

The Exploits of Elaine

A Detective Novel and a Motion Picture Drama

By ARTHUR B. REEVE

The Well-Known Novelist and the Creator of the "Craig Kennedy" Stories

Presented in Collaboration with the Path Players and the Eclectic Film Company

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SYNOPSIS.

The New York police are mystified by a series of murders and other crimes. The principal clue to the criminal is the warning letter which is signed by a "Clutching Hand," the mysterious assassin in Taylor Lodge, the insurance detective. His daughter, Elaine, employs Craig Kennedy, the famous insurance investigator, to unravel the mystery. What Kennedy accomplishes is told by his friend, Jameson, a newspaper man. After many fruitless attempts to pin Elaine and Craig Kennedy out of the way, the Clutching Hand is at last found to be none other than Perry Bennett, Elaine's lawyer and the man she is engaged to marry. Bennett goes to the det of one of his Chinese criminals. The Chinaman forces from Bennett the secret of the whereabouts of Elmo. This he gives the lawyer a position which will suspend animation for months. Kennedy reacts Bennett's side just after he has had consultation.

TWENTY-FIRST EPISODE

THE EAR IN THE WALL.

Elaine sat in the library reading one morning when her maid Marie entered, carrying a long pasteboard box, daintily tied with ribbon.

"Some flowers for you, Miss Elaine. I think," she said handing the box to her mistress.

Marie left the room, and Elaine, after contemplating for a moment in keen anticipation what she thought at first was a gift from Craig Kennedy, opened the box. There lay a splendid bunch of long-stemmed red and white roses.

Nestling in the green leaves was a little white note. She picked it up expectantly and tore it open.

Instantly, however, her face blanched. Instead of a billet doux, it was the most fearsome threat yet which the savage Chinese master criminal, Wu Fang, had sent in the vengeful vendetta which he had sworn on account of the loss of the Clutching Hand's millions.

Elaine had scarcely time to exclaim at its dire meaning when Kennedy himself entered.

"Good morning," he greeted cheerily, then cut the greeting short as he caught the horrified expression on her pretty face. "Why, what's the matter?"

Elaine was too terrified even yet to speak. All she could do was to hand him the note.

The first victim shall be Craig Kennedy of your aunt. You may choose. Place the red roses in the window for your lover, the white for the silver-haired one.

At this end appeared the mysterious sign of the serpent, darting from his fangs a death more than figurative.

"What shall I do?" she appealed. Craig did not answer directly. He could not. Thoughtfully he walked to the window and gazed out. There was only a dirty, bent cripple standing by the corner selling papers to pedestrians.

Kennedy's forehead wrinkled in thought. He turned and walked back from the window. Mechanically he picked up his hat and cane, then laid down the cane again.

"I must look into this at once," he said, lifting the flowers and putting them back into the box carefully, as if he expected trouble to come of the affair.

"You—you'll be very careful, Craig?" pleaded Elaine, as they left the library and went into the hall.

"I will be—for you," he repeated, with a reassuring smile. "Oh—I forgot my cane."

Quickly he returned to the library, leaving her standing in the hallway. There he had purposely left his stick on the table beside the flowers. He selected some from the bunch of red roses and hastily stuck them in a vase and placed the vase on the window sill. Then he picked up the cane and rejoined Elaine in the hall.

Outside the Dodge house the dirty, bent cripple looked about cautiously out of the corner of his eye.

Suddenly he paused as if he had caught sight of a mendicant officer bearing down on him. There on the window sill of the library was a vase of red roses. Hastily he shuffled off on his way.

As fast as his supposedly bent body could straighten itself safely out he hurried downtown with one idea—to reach the secret apartment of Wu Fang, the serpent.

Wu, Long Sin and several other Chinamen were gathered about a table on which was a long oblong oak box. In the cover, which was open, were fastened on the inside two flat spools of silken-covered wire. At each end of the box was placed an ordinary storage battery, and in a compartment between, besides switches and connections, were what looked like six sets of headgear much resembling those worn by wireless operators.

"This," said Wu, holding up a little black disk about as large as a watch, with a dozen or so little perforations in the face, "is the white devil's little mechanical eavesdropper—the telephone—the ear in the wall. By its aid we shall learn all about our enemies, where to strike, when to—"

He stopped short as a servant entered. The session was adjourned from the courtroom in the federal building to a motion picture house, where Dr. William M. Grosvenor, an expert chemist called as a witness by the English company, explained in detail the process of removing copper from ore as the pictures were thrown upon the screen. After the exhibition the hearing was resumed in the courtroom and Doctor Grosvenor continued his testimony.

