

Under the Rose

Passages from the Case-Book of Inspector FINNEY VALENTINE, Investigator Extraordinary

The Strange Dilemma of Stephen Dawlish

By FREDERIC REDDALE

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ALTHOUGH it was after eight of an evening in mid-October, and long past the usual hour for closing his office in the Flatiron building, Finney Valentine was there alone, finishing up some details demanding personal attention. Suddenly the desk phone at his elbow tinkled insistently. An agitated male voice at the other end of the line began to speak the instant connection was established.

"Inspector Valentine—this is Dawlish—Steve Dawlish—you remember? Say, inspector, I'm in a devil of a hole—just killed a man—said he was Miss Williston's first husband—remember that case? Well, he tried to blackmail me—our wedding comes off in three days—yes—I hit him—only once, but that was enough. Say, inspector, can't you come out here right away? Why, I'm at Locust Valley—you know my place—there's a late train at nine-thirty, get you here by eleven—can't you? That's good—I'll have a motor at the station to meet you. Don't fail me. I'm in an awful mess! Thanks—good-by."

Valentine's face was grave as he hung up the receiver and looked at his watch; there would just be time to run uptown and pack a bag before catching the 9:30 North Shore train over the Long Island railroad. Stephen Dawlish he remembered as one of an unusually bright bunch of newspaper boys who had sometimes pestered the life out of him in that grim stone pile in Mulberry street. But for some years they had not met—partly on account of the inspector's retirement, and also because Dawlish had come into property and was now a man of leisure, spending some months of every year at his country place in Locust Valley.

And now that the broken thread of acquaintanceship had been re-united by this urgent call for help, Finney Valentine recalled an exceedingly tragic episode in which Stephen Dawlish had been an unwilling actor.

Half a decade earlier, dating from this October night, certain fashionable and financial circles of uptown and downtown Manhattan had been agog over the rather meteoric rise of a young southerner, Yancey Daubeny, who in a breezy and masterful manner had stormed the city.

While more or less of a plunger on the "street," he was believed to have made considerable money. His brokers were Mortimer Williston & Co.—a very conservative and wealthy concern—and it was through the senior member of the firm that he met Grace Williston, an only daughter, heiress to her widowed father's millions.

With the same insouciant and dashing ways that had heralded his advent in Wall street the young southerner laid siege to the heart of Grace Williston. In person he was most attractive—emphatically a woman's man; tall, blond, wide-shouldered rather burly in voice and build, both of which traits one forgot when that one happened to be a beautiful woman whom Daubeny was anxious to please. Then his tones became caressing, and his strength somehow seemed to assume a protecting, almost chivalrous character.

Yancey Daubeny became a social favorite everywhere; he was a lavish spender, yet not a spendthrift, since he knew how to get dollar for dollar. His ancestry was supposed to be of the bluest blood south of Mason and Dixon's line—that is, by his own account—and he claimed relationship with half a dozen families of illustrious name. In short, Yancey Daubeny became a distinguished and popular member of the southern colony in New York.

Grace Williston was admired as much for her beauty as for her sweet girlishness; that she would one day be extremely wealthy was also no drawback. Of admirers she had a score, of whom Stephen Dawlish seemed to be the most favored until the advent of Yancey Daubeny. But the southerner soon usurped the place of first favorite; Dawlish proposed and was gently rejected; three months later the betrothal of Grace Williston and Daubeny was announced; everybody said it was a love match—in which for once everybody was right so far as the girl was concerned.

On a rare June morning they were married at Grace church, and immediately after the wedding breakfast the couple planned to sail for Europe on a six months' bridal trip. But at the foot of the gang-plank, while Mortimer Williston was in the act of saying farewell, a brace of secret service men tapped Daubeny on the shoulder, snapped the handcuffs on his wrists and arrested him for forgery!

