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Murder Is Forgetful

By WILLIAM BOGART
(Continued)

"I'll be darned!" said Moe. Then seized with a thought, he added quickly, "Now, if we can only find out who Bart is—"

Johnny nodded. He got up and walked over to the windows again and stood there looking out toward the balcony. "But I don't

think there's anyone named Bart. Otherwise, somebody around here would have heard the name in the past."

Then there was a sharp, impatient knock at the hall door. Before Johnny Saxon could even start toward the door it burst open and the wiry little man popped into the room.

The fellow spying Johnny moved toward him quickly. "Got any pennies?" he demanded in his shrill voice.

Reaching into his pocket, a smile flickering across the corners of his mouth, Johnny pulled out some change. Several pennies were in the palm of his hand.

The old man's hand darted out, picked up the coins. Examining them swiftly, he returned two and kept two. These he put into the pocket of his baggy jacket.

"Thanks," he said hurriedly, and went out of the room.

Moe Martin stood looking thoughtfully at the door. Then he turned to Johnny. "That," he announced, "was Grandpops Smith! Worth probably several million dollars. Yet he bums pennies, imagine!"

Johnny said, "He collects things—including keys." His eyes questioned. How'd you know about him?"

Moe Martin said, "Hannah—she's the cook—was telling me about Grandpops. Hannah's a good source of information."

Turning back to the window, Johnny saw that Karen, the tall dark-haired nurse, had come from the bedroom doorway directly across the courtlike space formed by the two rear wings of the house.

At first he thought Karen might be fixing the chair for Irene Smith, but immediately she reappeared with a magazine in her hand. She sat down in the reclining chair and started flicking the pages.

Behind him, as he finished dressing, Moe asked, "What's so interesting out there?"

Johnny said, "Moe, there's something I want you to do."

"Yeah?"

"That nurse—Karen—who is taking care of Irene... see what you can find out about her. Where she's from. How long she's been here. Things like that."

He turned. "There's another thing... you'll recall there was a guard at the main gate when we entered the estate. Find out if they have any other watchmen or guards around. I mean, anyone who is supposed to see that strangers don't enter the Smith grounds."

Moe said, "I thought we were hired to guard Irene Smith?"

"Dammit," Johnny said, "I'm not going to stay up night and day on this case. Besides, I'm not a twenty-five-dollar-a-week nursemaid. We're being paid to find out exactly what happened, the night her husband was murdered. For that, they're paying plenty."

"I guess we'd better get to work then," Moe said, disturbed.

"I'm working right now," snapped Johnny. "I'm watching that nurse."

"Oh," said Moe, heading for the door, and it was obvious that he was slightly mixed up by Johnny's remarks.

Johnny stood near the screened door. He decided, finally, that the nurse, Karen, was not reading the magazine at all. Instead, she was sitting there in the chair and watching the bedroom. She still held the magazine in her hands, but he knew from the angle at which she held it she could not possibly read the type.

A moment later there was a soft chime-like sound in the bedroom. Johnny moved across the room. There was a small, hand-carved writing desk near one of the twin beds. The telephone handset rested atop the desk and was the same light tan color as the walls.

"Yes?" said Johnny quietly, picking up the receiver.

"This is Kay, Mr. Saxon," the girl said.

"Yes, Kay?" (To be continued)

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