

THE CARUTHERS AFFAIR

By WILL HARRIS

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SYNOPSIS.
Minard Hendricks, great detective, just returned from Boston, finds awaiting him an unsigned typewritten letter directing him to apartment in Palace hotel, where an will find remains of Mrs. Weldon Caruthers—currently reported for past two weeks to be out of town. Detective seems to connect letter with attempt made on his own life some time previous. Goes with friend, Dr. Lampkin, to investigate. Upon search of Caruthers' apartments remains of cremated body and jeweled hand of victim are found in a vase. Hand bears marks of finger nails manicured to sharp points. Lampkin recalls reports of a row between Caruthers and Arthur Gliew, both suitors for hand of Dorothy Huntington, who is heiress to several millions should she marry Caruthers, unconditionally in case of Caruthers' death. Late that night Hendricks and Lampkin call at home of Miss Huntington. Dorothy shows detective typewritten letter, which was an invitation for herself and aunt to occupy with Count Bantini, Italian nobleman, his box at horse show, as he was called out of town by pressing business. She recalls Gliew had expressed before murder intense hatred for Caruthers and believes him guilty, yet decides to help him. She tells her aunt of her purpose. "Great heavens! where would you go?" gasped Mrs. Winifred.

CHAPTER VI.
Dorothy turned and answered: "To the studio. Even if he has left Henri will tell me something about him, for Henri would do anything for me."
"But—but it's almost daybreak," opposed Mrs. Winifred. "It's bad enough as it is, but for you to go looking up a murderer at such an unbecomingly hour—"
Dorothy laid her hand on the bell button and rang.

Then she walked to the door opening into the corridor and Mrs. Winifred heard her call to the servant below and order the carriage.
"All right, miss," came up from the hall beneath in sleepy accents.
Mrs. Winifred rose and came to her niece, her two hands outstretched.
"Wait until morning, darling," she begged. "You will accomplish just as much and run no risk of being talked about."
"If you don't go with me I go alone," burst from the determined girl. "Get ready; I will dress myself in a moment."
"I won't be long," said Mrs. Winifred, resignedly. "I know nothing else will satisfy you. You are simply in love, and love knows no reason."
Ten minutes later the two ladies stood shivering in the dark asphalt-paved portico waiting for the carriage. When the wondering coachman drove round they got into the vehicle and drew their wraps around them.

"Rembrandt Studio building, James," said Mrs. Winifred, her teeth chattering. "Not a word passed between the occupants of the carriage on the way up town. Mrs. Winifred put her arms round her state niece and made a gentle effort to draw the girl's head to her shoulder, but Miss Huntington sat stiffly erect. The tragedy had, as it were, turned her to stone. She drew a long, trembling breath as her aunt removed her arm and that was all.
When the carriage stopped at the studio building, Dorothy opened the door, and stepped quickly down to the sidewalk. Her aunt followed her into the dimly-lighted hall. A colored boy sat asleep on a bench at the open elevator and the jarring of the car as they entered it awakened him.
"Mr. Gliew's studio," said Dorothy, hoarsely.

The boy rubbed his eyes with one hand and with the other grasped the lever, and they began to ascend.
"Is he in?" asked Mrs. Winifred.
"I can't say, madam. I came on at three o'clock."
"If he is not in," said Dorothy, "his servant will give me the information I wish."
"Tenth floor," said the boy, sliding the door open. "Second door on the left."
The two ladies passed down one of the long corridors till they came to a door the transom of which transmitted a soft greenish refulgence from subdued lights within. Dorothy had just rung the bell when she noticed that the door was not latched. She pushed against it, it opened, and she preceded her aunt inside. They found themselves in a private hallway, and further on, through parted oriental curtains, they saw the lights of the large reception-room. Entering it they found it still and vacant. The room had a great skylight and the several windows looking eastward were of polished plate glass. Through them, when the curtains were parted, the rays of the moon fell weirdly and blinding inconspicuously with the low burning lights of the chandelier overhead. In nooks and recesses dark bronze and white marble statues loomed like suggestions of the good and evil they represented. As they stood in the center of the chamber, undecided what to do, they heard a step in the adjoining room, and Henri presented a terrified visage over the top of a grotesquely carved wooden screen.