It was testified that the process shown by the pictures had saved for

Finally he pushed the rat into the hole in the plaster which he had made, and an instant later, loosed the ferret after it, as if on a leash of wire. There Wu stooped over the wire as the ferret scyamed after the scared rat.

Wu faithfully paid out the wire, hoping for the result he had calculated carefully.

At last the tugging at the spool of wire ceased. Three sharp jerks told him he had succeeded. Then Wu set the transmitter in the hole in the wall close up to the baseboard, which he had replaced.

Perhaps half an hour after our return into the laboratory after Kennedy had soaked the mat, he decided after much deliberation to attempt to carry the war into the enemy's country. We left the laboratory, he to seek some clue, I to go down to the Star, where I had a little work to do.

It was that of the crowd which interested him. It was that of the woman who had posed as Elaine—Innocent Inez. He paused a moment as she went by and gazed after her. She had not seen him. This was too good an opportunity to miss. He turned and followed her to the Mandarin, a chop suey joint.

"Is the master in?" she whispered to the proprietor.

"No," he replied, "but Long Sin is in the other place."

A short time afterward, as they still talked, Kennedy after pausing outside the chop suey joint, decided to enter. While Inez and Sam were engaged in earnest conversation he sat down at a table near by with his back to them.

As he sat he could make out there was a room somewhere which was at least one headquarters of Long Sin, if not Wu himself. But it was too risky to remain.

Around on Park row again, he stopped in a drug store where there was a telephone booth and called up the agency whose operatives he had frequently employed on routine matters like shadowing.

"Can you send Chase down here immediately?" he asked, giving the address of the drug store. "I've a little shadowing in Chinatown for him."

It was not very many minutes later that Wu returned to the cellar with a large cardboard box under his arm.

"No one has gone in, master," reported one of the Chinamen.

Wu nodded and turned to another who had been engaged in enlarging the rat hole in the wall.

"Does it run upstairs?" he asked.

"Yes, master," returned the other.

"Then wait here," ordered Wu, taking up the telephone transmitter, the spool of wire and the box.

He left the cellar stealthily and a few minutes later reached the upper hall, which at the time happened to be deserted. Somehow he had obtained a skeleton key which fitted our lock, and with its aid he entered our apartment.

Quickly he looked about the room. Finally his keen judgment told him that the corner by the bookcase was the nearest to the compartment in the cellar in which he had left his lieutenants with the detectaphone.

Wu Fang had a method of wiring in the detectaphone that was all his own. He went over to the corner and drew from his capacious blouse a chisel with which he ripped back a section of the baseboard. After he had removed it he made a little hole in the plaster and laths on the wall.

Next he drew on a pair of thick gloves and carefully reached into the pasteboard box. From it he drew a ferret.

This ferret wore a small leather harness around his shoulders. To this harness Wu attached one end of the wire from the spool, and made sure that the spool would unwind readily.

Then he reached into his pocket and drew out a rat. As he held them, one in each hand, he let the ferret get a good look and smell of the rat as it squeaked in fright.

"Fine work, Chase," complimented Craig, seizing the receiver. "Hello—police headquarters? Connect me with the Elizabeth street station, please."

He waited impatiently. "Sergeant," he shouted, "this is Kennedy. Craig Kennedy. You remember I dropped in there a few minutes ago and told you I was on the trail of something. Well, I've got it. The raised is over the Mandarin. Have it placed at once and we'll get them. Not the Mandarin—the side entrance, one flight up."

He hung up the receiver. "Come, Walter," he cried. "You and Chase can help me now."

While he hurried downtown the police were being detailed for the raid and the patrol wagon was still waiting for the squad.

We drove up in a taxicab just as the wagon swung around the corner. Almost as soon as we, the police were close to the door, we were rushed the Mandarin and arrested the taciturn proprietor. The rest battered down the door of the room.

It was bare.

As we looked about in astounded chagrin, I saw a sign on the wall. "Look—what's that?" I exclaimed. It read mockingly, "FOR RENT."

