

Woman's Realm -:- Social and Personal -:- Fashions -:- Literature

THE SILK ENIGMA

By J. R. WILMOT (Copyright)

CHAPTER IV FIVE EYES OF MEDICUS (Continued)

From Chelsea Superintendent Beck drove straight back to Scotland Yard. Here he found that his assistants on the case had marshalled what facts they could concerning the late Mr. Nikolas Nolescue.

Inspector Graves had everything neatly tabulated as a result of the buzzing wires between London, Hong Kong, and half a dozen different European capitals.

Beck sat down at his desk with a sense of infinite satisfaction. He learned from the dossier that had been meticulously compiled that Nikolas Nolescue had been born of peasant stock at Krutova in 1890; that after an obscure childhood little was known of him until 25 years later when he appeared in Bulgaria as an agent for a silk firm in Hangchow.

Later he appeared in various silk towns and villages in China, and also was heard of in Tokyo. Prior to coming to London, in fact, within six months he had spent a considerable time at Suchow. The reason for his leaving Suchow was not known. He had arrived in London two months ago and for the past month had been employed by Oxford.

During his stay in London he had lived at a small hotel in the vicinity of Victoria Station, where he had paid his bills regularly and appeared, according to the proprietor, a mild-mannered and entirely reserved little man. While at the hotel, however, he had kept somewhat irregular hours and frequently arrived back there in the small hours of the morning.

Beck turned to the Inspector, who stood beside his desk. "That's good work, Graves, very good work, but there's one further inquiry I want made of this hotel. I want to know whether, during the time Nolescue stayed there he ever had any Chinese visitors. I'm off now to learn all about Suchow. I'm particularly anxious to know what attractions, business and otherwise, it had for friend Nolescue. Perhaps when I've re-furnished my mental attic I'll be able to get this affair into proper perspective.

Inspector Graves took his departure and Beck dialled his telephone and instructed the switchboard operator to find out whether Professor Karmen at the British Museum could spare him a few moments.

Half an hour later Beck was shown into a small room under the roof of the British Museum and found himself being greeted by a small, domed-headed little man whose face was akin to the parchment spread out on the little table from behind which he arose as Beck entered.

Good afternoon, Mr. Beck. It must be five years since last I had occasion to discuss our little conundrums. Now what can it be this time?

You're right, Professor. It is five years, and as for conundrums, I've got one now that's proving a real hot nut.

I like nuts, beamed the Professor, particularly Brazil nuts. They've got a flavour, a real nutty flavour, and they're not nearly so difficult to crack when once you know how.

For instance, if you insert the nut between the nut-crackers, so, and he held out two pencils and proceeded to place an imaginary nut between the two levers, and make quite sure that the greatest pressure is exerted on the hinge of the nut, which is curiously enough the weakest part since it has been released from the tree at that point.

Beck held up a friendly but protesting hand. You're quite right, Professor; absolutely right, but I'll warrant that you won't find my Chinese nut so easy of manipulation.

Professor Karmen wrinkled his brows. And what nuts, may I ask, have you been having from China, Mr. Beck?

Suchow nuts, smiled the Superintendent. Ever heard of them? Ever tried to get them between your crackers?

The old man shook his head. I was in Suchow less than a year ago, he said, but I never had nuts. That's fine, enthused Beck, I'd an idea you'd fill in the gaps that have been left in my education. I want you to tell me everything you know about Suchow.

A thin but hearty laugh echoed strangely between those four academic walls. I hope you are not in a hurry, Superintendent, he smiled. Suchow had a great history and if you want me to begin at the beginning...

I've not much taste for history, professor, but I am interested in Chinese silk, particularly Suchow silk.

Professor Karmen looked searchingly at the Superintendent. That's funny, he said quietly. I can assure you that it doesn't appear funny to me, commented Beck, grudgingly. I've got one murder on my hands already.

Murder! mused the old man. But how does Suchow silk come into it?

Beck told him what he knew; gave the facts tersely. At the mention of the name Nolescue, the Professor wrinkled his nose and an ejaculation escaped his lips.

