

# INITIALS ONLY

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"THE FILIGREE BALL" "THE HOUSE OF THE WHISPERING PINES"  
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### SYNOPSIS.

George Anderson and wife see a remarkable looking man come out of the Clermont hotel, look around furtively, wash his hands in the snow and pass on. Commissioner attracts them to the Clermont, where it is found that the beautiful Miss Edith Challoner has fallen dead. Anderson describes the man he saw wash his hands in the snow. The hotel manager declares him to be Orlando Brotherson. Physicians find that Miss Challoner was stabbed and not shot, which seems to clear Brotherson of suspicion.

### CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

"What kind of a looking person was the man who took you outside last night?" I inquired of George, with my eyes still on this furtive watcher.

"A fellow to make you laugh. A perfect character, Laura; hideously homely but agreeable enough. I took quite a fancy to him. Why?"

"I am looking at him now."

"Very likely. He's deep in this affair. Just an everyday detective, but ambitious, I suppose, and quite alive to the importance of being thorough."

"He is watching those people. No, he isn't. How quickly he disappeared!"

"Yes, he's mercurial in all his movements. Laura, we must get out of this. There happens to be something else in the world for me to do than to sit around and follow up murder clues."

But we began to doubt if others agreed with him, when on passing out we were stopped in the lobby by this same detective, who had something to say to George, and drew him quickly aside.

"What does he want?" I asked, as soon as George had returned to my side.

"He wants me to stand ready to obey any summons the police may send me."

"Then they still suspect Brotherson?"

"They must."

As we stepped out of the hotel George gave my arm a quiet pinch which served to direct my attention to an elderly gentleman who was just alighting from a taxicab at the curb. He moved heavily and with some appearance of pain, but from the crowd collected on the sidewalk, many of whom nudged each other as he passed, he was evidently a person of some importance, and as he disappeared within the hotel entrance, I asked George who this kind-faced, bright-eyed old gentleman could be.

He appeared to know, for he told me at once that he was Detective Gryce; a man who had grown old in solving just such baffling problems as these.

That night I bided George's coming with an impatience I could not control. He was late, of course, but when he did appear, I almost forgot our usual greeting in my hurry to ask him if he had seen the evening papers.

"No," he grumbled, as he hung up his overcoat. "Been pushed about all day. No time for anything."

needle but not so large as the ordinary stiletto.

"Stabbed while by herself, or what you may call by herself? She had no companion near her?"

"None, if we can believe the four members of the Parrish family who were seated at the other end of the room."

"And you do believe them?"

"Would a whole family lie—and needlessly?"

"It wouldn't seem so."

"She fell just a few feet from the desk where she had been writing. No word, no cry, just a collapse and sudden fall. She never looked up or spoke again. What do you make of it, Gryce?"

"It's a tough one, and I'm not ready to venture an opinion yet. I should like to see the desk you speak of, and the spot where she fell."

A young fellow who had been hovering in the background at once stepped forward. He was the plain-faced detective who had spoken to George.

"Will you take my arm, sir?"

Mr. Gryce's whole face brightened. This Sweetwater, as they called him, was, I have since understood, one of his proteges and more or less of a favorite.

"Have you had a chance at this thing?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; they were good enough to allow it."

"Very well, then, you're in a position to pioneer me. You've seen it all and won't be in a hurry."

"No; I'm at the end of my rope. I haven't an idea, sir."

"Well, well, that's honest at all events. Then, as he slowly rose with the other's careful assistance, "There's no crime without its clue. The thing is to recognize that clue when seen. But I'm in no position to make promises."

The mezzanine was guarded from all visitors save such as had official sanction. Consequently, the two remained quite uninterrupted while they moved about the place in quiet consultation. The locale was what Gryce wanted, and he got it. Whether he got anything else it would be impossible to say from his manner as he finally sank into a chair by one of the openings, and looked down on the lobby below. It was full of people coming and going on all sorts of business, and presently he drew back, and leaning on Sweetwater's arm, asked him a few questions.

one who approached her during those ten minutes. Every one, Sweetwater, and I must myself talk with Miss Clarke."