"Who is it?" he cried out in a voice that shook strangely. He had not recognized the visitors.
"It is I, Henri, Miss Huntington. Where is your master?"
Henri slowly stalked from behind the screen.
"You—you, Miss Dorothy!" he stammered, and then he stood a mute picture of indecision, his glance shifting to and fro uneasily.
"Where is Mr. Gliew? I must see him!" said the heiress.
Henri made no response. He clutched a brass stand, on which lay some curios, and they shook and rattled harshly. A small piece of china fell to the floor with a crash, but he did not notice it. Miss Huntington stepped deliberately to the chandelier and raised one of the lights. Then her eyes fell on Henri. His collar was unfastened, his necktie awry, and his long black hair tumbled; his eyes looked as if from weeping they had swollen too big for their sockets.
"What's the matter, Henri?" asked Miss Huntington, almost fiercely, his bearing and aspect hurling a fresh shaft of conviction into her heart.
"Speak, I say; don't you know I am as true a friend to him as you are?"
"—He's gone, Miss Dorothy," was the reply.
"Gone? Where?"
The man sank on a divan, forgetful of his station. He clasped his shaggy

head between his hands and groaned. His weakness seemed to appeal to the same quality in the heiress. Her mouth lost its firmness, her face appeared to wither. She tottered to the grand piano which, open and littered with sheets of music and the ashes and remains of cigars, stood near, and leaned heavily upon it.
Mrs. Winifred stepped up to the man and laid a commanding hand on his shoulder.
"Where has he gone to?" she demanded. "Speak, I say!"
Henri looked inquiringly at Dorothy, and perceiving that she was hanging on his reply, said:
"I don't know—I can't say, but he has left forever—forever, Miss Dorothy!"
The girl felt her knees growing weak, and she sank into a rustic chair which her lover had brought from the hills of Palestine. Presently she leaned forward.

"Henri, you must tell me all you know," she said, firmly. "I am his friend. You know I can be trusted."
"I know that well, Miss Dorothy," his accent betraying just the faintest touch of his French birth, "but he made me promise not to betray him to anyone, although almost the last word he spoke was to say he did it for your sake."
"Did it for my sake?" muttered the girl, and there she paused. It looked as if she were afraid that Henri's next words would furnish positive confirmation of her worst fears.
"If it was not for the row he had with Mr. Caruthers at the club I'd really believe that there was some mistake about it," continued Henri, in a dismal half-whine, half sobbing tone. "But as it is he has ruined himself for all time."
The man buried his face in his tense hands and rocked back and forth in a storm of emotion.
"Henri," said Miss Huntington at the lowest ebb of hope, "do you believe your master killed Mr. Caruthers?"
"I have been wanting to go to the Palace hotel to find out if anything has gone wrong there," was the answer; "but my master told me to stay right here and deny to any caller that he had left the city. He said he had murdered Mr. Caruthers, but I hope—I almost hope that master was out of his head."
"Great God!" exclaimed Dorothy, under her breath, and then she raised her voice: "He confessed it to you?"
Henri nodded.

"He said so, Miss Dorothy, but—"
"Henri, Mr. Caruthers was murdered ten days ago in his rooms at the Palace hotel."
"Are you sure, Miss Dorothy?"
"Yes, Mr. Hendricks, the most celebrated criminal detective in the United States informed me of it about an hour ago."
"Then it is true!" gasped the servant. "My master not only told me about it, but I overheard him confessing it to Count Bantini. The count was asking him all the particulars, and then I heard the count say: 'Now you must tell Henri. Tell him you did it, and then remember you must make your escape.'"
"Then some one rang for me, and I came in. Master was walking up and down the room tearing his hair and crying and swearing terribly. He was a statue and choke it and yell out: 'Oh, I've got you now, you black-hearted rascal. If I can't have her she shall be free from your dirty clutches!' Then he turned as I entered and started to fly at me with the fury of a tiger, but the count caught him and drew him back.
"Tell him now," said the count; "tell him about the murder."
"And then master grew calmer and told me a frightful story, such an unnatural one that I was sure he was mad. But the count told me it was true and ordered me to pack my master's bag with a few things. More dead than alive I obeyed, and then they went away together."
"Here did they go?" asked the heiress.
"I don't know."
"The poor fellow was insane," said Mrs. Winifred, comfortingly, as she put her arm round the shoulders of her niece. "Even if he is caught and brought back his unsoundness of mind can easily be established. Come, darling; let's go home. Remember you are now your uncle's heir unconditionally, and if you wish you can spend all your fortune in saving the poor fellow."
Dorothy rose stiffly, and as placidly as one in a dream followed her aunt from the room and down to the carriage.