At the subsequent trial it transpired that "Yancey Daubeny" was none other than William or "Bill" Dabney, an old jailbird and an accomplished crook "wanted" by the police of Chicago and San Francisco. He was tried and convicted; in view of his previous record the judge imposed the full penalty, twenty years in Sing Sing. Imagine the shock and mortifica-

tion of such a revelation to a gentleman and high-strung girl like Grace Williston! She was worse than widowed without ever having been a wife. After Dabney's trial and conviction, her father and friends urged her to take advantage of that merciful law which would automatically free her from such galling chains. However, Grace was a devout churchwoman, and refused to heed these entreaties, claiming tearfully that she had married the man "for better or worse." She even wanted to attend the trial and subsequently visit the condemned criminal in jail; but here Mortimer Williston put his foot down flatly and carried her off to Los Angeles for an indefinite stay. But she wrote several letters to the man who had so grossly deceived her.

Freedom came about in an almost miraculous manner. One day the newspapers contained black-faced front-page articles telling of a successful breakaway and escape at Sing Sing. It seemed that a gang of men were working on the outer wall of the prison on the river side. The month was February; a dense fog hid the Hudson from shore to shore; the river was frozen to mid-channel. When the whistle blew at five o'clock three of the convict gang made a dash for liberty—"Pet" Skent, "Skinny" Toler and "Bill" Dabney—all old-time pals and long-term men. Across the railroad tracks they ran, dashed down the low bank, and out on the ice. Rifle flashes stabbed the fog and bullets sang around the trio, but the case was hopeless under the conditions. It was learned afterward that the fugitives had made for the channel with the intention of swimming across to the ice on the Jersey shore.

That some one had been wounded was evidenced by bloodstains on the snow; next day it was learned that Skent had been picked up by a passing tug-boat; he was shot through the back, and lived only long enough to declare almost with his dying breath that he had seen Toler and Dabney sucked under by the swiftly-flowing tide.

"In that case," said the warden, "look for their bodies in Gravesend Bay next spring."

So, accident or the justice of God had freed Grace Williston. Upon her return to New York, her beauty chastened and refined by the fires of suffering, Stephen Dawlish was one of the first to show his sympathy and appreciation. Their friendship began again where it had left off two years before; the instant that convention permitted, Dawlish proposed again and was accepted, the wedding being set for the ensuing autumn; this time the ceremony was to be very quiet—a house wedding at "The Larches," the Williston place at Great Neck, some ten miles from the Dawlish estate at Locust Valley, and within easy reach by motor.

So much of the story Finney Valentine recalled during the tedious joggling of the train on his way to obey the urgent summons of Steve Dawlish. From what the ex-inspector could gather from the young man's agitated message it looked as though a tragedy threatened once more to mar the life of Grace Williston—for she had resumed her maiden name on the death of Bill Dabney.

But was he dead, after all? Dawlish had distinctly mentioned the "first husband," then "blackmail," and "just killed a man." Such piquant sentences were enough to scorch the wires. However, speculation was useless until all the facts were on tap.

Ten minutes over the hard North Shore roads brought Finney Valentine and Stephen Dawlish face to face in the snug library of "The Boulders." Steve was pale, nervous and on edge with excitement, pacing restlessly up and down the long low-ceiled room.

"Gad! I thought you'd never get here!" exclaimed Dawlish.

"Sit down, man, and get a grip on yourself," commanded Valentine. "Things may not be as bad as you imagine."

"Had! Imagine!" almost shouted the other. "They couldn't be worse! Not that I regret putting that dirty dog out of business, but just see the hole it puts me in. I'm engaged to be married in three days from now. Suddenly that hound, her husband, remember, whom everyone supposed to be dead, turns up and threatens to stop the proceedings—as of course he could! So in sudden passion and disgust I kill him. Justifiable, you say. Yes, but where does that leave me? Would any woman marry the slayer of her husband, no matter how big a villain he was?"

By the end of this incoherent tirade Stephen Dawlish was on his feet once more, pacing up and down the wide rug in front of the drift-wood fire.

"How did it happen?" queried Valentine. "If I am to help you I must have the facts as they occurred, and without any hysterics, mind you."

This little bit of sarcasm calmed the speaker; he poured himself a stiff drink of Scotch and soda, and went on more connectedly:

"I was due at The Larches for dinner with quite a party, and drove over in the car by myself. At the front steps one of Williston's men took the motor round to the garage. I lit a cigarette, being early—about seven-thirty—and stood on the gravel drive admiring the night.