"You will believe every word she says."

"No doubt. All the more reason why I must see her. Sweetwater, someone drew that weapon out. The question is who? We must leave no stone unturned to find that out."

"Where will you see Miss Clarke?"

"Whenever she pleases—only I can't walk far."

"I think I know the place. You shall have the use of this elevator. It has not been running since last night or it would be full of curious people all the time, hustling to get a glimpse of this place. But they'll put a man on for you."

"Very good; manage it as you will. I'll wait here till you're ready. I'll not trouble her much. But there is one point she must make clear to me."

Sweetwater did not presume to ask what point, but he hoped to be fully enlightened when the time came.

And he was. Mr. Gryce had undertaken to educate him for this work and never missed the opportunity of giving him a lesson. The three met in a private sitting-room on an upper floor, the detectives entering first and the lady coming in soon after. Miss Clarke was not a woman to rouse an unfavorable opinion in any man's mind. Of slight, almost frail build, she had that peculiar animation which goes with a speaking eye and a widely sympathetic nature. Without any substantial claims to beauty, her expression was so womanly and so sweet that she was invariably called lovely.

Mr. Gryce was engaged at the moment in shifting his cane from the right hand to the left, but his manner was never more encouraging or his smile more benevolent.

"Pardon me," he apologized, with one of his old-fashioned bows. "I'm sorry to trouble you after all the distress you must have been under this morning. But there is something I wish especially to ask you in regard to the dreadful occurrence in which you played so kind a part. You were the first to reach the prostrate woman, I believe."

"Yes. The boys jumped up and ran towards her, but they were frightened by her looks and left it for me to put my hands under and try to lift her up."

"Did you manage it?"

"I succeeded in getting her head into my lap, nothing more."

"And sat so?"

"For some little time."

"You knew she was dead, then?"

"I felt her to be so."

"How felt?"

"I was sure—I never questioned it."

"You have seen women in a faint?"

"Yes, many times."

"What made the difference? Why should you believe Miss Challoner dead simply because she lay still and apparently lifeless?"

"I cannot tell you. Possibly, death tells its own story. I only know how I felt."

"Perhaps there was another reason? Perhaps, that, consciously or unconsciously, you laid your palm upon her heart?"

Miss Clarke started, and her sweet face showed a moment's perplexity.

"Did I?" she queried, musingly. Then with a sudden access of feeling, "I may have done so, indeed, I believe I did. My arms were around her; it would not have been an unnatural action."

"No; a very natural one, I should say. Cannot you tell me positively whether you did this or not?"

"Yes, I did. I had forgotten it, but I remember now." And the glance she cast him while not meeting his eye showed that she understood the importance of the admission. "I know," she said, "what you are going to ask me now. Did I feel anything there but the flowers and the tulle? No, Mr. Gryce, I did not. There was no poniard in the wound."

Mr. Gryce felt around, found a chair and sank into it.

"You are a truthful woman," said he. "And," he added more slowly, "composed enough in character I should judge not to have made any mistake on this very vital point."

"I think so, Mr. Gryce. I was in a state of excitement, of course; but the woman was a stranger to me, and my feelings were not unduly agitated."

"Sweetwater, we can let my suggestion go in regard to those ten minutes I spoke of. The time is narrowed down to one, and in that one, Miss Clarke was the only person to touch her."

"The only one," echoed the lady, catching perhaps the slight rising sound of query in his voice.

it quite imperative that I should have a few words with you on a topic which need not be disagreeable to you, and probably will not be. My name is Gryce. A beautiful and charming young woman died here last night. May I ask if you knew her?"

"I? I never saw the young lady. Why do you ask? I do not recognize your right. I—"

Mr. Gryce made one of his low bows and propping himself against the table he stood before, remarked civilly:

"I had rather not force my rights. I thought perhaps you could tell me something which would aid me in my effort to elicit the real facts of the case. You were crossing the lobby at the time—"

"Yes." She raised her head. "So were a dozen others—"

"Madam"—the interruption was made in his kindest tones, but in a way which nevertheless suggested authority. "Something was picked up from the floor at that moment. Am I not correct? Didn't you see a certain person—I will mention no names—stoop and pick up something from the lobby floor?"