I met Nolescue in Suchow, he said quietly. I'm afraid this is very serious, Superintendent. You bet it is, agreed Beck, enthusiastically. But how did you come to meet Nolescue?

I have always been interested in Chinese secret societies, he said. The place is honeycombed with them. They exist for a bewildering variety of reasons. Political, religious, racial—right down to the ubiquitous family feud. I was staying with an old German professor—Gluntz, his name—who's been wandering around China for 30 years or more. He's stepped in it and it was while I was there a man named Nolescue—I remember it perfectly because I am interested in nomenclature—called to see Gluntz.

It appears Nolescue was interested, too, and he wanted to get into touch with a man named Tao Li, a silk weaver. Gluntz could not help him and Nolescue went on his mysterious way and we never heard of him again. And you say he's been murdered in a silk store.

That's very odd, isn't it? It's so odd that I'm at my wits' end to know where to begin my investigation. I thought that if you could give me some information about Suchow silk I might have a starting point, but for the life of me I don't see the connexion between silk and secret societies.

The Professor appeared considerably more animated at the Superintendent's perplexity. I wonder if there isn't some connexion after all, he said. But first of all let me tell you a story. I'm telling it to you because Nolescue you say is dead and because Nolescue was inquiring in Suchow for a silk weaver named Tao Li. I may be wrong, of course, he added, guardedly, but I take it that people in your profession, Superintendent, are able to piece things together even if some of the pieces are mislaid.

However, there is in existence at this moment more than one Chinese Tong, or secret society, engaged in trying to discover the whereabouts of the Five Eyes of Medicus, an ancient Eastern idol which was stolen when a famous Chinese temple in the Lianghuan mountains was pillaged by religious fanatics. The raid took place nearly two years ago, and when it became known that the jade jewel bearing so fascinating a name had disappeared, half the Tong in China went to war to obtain possession of it.

In extenuation of this I must explain that actually the Five Eyes of Medicus is a cluster of five separate jewels, and it is believed—and there is ample authority in Chinese religious lore for the belief—that each jade jewel represents the reclamation of ten years of youth for its possessor. How to come about I don't pretend to know, but word got around that the secret of the jewels' whereabouts was in the possession of poor Tao Li, the silk weaver of Suchow. The next we knew was that Tao Li had been taken by one of the rival Tong; that he had been tortured—and the Chinese know everything there is to know of this ancient art of extortion—and finally murdered because of his refusal to disclose the secret.

Now one of the torturers, it is said, has sworn that Tao Li, in his agonizing delirium, called, as he normally would, on the spirits

of his ancestors to preserve his secret in the silk where he had placed it, and prayed that a suitable curse should descend on anyone gaining possession of the silk and reading his secret. This mind you, Mr. Beck, is only hearsay. The machinations of the Tong are as mysterious as their motives, but my friend Gluntz believes—for he told me so himself—that the story I have told you is the correct one. Now, my dear Superintendent, what can you make of the jig-saw?

What can you make of the jig-saw? he asked.

Today's Short Wave Radio Program

(All Time is Eastern Standard)

MONDAY, AUGUST 30 MOSCOW

4 p.m.—Life of Workers in a Soviet Shipyard, the Baltic Shipyard, Leningrad. RNE, 25 meters.

TOKYO

4:45 p.m.—Folk Songs and Jazz Selections. ZJZ, 25.4 m., 11.80 meg.; ZJK, 19.7 m., 15.16 meg.

ROME

6 p.m.—American Hour; Folk Songs, Naples, Giovanni Barberini; Program Organized by Italian Federation of Business and Professional Women. ZRO, 25.4 m., 11.81 meg.

PARIS

6 p.m.—Concert. TPA—4, 25.6 m., 11.72 meg.

BERLIN

6:15 p.m.—Inauguration of the Fifth Reich-Conference of the Auslands-Organization of Stuttgart. DJD, 25.4 m., 11.77 meg.

SCHEENSTADT

6:15 p.m.—Travelogue of the U. S. in Spanish. W2XAF, 31.4 m., 9.53 meg.

HUIZEN, NETHERLANDS

7 p.m.—Netherlands World-Broadcast for Central and South America. PCJ, 31.2 m., 9.59 meg.

PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA

7:05—Knoch's Brass Band. OLRA, 25.34 m., 11.84 meg.

LONDON

7:10 p.m.—Points of View by Travelers from the Dominions and the Colonies. GSP, 19.6 m., 15.31 meg.; GSO, 19.7 m., 15.18 meg.; GSF, 19.8 m., 15.14 meg.; GSD, 25.5 m., 11.75 meg.

BERLIN

7:30 p.m.—The Wild Skans, a fairy tale. DJD, 25.4 m., 11.77 meg.

BERLIN

9:15 p.m.—Light Music. DJD, 25.4 m., 11.77 meg.

LONDON

9:30 p.m.—The Northern Capitals, a musical tour. GSG, 16.8 m., 17.79 meg.; GSI, 19.6 m., 15.28 meg.; GSD, 25.5 m., 11.75 meg.; GSB, 31.5 m., 9.51 meg.

TOKYO

12:30 a.m.—News in English. ZJK, 19.7 m., 15.16 meg.

Divorce Laws Too Easy Dorothy Dix That's Why Marriage Falls to Endure

America Needs a New Turnover of Mind in Its Opinion of Those Who Are Divorced—Parents Can Help by Properly Rearing Their Children

I HAVE received a questionnaire in which I am asked to state my views on why one marriage out of every six ends in divorce in this country, and to suggest a remedy for it, if any.



No one knows the answer to those questions, but in my humble opinion the reason that wrecked marriages have become as common as wrecked automobiles is because divorce has become fashionable. Everybody is doing it. In New York, in Palm Beach, in Hollywood, in Bird Center and Rabbit Track it is the smart thing to match your mate with your mood or your current fortunes and positions in society. Swapping partners has become the great national pastime.

Men and women collect decrees absolute as they do Japanese prints or stamps. It has become almost as much an indication of a lack of enterprise for people to stay married to the same husbands and wives as if they drove their old cars year after year, instead of trading them in every season for the newest model, with fresh paint and all the latest gadgets.

When all is said, Mrs. Grundy is the real arbiter of our manners and our morals. In the days when breaking the marriage vow was a scandal that nobody ever lived long enough to live down, and when women looked down their noses at a divorce and "poor Maryed" her, the misdeed bore whatever matrimonial ills they had rather than brave public scorn and contumely.

Human nature being what it is, and especially the natures of husbands and wives having never changed since the beginning of time, nobody will contend that marriages were happier in the past than they are in the present. Grandpa was just as much given to philandering and was just as cantankerous and took as much managing to get along with as does grandpa. Grandma was just as nagging and high-tempered and as poor a cook as granddaughters. But Grandpa and Grandma stood each other because in their day divorce was one of the things that simply wasn't done, except under extreme provocation, while their grandchildren think no more of getting rid of a husband or wife for whom they have lost their taste than they do of an old hat or shoes of which they have tired.

Another reason why divorce is so common is because every "joy ticket," as some people call a marriage license, has virtually a return coupon attached to it. Marriage is no longer an until-death-do-us-part contract. It is an experiment. It is one of the things on which the adventurous are willing to take a sporting chance and try once, anyway.

The young who marry nowadays seldom have any intention whatever of sticking to it unless they like it. If all their rosy dreams come true, fine and dandy. But if it calls for too many sacrifices, too much self-denial, too much work and worry, well, they feel they don't have to stand it. There is a quick way out via Reno. Call it a day, and try, try again. Maybe better luck next time.

How to cope with the divorces evil, nobody knows, but it would help a lot if society would turn a cold shoulder on the woman who had as many "iving husbands as she has banded bracelets, and on the middle-aged man who has traded off his faithful old wife for a flapper to match the new furniture. It would save the wreck of many young lives if marriage licenses were made to cost as much as dog licenses, and if the divorcees were made to pay for their marriages and school children were pitched into boiling oil. But after all, the only way you can stop people from getting divorces is to keep them from wanting them.

So in the end I think that the only real cure for divorce is a home-made remedy. It consists in mothers and fathers rearing their children to make the sort of husbands and wives who will be matrimonial prizes with which no one will want to part. If every mother brought up her daughter to be the kind of wife that she prays God to send her son, and if every father taught his son to treat his wife the way he hopes her husband will treat his own daughter, there would be mighty few divorces.