"There's a wide sweep of lawn and ornamental shrubbery in front of the house, and while I stood there a big sweater-clad figure wearing a cloth cap came lurching toward me from behind one of the tree clumps. As he crossed the drive I got a good look at him by the lights from the windows at my back. He came right close and said:

"Guess you're the man I'm looking for—Mr. Stephen Dawlish." There was a nasty sneer in his voice which I didn't like, but I kept my temper and said:

"That's my name. What's yours, and what's your business with me here?"

"The fellow laughed like a fiend and almost pushed his face into mine. "Just two words to answer two questions," he growled, "Bill Dabney!" "I was too astounded to speak for the moment, for instantly I saw all the devilish complications. As though he read my thoughts he went on:

"If you don't believe me, here's some of her letters written while I was waiting trial, and he half drew a small packet from his pocket. There they are, by the way, pointing to the library table. Then he went on: 'You come across here out of those lights and I'll talk.'

"He led the way back to the lawn and behind a clump of rhododendrons,

knocking on his door it was nine o'clock.

"On descending to the morning-room a strange tableau met the astonished gaze of Stephen Dawlish. There, with his back to the fire, his coat-tails trailing, stood Mortimer Williston. By the window, facing into the room, stood Finney Valentine, a grim smile on his usually immobile lips. But, wonder of wonders, as Steve's gaze traveled from one to the other and around the room, he beheld on the further side of the room, seated un-

comfortably on the edge of another chair, the bulky and burly form of the man he had supposedly killed twelve hours before, Bill Dabney!

"Too dazed for utterance, young Dawlish could only cross the room and silently grasp the hands of Grace and her father. But as he looked into the girl's eyes he missed all trace of the grave concern one would naturally have looked for under the circumstances.

As a last resort he turned to Finney Valentine with a question on his lips which the detective forestalled by speaking first.

"Mr. Dawlish, let me make you further acquainted—there was a stress on the word 'further'—let me make you further acquainted with Mr. 'Skinny' Toler, late of Sing Sing and elsewhere."

"But what—" Steve was beginning when Valentine again took up the tale:

"Miss Williston and Mr. Williston, will you kindly tell Mr. Dawlish whether our friend here bears any resemblance to a gentleman whom you once knew as Yancey Daubeny?"

"Never set eyes on him, as it hap-

pearance of the body in so short a time looked fishy to me. Dead men don't get up and walk away, you know. Secondly, you had never met Yancey Daubeny, and consequently could not recognize Bill Dabney, supposing your blackmailing visitor had been he.

"I sized it up that Dabney had really been drowned, or died later, in company with his pal Toler. The latter proved to be the correct guess, and that's how 'Skinny' got the letters, and also learned that you and Dabney had never met. So, while waiting low after the escape from Sing Sing, he plotted to blackmail either Miss Williston or her father by letter, or yourself in person should a favorable opportunity arise. That chance was provided by the announcement of your marriage to the lady.

"He and two of his pals came down here several days ago to look over the ground; they'd been putting up at a cheap roadhouse on the Cold Spring road. After you hit Toler last night and left him for dead his chums crept over the grass, loaded him into a light wagon and drove away. I found their tracks this morning and traced them to Sim Teeple's place.

"I guess that when they saw me they sensed the game was up. All that was necessary was a confession and to confront Toler with Miss Williston. That's all there is to it—except, Steve, my boy, it strikes me you're not much of a success as a murderer—and I'm glad of it! What time do you usually have breakfast here? I've been running about these beautiful roads of yours since five o'clock, first after Toler and then to fetch Miss Williston and her father, and I'm hungry enough to tackle a whale."

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RIDES TO TOWN IN CABOOSE

Mr. Morgan Stops Long Freight Train so Bishop Could Keep an Engagement.

Bishop Potter was spending a Sunday afternoon with Mr. Morgan at the latter's country place at Highland Falls. The village of Highland Falls is a way station on the West Shore road, a few miles below West Point, and the fast trains pass it without a stop on their first long jump away from New York. This is not a matter of much concern to the financier, who always goes back and forth on his yacht; but on this occasion it troubled the bishop. He was loath to travel on Sunday, but he had an important engagement to keep in the city that night, and he remarked that he would have to take a local train, which left a little while before supper.

"Oh, no," said Morgan, "there's a train after that one. Of course, you'll stay to supper."