"No." The word came out with startling violence. But her lips quivered, and her cheeks were white, to a white now for simple indignation.

"Then I have made a big mistake," apologized the ever-courteous detective. "Will you pardon me? It would have settled a very serious question if it could be found that the object thus picked up was the weapon which killed Miss Challoner. That is my excuse for the trouble I have given you."

The door burst open, and a young girl bounded into the room, with the merry cry:

"All ready, mother. I'm glad we are going to the Clarendon. I hate hotels where people die almost before your eyes."

The cloak which enveloped the girl was red, and full enough to be called voluminous.

"Who is this?" demanded the girl, her indignant glances flashing from her to the other.

"I don't know," faltered the mother in very evident distress. "He says he has a right to ask us questions and he has been asking questions about—"

"Not about me," laughed the girl, with a toss of her head. "He can have nothing to say about me." And she began to move about the room in an aimless, half-insolent way.

Mr. Gryce stared hard at the few remaining belongings of the two women, lying in a heap on the table, and half musingly, half deprecatingly, remarked:

"The person who stooped wore a long red cloak. Probably you preceded your daughter, Mrs. Watkins."

The lady thus brought to the point made a quick gesture towards the girl who suddenly stood still, and, with a rising color in her cheeks, answered, with some show of resolution on her own part:

what she had evidently been holding in her hand from the first, a sharp-pointed, gold-handled paper-cutter.

"It was lying there and I picked it up. I don't see any harm in that."

"You probably meant none. You couldn't have known the part it had just played in this tragic drama," said the old detective, looking carefully at the cutter which he had taken in his hand.

"You have washed this?" he asked.

"No. Why should I wash it? It was clean enough. I was just going down to give it in at the desk." And she turned aside to the window and began to hum, as though done with the whole matter.

The old detective rubbed his chin, glanced again at the paper-cutter, then at the girl in the window, and lastly at the mother, who had lifted her head again and was facing him bravely.

"It is very important," he observed to the latter, "that your daughter should be correct in her statement as to the condition of this article when she picked it up. Are you sure she did not wash it?"

"I don't think she did. But I'm sure she will tell you the truth about that, Caroline, this is a police matter. Any mistake about it may involve us in a world of trouble and keep you from getting back home in time for your coming-out party. Did you get up stairs, or—"

"—or—"

"Mother, how can I tell what I did?" flashed out the girl, wheeling round on her heel till she faced them both.

"Such a lot of talk about a paltry thing which couldn't have cost ten dollars." And she wheeled back.

"It isn't the value," Mr. Gryce could be very patient. "It's the fact that we believe it to have been answerable for Miss Challoner's death—that is, if there was any blood on it when you picked it up."

"Blood!" The girl was facing them again, astonishment struggling with disgust on her plain but mobile features. "Blood! Is that what you mean? Take it away," she cried. "Blood!" she repeated in horror, flinging herself into her mother's arms.

Mr. Gryce thought he understood the situation. Here was a little kleptomaniac whose weakness the mother was struggling to hide.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



"You Are a Truthful Woman," He Said.



"Blood!" She Reiterated With Horror, Flinging Herself Into Her Mother's Arms.



He Was Evidently a Person of Some Importance.

building. He saw the drops, and uttered the first suggestion of murder.

"How long after was this? Is there any one who has ventured to make an estimate of the number of minutes which elapsed from the time she fell, to the moment when the doctor first raised the cry of murder?"

"Yes. Mr. Slater, the assistant manager, who was in the lobby at the time, says that ten minutes at least must have elapsed."

### CHAPTER V.

#### The Red Cloak.

"What results? Speak up, Sweetwater."

## Good Word for the Oyster

London Lancet, Always Pessimistic, Comes Forward With a Surly Meed of Praise.

