

THE BLACK BOON

E. PHILIPS OPPENHEIM

Novelized from the Photo Play of the Same Name. Produced by the Universal Film Manufacturing Company.

SYNOPSIS.

Sanford Quest, master criminologist of the world, finds that in bringing to justice...

TWELFTH INSTALLMENT.

CHAPTER XXV.

"NEATH IRON WHEELS."

Side by side they leaned over the rail of the steamer and gazed shorewards at the slowly unfolding scene...

"I'm with you," Quest agreed emphatically. "It's the wrong side of the continent, perhaps, but I'm aching to set my foot on American soil again."

"I guess there's one of us here," Quest observed, "who is some too pleased to see America again."

Laura shivered a little. They were all grave. Quest moved slowly down the deck towards Craig's side, and touched him on the arm.

"Give me your left wrist, Craig," she said quietly. The man shrank away. There was a sudden look of horror in his white face.

"Do look, Mr. Quest," she begged. "There is Inspector French standing in the front row on the dock, with two enormous bunches of flowers—carnations for me, I expect, and poinsettias for Laura. They're the larger bunch."

Quest took the glasses and nodded. Slowly the great steamer drifted nearer and nearer to the docks, hats were waved from the little line of spectators, ropes were drawn taut.

"French," he said, "I tell you I shall make you hair curl when you hear all that we've been through. Do you feel like having me start in right away, on our way to the car?"

"Nothing doing," he replied. "I want to talk to Miss Laura. You can stop that criminal stuff. I'll wait all right. You've got the fellow—that's what matters!"

Quest exchanged an amused glance with Laura. The inspector and Laura fell a little behind. The former took off his hat for a moment and fanned himself.

"What do I want to go to New York for?" Laura demanded. "Oh, come on, Miss Laura, you know what I mean," French replied. "We'll slip off and get married here and then take this man Craig to New York."

Laura was on the point of laughing at him. Then the unwonted seriousness of his expression appealed suddenly to her sympathy. She patted him kindly on the shoulder.

"You're a good sort, inspector, but you've picked the wrong girl. I've run along on my own hook ever since I was born, I guess, and I can't switch my ideas over to this married stuff. You better get a move on and get Craig back to New York before he slips up again. I'm going to stay here with the bunch."

"He's been unconscious all the time," Quest reminded her. "Might have expected to find us there when he came to, anyway," Laura insisted.

Laura smiled faintly as she caught a glance from Quest. "Laura's got a heart takes a awful lot of getting at."

"Can you remember anything about the wreck, French?" Quest inquired. The inspector passed his hand wearily over his forehead.

"It seems more like a dream—rather a nightmare—than anything," he admitted. "I was sitting opposite Craig when the crash came. I was unconscious for a time, but when I came to, I was simply plinned down by the side of the car. I could see a man working hard to release me, tugging and straining with all his might. Every now and then I got a glimpse of his face. It seemed queer, but I could have sworn it was Craig. Then other people passed by. I heard the shriek of a locomotive. I could see a doctor bending over some bodies. Then it all faded away and came back again."

"Now for a little holiday," Quest declared, passing Laura's arm through his. "We'll just have a look around the city and then get down to San Diego and take a look at the exposition there. No responsibilities, no one to look after, nothing to do but enjoy ourselves."

Quest and Laura turned away from the window of the hotel, out of which they had been gazing for the last quarter of an hour.

"It's too beautiful," Laura sighed. Quest stood for a moment shaking his head. The professor, with a pile of newspapers stretched out before him, was completely engrossed in their perusal. Laura, who had been sitting in an armchair at the farther end of the apartment, was apparently deep in thought.

"I am beginning to suspect her," Laura chimed in. "Too bad he had to hurry away, dear!"

Laura's indignation was not altogether convincing. Quest and Laura exchanged amused glances. The former picked up the newspaper from the floor and calmly turned out the professor's lamp.

"Look here," he explained, "this is the first night of our holiday. I'm going to run the party and I'm going to make my speech to you. No more newspapers tonight or for a fortnight. You understand? No reading, nothing but frivolity. And no lovelessness, Miss Laura."

"Lovelessness, indeed!" she repeated scornfully. CHAPTER XXVI.

Quest took the dispatch which the hotel clerk handed to him one afternoon a fortnight later, and read it through without change of expression. Laura, however, who was by his side, knew at once that it contained something startling.

"What is it?" she asked. He passed his arm through hers and led her down the hall to where the professor and Laura were just waiting for the lift. He beckoned them to follow him to a corner of the lounge.

"There's one thing I quite forgot, a fortnight ago," he said, "when I suggested that we should none of us look at a newspaper until the time we were in California. Have you kept to our bargain, professor?"