"I don't see any train," objected the bishop, "and I really must get to town in time to conduct an evening service."

"There's an express," replied his host, disposing of the matter—"I'll have it stopped for you."

An hour or so later, in the thick darkness of an autumn evening, Mr. Morgan took the bishop in his carriage down the steep road to the railroad station. No lights shone from the building. The coachman got out and tried the door and rattled it. Then he came back and reported that the agent had gone home for the night.

The sound of an approaching train was heard, faintly, but growing louder.

"Break in the door," ordered Morgan, impatiently—"get a big stone and smash it!" He and his visitor got out of the carriage and looked on; finally the door gave way. Morgan went inside, and after scratching a number of matches, found a lantern and lit it. "All right, bishop!" he called cheerfully, "come ahead," and he walked out to the middle of the track and waved the light.

With a horrid screeching and squeaking the train stopped. It was a freight; a very long freight. Out of the cab leaned the surprised engineer, and from the caboose somewhere in the faraway darkness the conductor came running up, very angry.

"What do you mean by stopping this train?" he demanded fiercely.

Mr. Morgan, still holding the lantern, told him who he was.

"I don't care a whoop-in-blazes who you are (the conductor's language here becomes so unprintable), you've got no business—why," he choked, "there's an express train followin' us—you'll have a collision!"—but Mr. Morgan paid no more attention to him or his remarks.

"All right, bishop," he was saying gently, "then get right in the caboose and ride to New York."

Which the bishop did.—Metropolitan Magazine.

Fairly Wet World.

The Pacific ocean covers 68,000,000 miles, the Atlantic 30,000,000 and the Indian, Arctic and Antarctic 42,000,000. To stow away the contents of the Pacific it would be necessary to fill a tank one mile long, one mile wide and one mile deep every day for 440 years. Put in figures the Pacific holds in weight 948,000,000,000,000,000 tons.

FURNITURE IN SUMMER

UPHOLSTERED PIECES SHOULD BE COVERED WITH SLIPS.

These May Be of Chintz or Gay Cretonne That Can Be Selected to Match the Wallpaper.

The housekeeper who in winter time rejoices in her beautifully furnished summer time flees from its stuffy presence and hies her to the store where linen abounds. Nothing can help more to cool the appearance of a room than crisp slippery linen furniture slips. Delightful results can be attained at only a small expense, for material costs but from twenty-five to seventy-five cents a yard. For hard service plain brown Holland linen or linen jute is most practical, but often for the something more ornamental. Then come vast quantities of chintz and gay cretonnes from which she may choose. As she is wise she will, of course, choose a material which will harmonize with her wall paper and floor covering. For this purpose a favorite is the material which has a white or deep ecru background, and patterns in old pink, olive green and faded blues. This harmonizes with almost any room whether the wood work be white or mahogany. One attractive room with white wood work had slip covers made of an ivory white material, sprinkled with a rather conventionalized flower in the popular madder shade.

As for the cutting and sewing of furniture covers, authorities say it is no longer permissible to pipe the seams with plain cloth. Seams are hidden and the covers fit snugly now. All of which means that the housewife must be possessed of skilful scissors and cut her slips with phenomenal accuracy to make them fit well—she must hire a professional to help her, which doubles the cost. However, if well made, these covers last several seasons.

Chicken Fricassee.

Take one good sized chicken and cut in pieces ready to serve. Wash and wipe dry, roll in flour and fry in chicken fat or butter until a golden brown. Have a stew pan ready and as the chicken is fried put it in the stew pan, rinse the frying pan with enough boiling water to cover the chicken, then add one onion minced very fine, a tiny piece of garlic, one cup of strained tomatoes, dash of cayenne and black pepper and salt enough to suit taste. Set on back of stove and let simmer till done, stirring frequently so as not to burn.

Rhubarb Jam.

Allow for each pound of rhubarb cut in half-inch pieces one pound of sugar and one lemon. Peel the yellow rind of the lemon off, remove the white part and slice into a bowl, removing the seeds. Turn the rhubarb over the lemon, add the sugar and allow to stand over night. In the morning boil three-quarters of an hour in the preserving kettle, stirring often. Cool slightly after taking from the fire, then pour into airtight jars.

