

# The Filigree Ball

By ANNA KATHARINE GREEN,  
Author of "The Mystery of Agatha Webb," "Lost Man's Lane," Etc.

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CHAPTER I. Several months ago, death had occurred in the Moore house in Washington. It was a tragedy. The late David Moore, a prominent citizen, had been found dead in his study. The cause of death was a mystery. The police had searched the house for days, but had found nothing. The case was a puzzle to all who knew the Moore family. The late Mrs. Moore, a woman of high social position, was the only person who had been in the house at the time of the tragedy. She had been seen in the study a few minutes before the death. She had been talking to a young man who had just entered the room. The young man had been seen in the study a few minutes before the death. He had been talking to Mrs. Moore. The case was a puzzle to all who knew the Moore family. The late Mrs. Moore, a woman of high social position, was the only person who had been in the house at the time of the tragedy. She had been seen in the study a few minutes before the death. She had been talking to a young man who had just entered the room. The young man had been seen in the study a few minutes before the death. He had been talking to Mrs. Moore. The case was a puzzle to all who knew the Moore family.

CHAPTER VI. Next morning the city was in a blaze of excitement. All the burning questions of the hour—the rapid mobilization of the army and the prospect of a speedy advance on Cuba—were forgotten in the crossing topic of young Mrs. Jeffrey's death and the awful circumstances surrounding it. Though it was the hero of the hour and, as such, subjected to an infinite number of questions, I followed the lead of excitement. All the burning questions of the hour—the rapid mobilization of the army and the prospect of a speedy advance on Cuba—were forgotten in the crossing topic of young Mrs. Jeffrey's death and the awful circumstances surrounding it. Though it was the hero of the hour and, as such, subjected to an infinite number of questions, I followed the lead of excitement. All the burning questions of the hour—the rapid mobilization of the army and the prospect of a speedy advance on Cuba—were forgotten in the crossing topic of young Mrs. Jeffrey's death and the awful circumstances surrounding it.

"STARTLING TERMINATION OF JEFFREY-MOORE WEDDING." The Traditional Doom Follows the Opening of the Old House on Waverley Avenue. One of the Guests Found Lying Dead on the Library Heartstone. Letters in His Pocket Show Him to Have Been One W. Pfeiffer of Denver. No Interruption of the Ceremony Follows This Ghastly Discovery, but the Guests Fly in All Directions as Soon as the Nuptial Knot is Tied.

"The festivities attendant upon the wedding of Miss Veronica Moore to Mr. Francis Jeffrey, which was to have a startling check today. As most of our readers know, the long closed house on Waverley avenue, which for nearly a century has been in the possession of the bride's family, was opened for the occasion of the wedding of the bride. For a week the preparations for this great function have been going on. When at an early hour this morning a line of carriages drew up in front of the historic mansion and the bridal party entered under its once gloomy but now seemingly triumphant portal, the crowds, which blocked the street from curb to curb, testified to the interest felt by the citizens of Washington in this daring attempt to brave the traditions which have marked this house out as solitary and by a scene of joyous festivity make the past forgotten and restore again to usefulness the decaying grandeur of an earlier time. As Miss Moore, one of Washington's most charming women and as this romantic effort naturally lent an extraordinary interest to the ceremony of her marriage, a large number of our representative people assembled to witness it, and by high noon the scene was one of unusual brilliancy.

"Halls which had moldered away in an unbroken silence for years echoed again with laughter and merriment to the choicest strains of the Marine band. All doors were open save those of the library—an exception which added a pleasing excitement to the occasion—and when by chance some of the more youthful guests were caught peering behind the two Corinthian pillars guarding these forbidden precincts the memories thus evoked were momentary and the shadow soon passed. "The wedding had been set for high noon, and as the clock in the library room struck the hour every head was craned to catch the first glimpse of the bride coming down the old fashioned staircase. But five minutes, ten minutes, a half hour, passed without the expectation being gratified. The crowd above and below were growing restless when suddenly a cry was heard from beyond the gilded pillars framing the library door, and a young lady was seen rushing from the forbidden quarter, trembling with dismay and white with horror. It was Miss Abbott of Stratford Circle, who in the interim of waiting had allowed her curiosity to master her dread and by one peep into the room, which seemed to exercise over her the fascination of a Bluebeard's chamber, discovered the outstretched form of a man lying senseless and apparently dead on the edge of the heartstone. The terror which instantly spread among the guests shows the hold which superstition has upon all classes of humanity. Happily, separated by the narrowest of spaces, the guests were not aware of each other's presence. "Mr. and Mrs. Francis Jeffrey were decided to give up their wedding tour and spend their honeymoon in Washington. They will occupy the Ransom house on K street."