It is the spoiled children whose parents have unfitted them for marriage who furnish most of the grist for the divorce mill.

DOROTHY DIX

A Morning Smile

FREE SAMPLE

The new arrival at the golf club was doing his best to play the game as it should be played. However, his plus-fours and rainbow stockings were considerably more

impressive than his shots. His chief difficulty was to hit the ball. He found it much easier to hit the ground, and the turf flew in all directions.

At last, in desperation, the new player turned to his opponent. "What do you think of the course?" he asked.

"What do I think of it?" gasped his opponent, as he wiped a slice of the landscape from his mouth. "Best I ever tasted."

FASHION GUIDES FOR THE HOME DRESSMAKER

Smart collegiennes will call this sleek black rayon jersey dress with "corseted" look a real find. A bright lipstick red slipper accents the new long silhouette with its shirred flattery. You'll cut it out and finish it in no time at all for it's a one-piece affair. Satin in lovely plum, brown or black is also ideally suited to this model. Pattern includes a diagrammed sewing instruction chart.

Style No. 2940 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 years, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inches bust. Size 36 requires 4 1-2 yards of 36-inch material for short sleeved dress.

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of his ancestors to preserve his secret in the silk where he had placed it, and prayed that a suitable curse should descend on anyone gaining possession of the silk and reading his secret. This mind you, Mr. Beck, is only hearsay. The machinations of the Tong are as mysterious as their motives, but my friend Gluntz believes—for he told me so himself—that the story I have told you is the correct one. Now, my dear Superintendent, what can you make of the jig-saw?



For Holiday Health take ENO'S 'Fruit Salt'

THE HOUSEWIFE AND HER ACTIVITIES

THICK IS THE DARKNESS Thick is the darkness—Sunward, O, sunward! Rough is the highway—Onward, still onward!

Dawn harbors surely East of the shadows. Facing us somewhere Spread the sweet meads

Upward and forward! Time will restore us! Light is above us. Rest is before us. —William Ernest Henley.

BRITAIN'S BLONDE VENUS

"I definitely believe in make-up," says Rosemary Andree, Britain's blonde Venus, in an interview given in England. "Women should make the best of themselves, and the wise use of cosmetics is most helpful in improving one's appearance."

Owner of the most beautiful figure in the British Isles, Miss Andree brings into the realms of beauty culture views that are new and interesting.

Just back from her American tour, she is well able to compare the beauties of two nations. While the American girl is more gifted in beauty culture, says Miss Andree, the English girl scores in charm and personality.

She has a make-up hint especially for the English girl. It is, don't overdo the rouge. "Let the accent be on the eyes and lips. Rouge should be put on carefully, to avoid a heated or blatant effect. The appearance of the eyes can be much improved by the use of mascara of the right shade, and long curling eyelashes are a great aid to beauty."

It is worth while taking great care of your teeth, brushing them well at least twice a day with a good tooth-paste, and visiting your dentist regularly for "tooth-inspection."

Then "smile plenty." Hair needs a lot of attention if it is to add to the attractiveness of a "well-dressed face." The more brushing you can give your hair the better.

But beauty should come from within also, says this slim "lovely." Fresh air and good food and the right sort of exercise all play their part in achieving this basic aim.

Miss Andree believes in a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of fresh salads and green vegetable, meat and fish in the right proportion.

She has never gone in for starvation diets, and does not approve of them. "Of course, my dancing keeps me slim," she explains.

Another wise theory Miss Andree puts forward is this: The amount of energy put out should be equal to the amount of food taken into the body.

"There's nothing like sleep or relaxation to preserve health and beauty," says the graceful dancer, who sleeps for an hour every afternoon before her show starts.

In the matter of slimming, too, this British Venus has many sound ideas. They are: 1.—Don't over eat and don't starve.