Poncho Cake.

Two cups brown sugar, half a cup of butter, half a cup of sweet milk, two eggs, three cups sifted flour, two teaspoons of yeast powder, half a cup of chocolate filled with half a cup of hot water, added last.

Filling—Two cups of brown sugar, half a cup of sweet milk, one cup of chopped nuts, butter, size of an egg. If filling becomes too stiff to spread upon cake add a little milk.

Salad Dressing.

One egg, one-half teaspoon of salt, one teaspoon of mustard, three teaspoons of flour, two tablespoons of sugar. Beat well together, add three-quarters cup lemon juice, one-half cup of water, small piece of butter. Cook in double boiler, keep stirring until it thickens. When cold you can add a little milk if you like it thinner.

Hold Back Sugar.

Good cranberries can not be made if the sugar is allowed to boil in with the berries. After the cranberries are soft and strained through a colander add a scant pound of sugar to a quart of berries, bring to a boil and cook four minutes. Put three-quarters of a pint of boiling water on the berries when first cooked.

Strawberry Jam.

Allow for each pound of stemmed berries a generous three-quarters of a pound of sugar. Put the fruit over the fire in a preserving kettle and cook half an hour, stirring often. Add the sugar, boil 20 minutes, skim carefully and blot in airtight jars while boiling hot. The berries should be ripe and solid and of good flavor.

Mock Lemon Pie.

One cup sugar, yolks of two eggs, one heaping teaspoon cornstarch. Beat well together, add one teaspoon lemon extract and one cup thick sour milk. Beat well with an egg beater all together and bake in one crust. Beat whites of two eggs stiff, sweeten and spread on pie. Set in oven just a minute or so to brown.



In the KITCHEN

Cake will not stick to their tins if placed on a damp cloth when removed from the oven.

In making crusts of any kind, do not melt the lard in the flour. Melting will injure the crust.

When making fruit pies, damp the edge with milk instead of water. It holds better, and the juice is not liable to boil over.

Before preparing vegetables or fruits that stain the fingers, a very good plan is to previously rub the thumb and fore-finger with a little grease, which will prevent the stains that are so unsightly and difficult to remove.



"YOU HAND ME FIFTY THOUSAND BEFORE THE WEDDING"

I following. When we were out of sight and sound from the house he turned and said:

"Thought I was dead, didn't you? Well, I wasn't, and what's more, I ain't! Now, I'm wise to what's going on, Mister Stephen Dawlish. You're welcome to my wife—I never cared a rap for her—twas the old man's money I wanted most—but you can't have her unless I say so! See! I guess you do! That being so, here's my proposition: You hand me fifty thousand before the wedding and I'll go dead and stay dead this time! If you don't—well you know what'll happen."

"For a moment the cool audacity of the proposal took my breath away. Then, too, it flashed across me that I could easily pay the money and no one be the wiser. But also I saw just as quickly what a hell of uncertainty and constant fear I'd be letting myself in for. Such an unprincipled devil could no more keep faith than fly. These thoughts took but a second or two of time. Then my gorge rose and I sprang at him.

"You dirty blackmailing hound! I shouted. My fist shot out with all my weight of body and shoulder behind it. I landed square on the point of his jaw with a squash—he was soft as putty—I heard his teeth click and his neck snap. Then he went down in a heap.

"It's an awful thing to kill a man like that, Valentine, with your bare fist, and see him lying before you all limp and lifeless. I knew I must hide the body, but before anything else I wanted those letters, so I just grabbed them out of his coat. Then I went up to the house. On the way I made a

opened, for good and sufficient reasons which you can appreciate."

Valentine nodded again, still puffing serenely. Then a third question, indicating the little package on the table:

"Those letters are the real thing, I suppose."

"Well, I haven't read them, of course, but I'd swear to the handwriting as being genuine."

Another and a final nod as Valentine rose:

"You'll put me up for the night?—thanks. Now, Steve, I'm going to bed, and you'd better do likewise. Oh, just tell your man to have the car round at six o'clock."

Dawlish was both amazed and disgusted and showed it.

"Not another word tonight," said Valentine. "I want to sleep on the matter. Tomorrow there may be some news for you—and for Miss Williston."