has since given that gentleman such deep satisfaction. Why this proceeding should have been so displeasing to their friends is not clear. It is not clear that it was not a long-rejoicing, however, for John Judson followed his wife to the grave before Veronica had reached her tenth year, leaving her and her half sister, Cora, to the guardianship of a crabbed old bachelor who had been his father's lawyer. This lawyer was morose and peevish, but he was never positively unkind. For two years the sisters seemed happy enough, when, suddenly and somewhat precipitately, they were separated, Veronica being sent to a western school, where she remained, seemingly without a single visit east, till she was seventeen. During this long absence Miss Tuttle resided in Washington, developing under masters into an accomplished woman. Veronica's guardian, severe in his treatment of the youthful owner of the large fortune of which he had been made sole executor, was unexpectedly generous to a minimum. After, hoping perhaps in his close, peevish old heart that the charms and acquired graces of this lovely woman would soon win for her a husband in the brilliant set in which she naturally found herself. But Cora Tuttle was not easy to please, and the first men of Washington came and went before her eyes without awakening in her any special interest till she met Francis Jeffrey, who stole her heart with a look.

True, I might approach the captain or the major with my story of the telltale marks I had discovered in the dust covering the south-west chamber mantelshelf, and, if fortunate enough to find that these had been passed over by the other detectives, seek to gain a hearing thereby and secure for myself the privileges of an earnestly desired. But my egotism was such that I wished to be sure of the hand which had made these marks before I parted with a secret which, once told, would make or mar me. Yet to obtain the slight concession of an interview with one of the principals connected with this crime would be difficult without the aid of one or both of my superiors. Even to enter the house again where but a few hours before I had made myself so thoroughly at home would require a certain amount of pluck, for Durbin had been installed there, and Durbin was a bark-dog whose bite as well as his bark I regarded with considerable respect. Yet into that house I must sooner or later go, if I decided to adopt it, comforting myself with the thought that if after a day or two of modest waiting I failed in obtaining what I wished I could then appeal to the lieutenant of my own precinct. He, I had sometimes felt assured, did not regard me with an altogether unfavorable eye. Meantime I spent all my available time in looking around newspaper offices and picking up such scraps of gossip as were offered. As no question had yet been raised of any more serious crime than suicide, these mostly related to the idiosyncrasies of the Moore family and the solitary position in which Miss Tuttle had been plunged by the sudden death of her only relative. As this beautiful and distinguished young woman had been and still was a great belle in her special circle, her present homeless, if not penniless, position had attracted many suitors. Would she marry, and, if so, to which of the many wealthy or prominent men who had openly courted her would she accord her hand? In the present egotistic state of my mind I secretly flattered myself that I was right in concluding that she would say yes to no man's entreaty till a certain newly made widower's year of mourning had expired.

"Off to Alexandria." occurrence, so they said, before the fancy took her to be married in the ill starred home of her ancestors. The few lines of attempted explanation which she had left behind for her husband seemed to impose on one. To those who knew the young couple well it was an open proof of her insanity; to those who knew her slightly, as well as to the public at large, it was a woman's way of expressing the disappointment she felt in her husband. That I might the more readily determine which of these two theories had the firmest basis in fact I took advantage of an afternoon off and slipped away to Alexandria, where, I had been told, Mr. Jeffrey had courted his bride. I wanted a taste of local gossip, you see, and I got it. The air was fully charged with it, and, being careful not to rouse antagonism by announcing myself a detective, I readily picked up many small facts. Through an acquaintance and arranged in the form of a narrative, the result was as follows: John Judson Moore, the father of Veronica, had fewer oddities than the other members of this eccentric family. It was thought, however, that he had shown some strain of the peculiar independence of his race when, in selecting a wife, he let his choice fall on a widow who was not only incumbered with a child, but who was generally regarded as the plainest woman in Virginia—he who might have had the pick of southern beauty. But when in the course of time this despised woman proved to be the possessor of those virtues and social graces which eminently fitted her to conduct the large establishment of which she had become mistress, her love was forgotten, his lack of taste. Little more was said of his peculiarities until, his wife having died and his child proved weakly, he made the will in his brother's favor, which

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"Preferred to Die." "I had been sick for more than a year with kidney trouble," writes Mrs. Lucy Haver, of Wood Co., Ohio. "I was treated by several different doctors but none did me any good. One doctor said I never could be cured, that I had Bright's Disease. I suffered nearly death at times, had spells the doctor called spasms. Was bedfast most of the time for six months. My mother begged me to try Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and he brought me a bottle. I took that and the first half seemed to help me. I took six bottles before I stopped. I am perfectly well and am cooking for my husband (I was six), and am taking in washing besides. I will never take any more medicine until I am recommended to do so, and none. It has been a God-send to me. I will be willing to answer any letter of inquiry that any one wishes to. If you think this will be the means of helping any poor suffering woman to obtain relief, you may print it and make any honest use of it you wish."

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