would confide papers of a secret and highly important character. They would have been safer there than in a place subject to possible search-warrant and raid, not to mention the contrivances of safe blowers.

The picaroon's imagination had played extravagantly with the idea. If such were the case—if the flaw in the woodwork indicated a secret receptacle for documents used by Doctor Moffett in his wicked enterprises—why might it not contain the very papers he had offered to sell to Mr. Castle for \$100,000? What a stroke of luck it would have been! What a blow to Doctor Moffett!

But instead he had found this. Already the Picaroon's first sense of elation was yielding to a feeling of disappointment. This rope of pearls, exquisite and superb through it was, would not solve the problem pressing on Adele Castle's young heart. Aside from its esthetic merits, duly appreciated by the Picaroon, its value was a purely pecuniary one. It might be worth \$100,000, perhaps even more—

The Picaroon drew himself up, momentarily forgetting the stoop that went with his assumed role. A thought burned brightly, exhilaratingly in his brain. Whatever the exact value of the pearls, it equaled or exceeded the price Doctor Moffett had demanded for the papers. With the pearls in his possession, the Picaroon would be in a position to negotiate terms with the wily doctor.

With an elated chuckle he dropped the pearls into his pocket. Now he reached for a case in his pocket, and from it he removed a small card with an engraved inscription. It read:

I trust you will pardon my little joke and excuse the liberties I have taken with your valuables. They will be returned to you as soon as you shall have donated 10 per cent of their value to the Society for the Protection of Animals.

THE PICARON.

He gazed doubtfully at the card. A similar card was always found on the scene of each of his enterprises, and he had never failed to make good the promise toward the end, but that promise did not apply here, Doctor

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James MacMurray—President
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MONTREAL HALIFAX CHARLOTTETOWN
MONCTON SUMMERSIDE FREDERICTON

Mr. Moffett should not get his pearls back on such easy terms. Yet it was a matter of principle as well as ethics with the Picaroon to leave such a card behind him. It served as a taunt to the police who had once cruelly wronged him, and it safeguarded innocent persons against unjust suspicions.

After brief reflection he took out his pencil and in a cramped and unaccustomed hand changed the last sentence so that it read:

"They will be returned to you on terms that will be communicated to you in due time."

With a chuckle he dropped the card into the recess from which he had taken the pearls. His good friend Summers would grit his teeth and mutter maledictions. Doctor Moffett would fly into a rage. Adele Castle would give Martin Dale a heavenly smile. And that would be his started to close the aperture, and then a doubt came. Suppose the pearls were not Doctor Moffett's property? Suppose they belonged to Mr. Ferryman, the pitiful mourner in the next house?

Not for the worlds would the Picaroon touch anything belonging to that gentleman. He stood in a quandary, but soon his doubt dissolved. The very nature of the hiding place in which he had found the pearls suggested secretiveness, even criminal design.

Mr. Ferryman would not have concealed them in such a place. Moreover, he would have been more likely to conceal them in the next house, where he lived and where he could watch them closely. Besides, it was doubtful if Mr. Ferryman possessed an ornament of such great value. No, in all probability it belonged to Dr. Moffett, who in all likelihood had acquired it through some shady transaction.

It was rather droll, thought the Picaroon as he reached out his hand to close the aperture. Dr. Moffett's silence would be purchased with his own rope of pearls. For the present the Picaroon did not think beyond that point. Somehow Adele Castle must be saved from leaping from the frying pan of blackmail into the fire of marriage to a scoundrel, but perhaps that difficulty would take care of itself.

He laughed softly, and then, with great suddenness, jerked his hand away from the opening. With the swiftness of a thought he darkened his flashlight, stood with his back to the wall, all his senses exploring the darkness. A signal of warning had come out of the stillness, but as usual the Picaroon's senses had acted in advance of his mind. As yet his brain could not grasp the elusive something that had gone like the faintest tremor through his ears.

The room was utterly still. The Picaroon thought of the pearls in his pocket and the card he had dropped into the aperture. He edged back toward the opening. Perhaps he had been mistaken. The stillness on all sides had a reassuring quality. In any event, he had left way of retreat, open—the door in the rear and the window looking out upon the backyard. Besides, the Picaroon had

established a reputation for his ability to wriggle out of tight corners.

Just to make sure he stepped softly to the door in the rear. His fingers closed around the knob, he pushed, and then a faint mutter fell from his lips. The door was bolted on the other side. In one direction his escape was cut off. But there were still the windows and the door leading to the front hall. Swiftly and lightly he darted to the window looking out upon the street, raised the shade a little, then drew quickly back at the sight of a face looking straight toward him.

"Trapped!" he muttered.

To Be Continued Tomorrow

When Buying Shoes

FIRST—Find a good reliable shoe store with an established reputation behind it, whose every clerk has an ambition for fit rather than high pressure salesmanship.

SECOND—Weigh well the salesman's advice as to fit and quality, fashion, etc., remembering that a qualified shoeman knows more about these than a layman.

THIRD—Buy quality goods and be willing to pay a reasonable price for truly, it is the persistent bargain hunter that usually gets stuck.

FOURTH—Stick by the people that try to give satisfaction by looking after your interests as well as their own.

Try Goffs for every kind of footwear from the cheapest to the most expensive

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Women's Hose, all the latest shades by the leading factories of Canada. See the Eastern Brand made in Truro, N. S. This firm claims that their 75c, \$1.00, \$1.50, \$2.00 lines beat all others. Try a pair to see if they are right.

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PEERLESS FOX NETTING

Branch-line programs of two Canadian railways will involve expenditures of approximately 80,000,000.

The Australian government has refused to grant an increase on the bounty in cotton.

Natives of rural districts of Egypt are pouring into Cairo and other large cities to live.

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Mr. Charles Hector MacDonald and Hugh MacPherson of Wood Island have the large new and up to date barn of the Compton Co., of Belle River—H.

LARKIN TO COME HOME

LONDON, July 24.—Hon. P. C. Larkin Canadian High Commissioner in London will sail for Canada on August 3 on his annual visit to the Dominion.

The Isle of Man is reducing its income tax.

—By George McManus

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BOY, IT'S GONNA TAKE TWO WAITERS TO CARRY IN THE FOOD I'M GONNA DIVE INTO—NOW LET ME SEE?

OH, MR. JIGGS, I'M MRS. CHATTER-TOUR WIFE TOLD ME YOU WERE ON THE FAMOUS DIET. ISN'T IT JUST WONDERFUL? I'VE LOST TWO POUNDS IN THE PAST TEN DAYS—I EAT HERE EVERY DAY.

SHE'S WATCHIN' ME—SO I'LL HAVE TO STICK TO THE DIET—I WISH SHE'D LOSE HER EYE-SIGHT!

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