Henri accompanied them to the door, and then crept sobbing and sniffing back to his own apartment. He had suddenly turned his back when a man crawled out from behind a heavy curtain of a little alcove. He went softly to the door, unlatched it, and glided into the dimly-lighted corridor. He turned a corner, and, going down one of the darkest and narrowest hallways on the same floor, he approached a man sitting on a window sill.
"I know you are cold and tired," he said. "But I could not get away sooner." It was the voice of Minard Hendricks, and he was speaking to Dr. Lampkin. "I found the door of the studio open, and got in safely enough. I was too late to see Gliew, and just as I was about to come out Miss Huntington and her aunt came in and turned up the gas. I had to lie low, but I overheard what I'll bet the police will never get out of the artist's servant. I heard him tell Miss Huntington that Gliew had confessed to the murder."
As they walked away through the lonely streets Hendricks recounted minutely what had taken place in the studio.
"He'll never hang for it if he is caught," was the doctor's comment when his friend had concluded. "It is plain that he is as mad as a march hare."
The detective reserved his opinion on that point, and Lampkin studied his face in no little surprise. Hendricks paused, struck a match on a wall and lit a cigar. He held two in his hand, but he was too much absorbed to offer the remaining unlighted one to his friend.
"You certainly think Gliew did the killing, don't you?" questioned Lampkin, taking the cigar as it was traveling back to Hendricks' vest pocket.
"Oh, beg pardon!" exclaimed the detective. "I was not thinking of what I was doing. As to your question, it is by far too early to pronounce the artist guilty, sane or insane. If I did that, there would be nothing left to unravel, and I don't operate that way."
He heaved a big sigh. "Doctor, mark my

words, when this thing is sifted to the bottom, it will be found the most gigantic piece of shrewd criminalism ever lost of record. Remember, I said—ever heard of Good-by; this side street will take me home quickly, and I want to think over some perplexing details."