And that was all he would say. Steve knew from past experience that further protest would be useless. Finney Valentine would not and could not be hurried; he worked according to his own methods and theories or not at all. So he was shown to his room, where he slept the sleep of the just until the streaks of dawn penetrated the curtains of his room.

And although Dawlish was racked and tortured with anxiety—remorse for what he had done was non-existent—after tossing feverishly until the stable clock chimed two—confidence in the great detective finally brought mental calm to the supposed assassin, and he slept long and late. When he awoke in response to a thunderous

"There's a slight resemblance, certainly," said Grace Williston, speaking for both, "but we neither of us ever saw him in our lives until half an hour ago!"

"A rank impostor!" exclaimed Mr. Williston.

"Are you quite satisfied, Mr. Dawlish?" inquired Valentine suavely with a grave twinkle in his eyes.

But Steve was yet too astounded to speak. All he could do was to cross the room to Grace's side and put his arm across her shoulders.

"Then I guess that'll be about all we need of you, Toler," said Valentine, pointing to the door. "Remember what I told you of that rat mouth of yours, and back you go to the pen! You know me!"

The jailbird slunk to the door, pulling on his greasy cap as he went. In a few seconds his giant bulk—he had been dubbed "Skinny" by his pals in pure derision—went past the window and down the drive, to pass out of this story and out of the dilemma which he had created for Stephen Dawlish.

"But what's the explanation?" insisted Steve almost as soon as the door had closed on Toler. "How did you work it out?"

Finney Valentine was ever loth to disclose his methods either by thought or action, so the explanation which he could not in this case defer or deny was characteristically brief and terse.

"The case was simple enough—there were two serious holes in your version of last night's happenings. First, you had no actual proof that you had killed your man—the subsequent dis-

AMATEUR WHO KNOWS IT ALL

Usually it is the Practice of Medicine That Engages His Valuable Attention.

It is astonishing how many amateur physicians one meets nowadays. Briefly defined, the amateur doctor is a person who has never studied medicine at all, but who believes he knows more about such things as smallpox, the use of calomel, etc., than the men

who have studied and worked at these problems for a lifetime.

Usually the amateur doctor is a specialist. His specialty may be anti-vaccination, or the danger of calomel, or the interference with the relief of suffering in its broadest sense by protesting laboratory experiments upon animals under anesthesia.

But now and then we run across a general practitioner. Recently the writer met one, a musician by profession, who studies medicine in the "new thought" magazines and criticizes the regular medical profession

as an avocation during leisure hours. From him the writer learned that vaccination is a crime; that a doctor who administers calomel to a little child deserves to be shot; that the germ origin of disease is more than doubtful; that the medical profession has been grossly remiss in not adopting hypnosis into everyday practice, and that medical ethics are an abomination on the face of the earth.

In exchange for all this information the writer asked a question—namely: What should be said of a medical man who has never studied music—except

by mail, perhaps—if he should volunteer the opinion that the music of Beethoven is devoid of merit; that the banjo is more musical than the violin, that "ragtime" is superior to the music of Edward MacDowell, and that music is not so much of an art after all?

The trouble with lay critics is that they mistake the complexity of the physician's problem for inability on the part of the physician himself. Doubtless medical men, as a class, are about as intelligent and honest as any other class of experts, and it is the

part of wisdom for the outsider to stick to his own business, relying upon the men of medicine to solve their own peculiar problems without the assistance or hindrance of amateurs.—Los Angeles Herald.

Paper Pulp From Tasmania.

An application has been made to confer upon ministers powers to grant reservations of land to a company which proposes to use Tasmania eucalyptus timber for the manufacture of paper. Twelve tons of tim-

ber obtained from Tasmania were re-duced to pulp and declared by experts in London to be suitable for making good paper, either for stationery or printing purposes. The waste timber of the Tasmanian saw-mills would be used for obtaining wood alcohol, acetate of lime and acetone by the destructive distillation of wood. Tests have already been made of Tasmanian timber sent to Canada, which yielded rather a high percentage of alcohol and acid than the Canadian maple and hemlock, and it was also somewhat richer in tar.

Look Up.

"I suppose you'd love a man if he had an aeroplane?"

"Well, I'd certainly look up to him."