"Absolutely!" "And you, girls?" "I've never even seen one," Laura declared. "Nor I," Laura echoed. "I made a mistake," Quest confessed. "Something has happened which we ought to have known about."

"You had better read this message—or, wait, I'll read it aloud." Quest turned to the telephone booth at the Sanford Quest Garfield Hotel, San Diego. Injured in wreck of limited. Recovered consciousness today. Craig reported burned in wreck out think you had better come on.

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"We Ain't Powerful Civilized at This Camp, but You Don't Get Our Cook Till You Show a Warrant."

There was no one in sight. Sotly, almost stealthily, he crept up to the wagon, fetched out from its wooden case a small violin, sat down with his back to the wheel and began to play. Suddenly the bow rested motionless. A look of fear came into his face. He sprang up. The cowboys were all staring from the other side of the wagon. They had arrived and dismounted without his hearing them. He sprang to his feet and began to stammer apologies. Long Jim's hand was laid firmly upon his shoulder.

"Say, cookie, you don't need to look so scared. You ain't doing nothing wrong. Me and the boys, we like your music. Sing us another tune on that fiddle!"

The cook looked at him for a moment incredulously. Then he realized that the cowboy was in earnest. He picked up the bow and commenced to play again. They sat around him, wondering, absolutely absorbed. No one even made a move towards the fiddle. It was Craig who led them there at last himself, still playing. Long Jim threw his arm almost carelessly around his shoulder.

"Say, cookie," he began, "there ain't never no questions asked concerning the past history of the men who find their way out here, just so long as they don't play the game wrong. He'll be you've fitted up a nice little hell for yourself somewhere, but we ain't none of us hankering to know the address. You're white and you're one of us and any time any guy wants to charge you rent for the little hell where you got the furniture of your conscience stored, why, you just let us settle with him, that's all."

The interruption which came was from outside. "More of these d—n tourists," Long Jim muttered. "Women, too!" Craig turned his head slowly. Quest was in the act of dismounting from his horse. By his side was the professor; just behind, Laura and Laura. Long Jim greeted them with rough cordiality.

"Say, what are you folks looking for?" he demanded. Quest pointed to Craig. "We want that man," he announced. "This is Inspector French from New York. I am Santoro Quest."

There was a tense silence. Craig covered his face with his hands, then suddenly looked up. "I won't come," he cried fiercely. "You've hounded me all around the world. I am innocent. I won't come."

"You're a step forward, Long Jim, as though by accident, snatched in the way. "Got a warrant?" he asked tersely. "We don't need it," Quest replied. "He's our man, right enough."

"Right, this minute he's our cook," Craig yelled. "and we ain't exactly particular about going hungry just to please a bunch of strangers. Cut it short, mister. If you ain't got a warrant, you ain't got this man."

"All right," Quest agreed. "The inspector here and I will soon see to the matter. You're a step forward, Long Jim, as though by accident, snatched in the way. "Got a warrant?" he asked tersely. "We don't need it," Quest replied. "He's our man, right enough."

"You're welcome to anything we've got except our cook," Jim replied, turning away. "Darius has come early and the little company is closer and closer to the camp fire, where Craig had once more taken up his violin. The professor had wandered off somewhere into the darkness and the girls were seated a little apart. They had been treated hospitably but coldly."

"Don't seem to cotton to us, these boys," Laura remarked. "They don't like us," Laura replied, "because they think we are after Craig. I wonder what Long Jim has been whispering to him, and what that paper is he has been showing Craig. Do you know how far we are from the Mexican border?"

"Not more than five or six miles, I believe," Laura replied. "Laura rose softly to her feet and strolled to the back of the range wagon. In a few moments she reappeared, carrying a piece of paper in her hand. She stooped down. "Craig's adding up," she whispered. "Look what he dropped."

She held out the paper, on which was traced a rough drawn map. "That line's the river that marks the Mexican border," she explained. "You see where Long Jim's put the revolver into the center of the bay?" He later ordered three of his men to open the stack. They did so. Inside, with loopholes and airholes, casks of water, a month's provisions, and 4,000 rounds of ammunition, was a German, with six bullets in his head.

"Hand-me-Downs. I don't want to wear father's old clothes. I've got some girls' natty new troubles like those." "Yes, we do," said the girl. "I have to wear mother's old hair."

Matter of Necessity. Sir Frank Lockwood was once re-examining a client in regard to various companies, a good many of which had been wound up. The Automatic Musical Instrument company came up for notice—a company for utilizing a kind of street-organ piano. "That," said Sir Frank, genially, "had to be wound up, anyway."

cross? That's where the bridge is. That other cross is the camp." She pointed away southwards. "That's the line," she continued. "Laura, where's the professor?" "I don't know," Laura replied. "He rode off some time ago, and he was going to meet Mr. Quest."