When the Lancet, representative of the medical profession of Great Britain, says anything good about anything, it is listened to with emotions of mingled surprise and respect. Some one has remarked that every time he picked up the Lancet he discovered he was doing something right along, or taking something that was surely killing him. It has a good word for the oyster just at the time when that apparently innocuous edible is exciting the scrutiny of our always feverish advisers, the bacteriologists. This distinguished, if usually alarmist, authority declares that the oyster is a tonic of the first order, and a complete food, most beneficial to weakened patients and those in whom appetite is deficient. Clinical results of a most favorable nature are reported where oysters are given to persons suffering from tuberculosis. If oysters are indicated for the diet of persons in the state described, they must be wholesome for the rest of us.

There was never any doubt about this, of course, before nervous bacteriologists sought to fill us full of fear instead of oysters. He was a brave man who first ate one raw, and then of the philosopher of the breakfast table; and now the bacteriologists challenge our courage. The Lancet's commendation should help to sustain timid souls at this crisis.—Providence Journal

Over Alps by Automobile. It will soon be possible for the tourist to go over the Alps by automobile. All the details have been arranged for the establishment of an electric stage service, the amount involved in the purchase of equipment

and material and in good improvement being about a half million dollars. The line runs from Airole by way of the Bedretto valley and the Nufer pass, ending at Ulrichen, in the Valais region, with a total length of twenty-five miles. Considerable work will need to be done in enlarging the routes so as to make them suitable for automobile traffic, and a bridge is to be built over the Tessin river. The new electric automobiles have capacity for twenty-two passengers and make the trip in two and one-quarter hours on ordinary and one and three-quarters on express service, running twelve to twenty-two miles an hour. Three trips will be made per day in each direction, during all seasons when there is no snow on the roads.

Women in Finland's Parliament. There are fourteen women in the Finnish Diet, as there the parliament is known, and one of their number, Dr. Thekl. Hutlin, on a recent visit to London, expressed surprise that in enlightened England women had not yet been accorded the parliamentary franchise. She added some interesting facts about Finnish women M. P.'s. All members are paid a salary, but they lose it if absent without special leave, and are also fined 15 shillings a day. "I may say," she went on, "that the women attend the sittings more regularly than the men. The women members have endeavored to bring about improvements in women's position, especially in its legal and economic aspect. Bills introduced by women have been concerned with the rising of the age of consent, securing equality of the wife with the husband in the control of the children, motherhood insurance, the right of women to enter the legal profession, and so forth."

## MILLIONS FOR RIVERS-HARBORS

CHIEF ENGINEER OF ARMY SUBMITS RECOMMENDATIONS.

Texas Faces Well, as More Than \$3,000,000 Is Recommended for Texas Projects, Etc.

Washington, More than \$9,000,000 for the Mississippi river, almost \$2,000,000 for the Ohio river, more than \$3,000,000 for Texas projects, more than \$2,000,000 for the Missouri river, almost \$2,000,000 for the Columbia river and \$1,000,000 for the Delaware river are the amounts considered necessary by the chief of engineers of the army for the improvement and maintenance of those great waterways during the fiscal year of 1912.

In submitting to the secretary of war his report, made public Monday, the chief of engineers makes estimates aggregating \$14,482,800, to be applied to 261 river and harbor projects during the year ending June 30, 1912. This is \$9,534,224 less than the amount appropriated by congress for river and harbor works for the fiscal year of 1911.

Estimates of amounts needed for fortifications in the United States aggregate \$1,045,000 and in the insular possessions \$922,500.

The estimates in detail are: Mississippi River—Southwest Pass, \$400,000; head of passes to Ohio river, including expenses of Mississippi river commission, \$6,000,000; between Ohio and Missouri rivers, \$1,000,000; between Missouri river and Minneapolis, \$1,500,000; between Minneapolis and St. Paul, \$170,000; improvement Mississippi and Levee rivers, \$30,000; between Brainerd and Grand Rapids, Minn., \$8,000.