CHAPTER VII.
Lampkin did not see the detective again till late in the afternoon of the day thus begun. He met Hendricks as he sprang from a cab in front of Grace church, on Broadway.
"I have but a minute to spare," the detective said. "There is much to look into. I am sending out trusty young fellows in many directions. As for me, I am just now studying cremation."
"You want to see it?"
"If a one-handed man has been taken to a regular crematory."
"Ah, a good idea, of course. Have you read the papers?"
"Only the headlines. They are enough for me. Denham's star in the ascendant, but it will sink eventually into a mud-puddle."
"He seems not to have got a word out of Gliew's servant," replied the doctor.
"He didn't know how to do it," pronounced the man of experience in such things. "There are many theories advanced, I presume?"
The doctor nodded.
"All of them point to Gliew's love affair and his recent flight. They make Miss Huntington disagreeably conspicuous."
"And a blasted shame, too!" muttered Hendricks. "She belongs to the swell gang and all that, and was born with the proverbial spoon in her pretty mouth, but all the same she is a credit to womanhood—the stuff mothers of great men are made of."
"If she reads the papers she will feel sorry hurt, for not one of them credits the poor fellow with even temporary insanity. They have made him out a cold-hearted, cool-headed villain, who, not satisfied with killing his man, cremates his body simply to show the malignity of his hatred."
Hendricks was moving away, his hand outstretched, when a sudden thought lighted up his face and he said:
"Anything in the papers about his having been last seen in the company of Count Bantini?"
"Not a word."
"Then Denham is minus the chief clew to the whole business. Poor Gliew! One of the headlines dubs him a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde, a man who plays Madonnas and angels, and at the same time is the devil's vilest agent."
"I hope you will run across something in Gliew's favor," said Lampkin.
"May God help him if I can," said the detective, with feeling. "This forenoon I went all the way out to Kola's place on the Palisades, hoping he might aid me in some way. I found him absorbed in crystal-gazing, and I knew it would irritate him to be interrupted till it pleased his fancy. His eastern servant had led me into the great dark room where Kola sat, and whispered that I must wait till the prince of occult balderdash had received some psychic impression or other. From where I was placed I could see Kola behind a screen. His profile was towards me. His lips were moving constantly, and his eyeballs standing out from his cheeks on stiff muscles. He is a fit subject for a museum. He has had some accident with an explosive with which he was experimenting and his hair was singed off close. He actually looks uncanny. I sat without a word or a sign of recognition from him till I got tired and stole away."
"I didn't know he had moved out there," said the doctor.
"Oh, yes, and he place suits him to a T. He found an old colonial mansion built half of brick, half of stone, in a wooded portion of Cliffside Park, the most inaccessible part of the Palisades. He found out by accident that it was under contract to be torn down before long, and got a couple of years' lease on it, and recently he received a carload of oriental rubbish from somewhere and has turned the interior into the queerest looking retreat you ever saw. I got onto his idea not long ago, and while it is not exactly above board, I have nothing to say, for New Yorkers—the wealthy ones—love to be humbugged, and Kola has discovered that they are willing to pay for it to boot. The vast mystery with which the rascal invests his personality does the work. He couldn't have chosen a better place. The old mansion is reputed to have been the headquarters of a gang of thieves of long standing, and when they were disbanded ten years ago I heard much about the place. One of the thieves who died in prison said a gang of counterfeiters had operated there for fifteen years and had the most perfect outfit in the cellars beneath the house that was ever owned in America. As I said, the mystery does the work for Kola. He receives applicants for psychic messages in the dark or when he is cowed, gowned and masked. I heard of one multi-millionaire who wanted his advice and went out there one afternoon in a coach with six armed attendants to drive off possible highwaymen. Kola's ambition is to get rich rapidly, and I think he is making considerable money. He has founded a sort of cult, and I assure you none but the rich are admitted."
"Do you think he can really tell people things they don't know?" asked Dr. Lampkin.
"He often gives me valuable hints," answered Hendricks, with a shrug. "I have no idea how he gets his information. You know my weak point is superstition; I can't help it. I shall talk with him about this case before it is ended. He is a sensitive cuss and would take offense if I didn't. I want to know particularly if he has ever met Bantini, and if he has I want to know what he thinks of him. I called at the count's rooms this morning and found he had left the city. His housekeeper was as mum as a gravestone with the top knocked off. I interviewed Caruthers' valet. I wanted to see the letter he received from Philadelphia, but Denham has taken it. The valet admitted that it was typewritten, however."

Private Butte.
I am reminded of an incident on one of the Atlantic steamers which took place not so long ago, and in which a member of a family to whom it is not necessary to allude was a party. The husband and wife appeared at all meals, flanked on either side by a large dish of butter.
As it was an English ship and but not served at any of the meals, some Americans who were neighbors were delighted to see that the husband and wife were seated at the head of the table. They helped themselves bountifully at luncheon.
At dinner they were surprised to see little sticks stuck in the middle of the mound of butter with a pasteboard card attached. The card read:
"Private Butte. Keep Off the Grass."
It is needless to say that the hint was taken.—N. Y. Journal.

War Was a Blessing.
"This here last war," remarked the old lady, "has been a blessing to my family; John, a drink of a big pension for one ear and three fingers; the ole man's writin' a war history; Mollie's engaged to a sergeant, an' Jennie's gwine to marry a feller that come within an ace of bein' a gin rummy!"—Atlanta Constitution.

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A Martyr to Science.
"Why, doctor, you're just been reading a paper before the medical society claiming that kissing is dangerous to health, and now you want a kiss from me!"
"For you, my dear, I would gladly face any danger."—Chicago Springs, Ar.

Keen's Family Medicine.
Moves the bowels each day. In order to be healthy this is necessary. Acts gently on the liver and kidneys. Cures sick headache. Price 25c and 50c.

Coughing Leads to Consumption.
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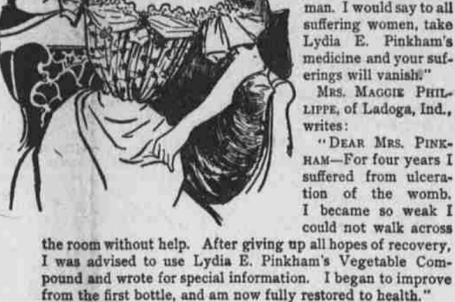
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I am reminded of an incident on one of the Atlantic steamers which took place not so long ago, and in which a member of a family to whom it is not necessary to allude was a party. The husband and wife appeared at all meals, flanked on either side by a large dish of butter.
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