"If only he were here!" Laura muttered. "I feel sure Craig means to escape. There he goes." She galloped off while Laura was still undecided. Almost at that moment she heard from behind the welcome sound of horses' feet in the opposite direction and Quest galloped up. Laura laid her hand upon his rein.

"Don't get off," Laura continued quickly. "Craig has escaped, riding towards the Mexican frontier. Lenora is following him. He's gone in that direction," she added pointing. "When you come to the river you'll have to hunt for the bridge."

Quest nodded as he gathered up his reins. "I was afraid they'd try something of the sort," he muttered. "Tell the others where I've gone, Laura."

He galloped off into the darkness. Behind, there were some growls from the little group of cowboys, none of whom, however, attempted to interfere with him. Long Jim stood up and gazed sullenly southwards. "Cook'll make the bridge all right," he remarked. "If the girl catches him, she can do anything. And that guy'll never make it. Whoop! Here come the rest of them."

The inspector, with the two deputies, rode suddenly into the camp. The inspector paused to speak to Laura. Long Jim's eyes sparkled as he saw them approach. "Be's old Harris and fat Andy," he whispered. "We'll have some fun with them."

The older of the two deputies approached them, frowning. "Been at your games again, Long Jim?" he began. "I hear you declined to hand over a criminal who'd been sheltering on your ranch. You'd get into trouble before you're finished."

"Got the warrant?" Jim asked. The deputy produced it. Long Jim looked at it curiously and handed it back. "Guess the only thing you want, then, is the man."

"Better produce him quickly," the deputy advised. Jim turned away. "Can't do it. He's beat it."

"You mean that you've let him go?" "Let him go?" Jim repeated. "I ain't got no right to keep him. He took the job on a moment's notice and he left at a moment's notice. There's some of your party after him, all right."

The hunted man turned round with a little gasp. Before him was the rugged mountain bridge, and on the other side—freedom. Scarcely a dozen lengths away was Lenora, and close behind her came Quest. He slackened speed as he walked his horse cautiously on to the plank bridge. Suddenly he gave a little cry. The frail structure, unexpectedly insecure, seemed to sway beneath his weight. Lenora, who was riding fast, was unable to stop herself. She came on to the bridge at a half canter. Craig, who had reached the other side in safety, threw up his hands.

"The bridge suddenly collapsed as though it had been made of paper. Lenora, grasping her horse, was thrown into the stream. Quest galloping up, was only able to check himself. "The bridge suddenly collapsed as though it had been made of paper. Lenora, grasping her horse, was thrown into the stream. Quest galloping up, was only able to check himself."

After the Wreck Another Warning. self just in time. He flung himself from his horse and plunged into the stream. It was several moments before he was able to reach Lenora. From the opposite bank Craig watched them, glancing once or twice at the bridge. One of the wooden pillars had been sawn completely through, as he drew Lenora to the bank. She shook her head. "Just my side did Craig get away?" Quest looked gloomily across the stream. "Craig's in Mexico, right enough," he answered savagely. "I'd bet I'm beginning to feel that I could fetch him back out of hell!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

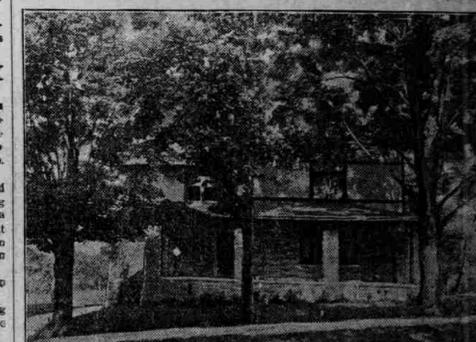
Chinese Amulet. One of the commonest amulets worn by an only son in China is a small silver lock, according to the authors of "The Book of Talismans."

Man's Usefulness. A man continues in the prime of life so long as he continues to maintain and assert with full vigor those faculties which he habitually and most actively has been accustomed to employ. He may be old as to unused faculties quite early in his mundane career, but that he disregards because he has no special use for them in the work to which he has devoted himself and knows that in the future, as in the past, they will continue to serve his purposes.

She Wouldn't Tell. When Claire was about five years old she had a picture taken for her papa and was told not to tell, for it was to be a surprise. That evening when he returned from the office she said: "Papa, we've got a picture for you, but I won't tell, I won't tell; just wait until you see the proof!"

Daily Thought. Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others, and in their pleasure takes joy, even as though 'twere his own.—Goethe.

The HOME BEAUTIFUL



The Result of Good Tree Planting, Affording Shade and Beauty of Leafage.

SHADE TREES FOR BEAUTY in a protected place and are ready at any time they are wanted. A few days of sunshine and windy weather in early spring put the mounds of earth beside the holes in fine shape to put in around the trees.