Ohio River—For continuing construction of locks and dams below Pittsburg, \$3,887,000; for new work in construction of locks and dams below Pittsburg, \$5,000,000; open channel work, \$350,000.

Missouri River—Kansas City to mouth, \$2,000,000; Kansas City to Sioux City, \$150,000; Sioux City to Fort Benton, \$150,000; Osage river, \$15,000; Gasconade river, \$15,000.

Columbia River—Improving mouth, \$1,000,000; improvements below Portland, \$300,000; at Cascades, \$100,000; at Three-Mile Rapids, \$425,000; upper Columbia and Snake rivers, \$200,000; Willamette river above Portland, \$30,000; Clatskanie river, \$100,000.

Texas—Galveston channel, \$100,000; channel from Galveston harbor to Texas City, \$900,000; channel to Port Bolivar, \$25,000; Houston ship channel, \$400,000; West Galveston bay channel, etc., \$25,000; Galveston and Brazos river canal, \$15,000; channel, Brazos river to Matagorda bay, \$25,000; channel, Arkansas Pass to Pass Cavallo, \$30,000; river section to Victoria, \$15,000; Turtle Cove channel, between Aransas Pass and Corpus Christi, \$25,000; Brazos river mouth, \$25,000; Velasco to Old Washington, \$25,000; Old Washington to Nacoochee, \$25,000; improving locks and dams Nos. 2 and 6, \$200,000; channel, Pass Cavallo to Port Lavaca, \$5,000; Port Aransas, \$300,000; channel, Port Aransas to Corpus Christi, \$15,000; Sabine Pass harbor and Port Arthur canal, \$550,000; Trinity river, open channel work, \$15,000; lock and dam No. 7, \$15,000; Hurricane shoals lock and dam, \$80,000; White Rock shoals lock and dam, \$15,000; Cypress ark, \$5,000; Red river, from Fulton, Ark., to Denison, \$25,000.

Arkansas—Red river, below Fulton, \$100,000; Ouachita and Black rivers, Arkansas and Louisiana, \$504,000; Ouachita river above Camden to A-kadelphia, \$2,500; Saline river, \$3,000; Bayou Bartholomew, etc., \$15,000; Yazoo river, etc., \$130,000; Arkansas river, \$164,700; White river, \$31,800; Cache river, \$3,000; Black and Current rivers, \$32,150; St. Francis and L'Anguille rivers, \$6,000.

Louisiana—Bayou Teche, \$50,000; Bayou Vermilion and Mermentau river, \$12,000; water hyacinth removal, \$12,000; Bayou Techebonne, \$25,000; Johnsons bayou, \$5,000.

New Court House for Groveton, Groveton, Tex.—Work on tearing down and removing the old court house has been about completed, and on the 10th of this month bids will be received for the construction of the new court house. The building is to cost \$50,000.

General Reaches El Paso. El Paso, Tex.—General Roque Gomez, one of the commanders who ran away from Chihuahua, crossed into the United States at Columbus, N. M., and arrived in El Paso Saturday. He escaped across the border and took refuge in the home of friends.

McFarland Outpoints Britton. Milwaukee, Wis.—Packer McFarland outpointed his old enemy, Jack Britton, both of Chicago, in an unsatisfactory ten-round no-decision boxing contest before 6,500 spectators Monday night.

Schooner's Crew Finally Saved. Seattle, Wash.—A crew of ten men who abandoned the water-logged schooner Aloha in a storm last Sunday and took refuge on Destruction Island, off the entrance to Puget Sound, were rescued by a tug Monday.

Commission Form for Mission. Mission, Tex.—The election Wednesday for the incorporation of Mission under the commission form of government carried by 53 votes, with but 1 against.

Wool Is Now Being Released. Springfield, Mass.—Under the new tariff act, which went into effect Dec. 1, and which allows wool to be imported free, there was released Saturday 468,000 pounds. It is estimated that 4,580,000 pounds were held at Springfield awaiting the change in tariff.

Antis Wen at Harlingen. Harlingen, Tex.—At a prohibition election Monday the Harlingen independent district went west by 13 votes.