But underneath was that mystic coiled reptile, ready to spring, with fangs extended—the sign of the serpent!

Wu Fang had already plugged in the six receivers of the detectaphone and, though we did not know it, was eagerly listening with the others down in the cellar as Kennedy gave his orders for the raid.

"Tom," muttered Wu, "you must get down there at once."

Inez and Long Sin had scarcely had time to enjoy half a dozen luxurious whiffs before the secret rapping sounded at the door. Long Sin opened it and Tom, usually imperturbable, almost rushed in.

"The master—has learned—the police—raid—here," he announced, breathlessly.

Wu Fang had outwitted us and saved both Long Sin and Inez by the marvelous little eavesdropper.

It was some time after Kennedy left the Dodge house that Elaine re-



Caught at Last!

turned to the library, still thinking about the note which she had received with the flowers. As she entered she hardly noticed that both Marie and Jennings were there.

She had scarcely awakened from her day dream in which she was walking, as it were, when her quick eye caught sight of the vase of red roses on the window sill.

"Who put those flowers there?" she demanded of the astounded butler and maid, as she dashed them to the floor.

Neither of them, naturally, knew a thing about it. Nor did Aunt Josephine, who happened to pass through the room at the moment.

"Oh, I must see him—I must!" cried Elaine excitedly, as she hurried out for her wraps. "Who knows what may have happened?"

We returned to our apartment, chagrined, after out flat failure to capture either Long Sin or even get evidence against Wu.

As we entered the apartment, Craig dropped into a chair, scowling to himself. I watched him in gloomy sympathy. Suddenly his face brightened.

"What do you think they—"

He cut me short with his finger on his lips, pantomiming silence. Instead of answering me he wrote on a slip of paper and handed it to me.

"There must be a detectaphone in this room. Talk about the weather—anything—while I locate it."

Finally Craig went over to his desk and took out a small piece of apparatus. He placed a peculiar telephonelike contrivance attached to one end of it up to his ear. He adjusted the magnet and carried the thing carefully about the room.

Suddenly he paused and his face wrinkled. He stooped down and made

a mark with a pencil on the baseboard. It was at that moment that Elaine's car stopped outside the apartment.

"Oh," she cried with an eager sigh of relief at seeing Kennedy all right, as she almost ran toward him. "I'm so glad you—"

She stopped short as Craig motioned to her to be silent. She did not understand, and for the moment stopped complused, as he picked up a pencil and began to write on a pad instead of meeting her advance.

An instant later her mobile face looked up at him in wonder as she read:

"Every word we say is being overheard through a detectaphone in the wall. Don't be surprised at anything I say."

Then he walked deliberately over to the wall near which the instrument was concealed and leaned down to insure his words being heard distinctly by those listening.

"I am going over to the laboratory for an hour," he said in a loud, distinct tone. "Jameson, will you escort Miss Dodge home?"

"Why, certainly," I replied with alacrity.

A moment later we all left the room, chatting in forced tones about a hundred inconsequential things. Craig banged the door.

But before we left he reached into his pocket and took out the flask and atomizer which I had seen him place there. He poured the contents of the flask on the rug.

I accompanied Elaine to her car and we drove away while Kennedy left the apartment on foot.

Downstairs, Wu Fang had been listening at the other end of the detectaphone.

Their attention was soon at fever heat when Elaine entered our rooms. Wu, Long Sin and the others listened breathlessly.

The Chinaman waited until they heard us go out. Wu then handed Long Sin a vial and a key. "You understand?"

"Yes, master," nodded Long Sin with an evil leer.

He hastily climbed the stairs from the cellar to our apartment. For a few seconds he stood on the rug as he inserted the skeleton key in the lock. Then, swinging the door open cautiously he entered. He looked about a minute. The apartment was empty.

Slowly Long Sin walked over to the table and began examining the articles on it. Finally he picked up Kennedy's pipe, and again his inscrutable face lighted with diabolical joy.

He took the vial quickly from his pocket, and, with a small, soft brush laid the mouthpiece of the pipe with the liquid from the vial.

He laid the pipe down as he found it and beat a hasty retreat.

We had scarcely time to drive to Elaine's house when a message reached us from Kennedy directing us to return and meet him several squares below our apartment.

We did so immediately. There was Kennedy with Chase and three or four policemen.

"In ten minutes I want you to raid the apartment," he said, looking at his watch. "I am going in there now."