THE COOK'S CORNER

BRAISED LIVER Have 1 pound baby beef liver cut in slices, and wash each piece along the vein. Cut thin slices about 1-4 inch wide, and lay these in each gash. Place 2 dessertspoons bacon fat in a baking dish. Melt, and place carefully the liver slices in the bottom. Place 1-2 cup carrot cubes and 1-2 cup chopped celery around the meat. Place pieces of bacon on top. Sprinkle all with 1 tablespoon minced parsley, 4 cloves, 1 bay leaf, salt and pepper. Add 2 cups water, cover closely, and simmer about 2 hours. Remove cover, and brown liver. Lift liver to hot platter, thicken the gravy, and pour over it. Serve with hot, steamed rice.

GRAHAM-CRACKER SANDWICHES. Graham crackers may be used for making many crunchy sandwiches. One cup of peanut brittle crushed to a powder with a rolling pin and added to 1-2 cup of whipped cream will supply filling for a dozen graham-cracker sandwiches.

Three tablespoons of currant jelly, chopped pecans, and a small packcream cheese, mixed together, also make a delectable filling. Bits of banana and chopped walnut may be used in a cream cheese filling.

For those who are fond of the malted-milk flavor, a sandwich filling of 2 tablespoons of chocolate malted-milk powder and 1 teaspoon of vanilla, added to a cream cheese filling, is delicious.

INDIVIDUAL CHICKEN DAISIES. One pepper, diced; 1-4 pound mushrooms, chopped; 1 cup cooked chicken, diced; salt, pepper and paprika; 2 pounds cooked spinach; 2 hard-boiled eggs; Parmesan cheese, grated.

Saute the peppers and mushrooms. Add the chicken, salt, pepper and paprika, and thicken with cream sauce. Place the chicken mixture in well-buttered ramekins and add a layer of spinach. Sprinkle with grated cheese. Cut the eggs lengthwise, removing the yolks. Arrange the eggs on the spinach to resemble a daisy, using the grated yolks as the centre. Add a dash of paprika to the yolks. Bake in a slow oven (300 degrees) for half an hour.

then, with a little planning, you can arrange more dishes on one tray. It is advisable to keep even green vegetables and salads covered in order to retain their crispness.

Never scrub your enamel trays. Wash them with soap and water, then sprinkle them with flour and rub hard with a soft duster. This will give them a good polish.

CLEANING GAS STOVES When you clean your gas stove rub it over with a damp soapy cloth if the framework is enamel. Take all the fittings on top of the stove apart and wash them with very hot water with soda in it.

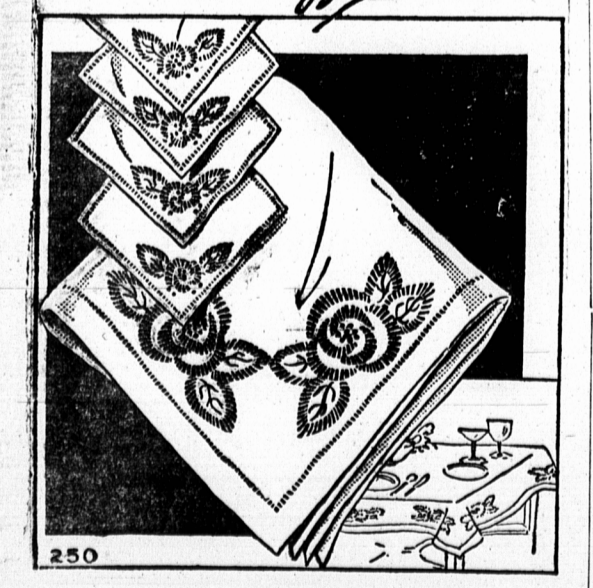
The inside should be kept spotless by rubbing a lump of soda dipped in water all round first, then rub well in a cleanser. This should be done frequently.

When buying new baking tins for the oven see that they are not too tight a fit as continual pushing in and out is rather hard on the walls of the stove, and small ones are easier to handle when cooking.

SCOUR FRYING PAN An easy way to clean a frying-pan is to scrape off all the congealed fat with a knife, then take a wad of soft paper, put the pan over a very low heat and scour it with the paper. Never wash a frying-pan.

Enamel saucepans get burned easily. This can be remedied by rubbing them with vinegar and bathbricks.

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