The trees may be set out two or three weeks before the surrounding soil will do to cultivate. First, straw manure is tramped six inches deep in the bottom of the holes, then about six inches of the top soil is thrown in, leaving a little mound at the center of the hole upon which the center of taproot should rest.

The finer or side roots are spread out around the little mound, more of the top soil is thrown in and packed tightly around the roots, filling up all air spaces and holding them in proper place. Next, some rotten straw, not manure, is thrown in, then the rest of the soil is tramped well around the trees. I do not use any manure next to the roots of the trees. The manure is scattered around the trees, the rain takes the fertility down to the roots and the solid matter, while rotting serves as a mulch.

The above method, if closely followed, will take a tree through the first summer, which is the most critical part of the life of a tree. Get them started right. The way is easy. A bad start causes much trouble and delay.

IN THE GARDEN Do not make the mistake of planting magnolias in the autumn. Where they thrive there is nothing more showy than the Chinese varieties. The flowers appear about the same time as the crocuses and tulips in the spring. The spring is a better time for planting. Do not permit any weeds to grow to seed. Better not allow the seed pods to form. Go carefully over the garden these fall days and clear out every weed. Will save lots of trouble next season.

Destroy the webs of the fall web worms wherever they are found. Right now is the time to arrange for cold frames for flowers and for the small greenhouse for winter gardens. At a moderate cost small greenhouses of our people, complete with heating apparatus. Various shapes and sizes are offered.

A spraying outfit for the garden need not be large or costly, and it will save its own value the first year it is used. The salvia is a splendid plant for hedges, for massing and for borders, as well as for general planting. It does best grown by itself. Remember it when planning next year's garden.

THE MODERN GLADIOLUS By GEORGE S. WOODRUFF. Everybody knows the gladiolus—in a way, it has been called "The People's Flower" because the common people can get more satisfaction out of it, without special care or facilities, than from any other flower. As a cut flower, nothing but decorative or ornamental lasts so long and no other flower has such variety and beauty of coloring.

Nevertheless, the modern gladiolus is almost unknown to a large majority of our people, because of the great improvement which has been made in a comparatively short time. The gladiolus is propagated by direct multiplication, by cormels and by seeds. The corm planted dies at the end of the season, but produces a new one at the base of each shoot it sends up; so that the rapidity of multiplication depends on the number of shoots sent up.

When the corms are dug in the fall Chinese Amulet. One of the commonest amulets worn by an only son in China is a small silver lock, according to the authors of "The Book of Talismans."

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The First Perfumes. When you use perfume and call it such, do you think how the name came about? It means, in Latin "from smoke," and the name proves that the first perfumes were only kind of street-organ or gams that scented the air when burned.

Ancient Shipbuilding Yard. A shipbuilding yard in Japan which was established 1800 years ago is still in operation.



Craig Assisted in Dragging People From the Burning Car.

ing the postmarks on the package, threw the paper down. "The postmark's all blurred out," he remarked. "There's no doubt about it, that fellow Craig has the devil's own luck, but we'll get him—we'll get him yet. I'll just take a stroll up to police headquarters and make a few inquiries. You might come with me, Lenora, and Laura can get busy with her amateur nursing."

"I shall make inquiries," the professor announced briskly, "concerning the local museum. There should be interesting relics hereabouts of the prehistoric Indians."

CHAPTER XXVII. A man sat on the steps of the range cook wagon, crouching as far back as possible to take advantage of its slight

It was the world's most undemocratic attempt at a republic. The fruits of its institutions were a reflection of the misconception which its ruling classes entertained of the relation of government to the people.—Judson C. Welliver in Century Magazine.

A Sniper's Fort. A recent letter from a British soldier at the front tells of a German sniper who was killed under unusual conditions by an Indian officer. The

The shops, fountains and porticoes bordering the streets of old Ostia which have been brought to light in the recent excavations complete the picture and make us realize that life was not so very different in the far-away past from what it is today in many an Italian town.

CAUSE OF FALL OF POLAND The Polish aristocracy succeeded where other medieval aristocracies failed, and its success was Poland's ruin. The king was kept a figurehead, isolated from the mass of people largely by reason of the Polish custom of electing kings. It all looked very democratic, but in fact it merely served to keep aliens or weaklings on the throne much of the time.

OSTIA ONCE WAS BUSY CITY Excavations of Roman Seaport Show Evidence of its Former Commercial Importance.

"American in their straightforwardness and regularity" is one description of the streets of Ostia, the old port of Rome at the mouth of the Tiber, once a busy city, now dead and forgotten by all but the archeologists.

upper middle class watering place, while Herculaneum was a Roman Newport. But Ostia was an ordinary Roman business seaport and city, and the discoveries just made there enable one to reconstruct the life of a busy imperial center of 2,000 years ago.