He entered the building and, as he opened our door, drew a gun, kicking the door open and retreating a step. No one was there and he went in.

Craig looked about a moment. On the surface, nothing had been disturbed. He went through the bedrooms. Nothing was disturbed there.

Slowly he went back again to the doorway, all the time careful not to step on the rug. Starting near it, he began spraying the floor with the atomizer.

It was one of his own inventions, which he called a "photo-mat."

As the spray fell on the carpet and hardwood it developed Long Sin's footprints exactly.

Carefully Kennedy followed them as the chemicals brought them out. Long Sin had not walked around the room much, evidently, as Craig advanced slowly along the floor, still spraying. As each step came out it was apparent that Long Sin had done little else but go to the table and then leave.

Craig looked at the table a moment. There seemed to be nothing on it that would attract a man of Long Sin's temperament. Mechanically, Craig picked up his pipe lying there and looked at it contentedly. He sniffed at the mouthpiece. There was a peachstone smell.

"Cyanide," he muttered to himself under his breath, laying the pipe down gingerly.

For a moment he thought, then a sudden impulse seemed to seize him. His mind was made up. He moved closer to the marked baseboard. Suddenly he uttered a sharp cry.

"Hello—central! Help! Help! I'm poisoned!"

At the same time he struck the wall a blow as though he were falling.

Down in the cellar the six Chinamen looked at each other in unfeigned delight as they heard the call for help.

Quickly Wu pulled the detectaphone receiver off his head.

"Here—take this," he ordered Long Sin, handing him a paper which he drew from under his blouse.

Long Sin took it and looked at it with a smile of satisfaction. He understood. On the paper was drawn Wu's sign of the serpent, with fangs striking viciously and victoriously.

Beckoning to another of the Chinamen, Long Sin went out and upstairs.

Meanwhile Craig, who had been listening at the door expecting some such incursion, heard Long Sin approaching. He seated himself in a

chair, sprawling out rigidly, eyes closed.

Without waiting, Long Sin and his servant entered stealthily. The Chinaman stood in the doorway and Long Sin slowly crept over to Kennedy's chair.

As he reached down to pin the sign of the serpent on Kennedy's apparently lifeless body, Craig seemed and came to life. He seized Long Sin and they struggled fiercely, while Craig, freeing one hand, whipped out his automatic and fired sideways at the Chinaman in the doorway.

The Chinaman fell, lay there a moment, then raised himself up and with fast ebbing strength managed to crawl out of the doorway and down the hall.

It was a death grapple between Craig and the wild Long Sin. At last they had each other face to face. But it was unequal. Short and sharp came the moves.

Craig had in his pocket a newly invented pair of handcuffs which snapped automatically over first one and then the other of Long Sin's bony wrists. Then he pressed the bracelets tighter until even Long Sin winced.

As Craig stood panting over his prisoner, the wounded Chinaman staggered downstairs until he almost fell into the cellar.

"Master," he gasped. "He is—alive!"

"The mere hint of Kennedy's name

was as though some word of black magic had been spoken to them. The three other Chinamen fell back as if in fear of an uncanny power.

Wu, white with anger, raised his hand, and they covered still.

"Is anyone else there with him?" demanded Wu.

The wounded Chinaman had only strength to shake his head in the negative.

"Then there is time yet," ground out Wu furiously. "Follow me."

Craig was still bending over Long Sin making sure of his capture when he heard the scurry of footsteps outside. It was Wu and his servants. Craig rushed to the door, but not in time to close it.

Instantly his gun spat a fatal dab of smoke and fire at the foremost Chinaman, who dropped. Craig seized the next onrushing Oriental and flung him over his head, butting him like a human battering ram directly into Wu.

Craig's onslaught had been fiercer and more unexpected than the Chinamen had bargained for. They recoiled. Kennedy instantly slammed the door on Wu and the rest.

They recovered in a few seconds and returned to the attack, battering against the door. It swayed and creaked with the weight of the Chinamen pushing against it, while Kennedy plucked away blindly with his gun through the panels.

Down the street I wondered, as the minutes passed, what was happening behind the calm exterior of our apartment. Elaine was anxious; Chase was impatient. But I wished to be exact.

As the ten minutes ended I gave the signal to the driver. The police crowded in with us and we shot around the corner and up the street. In front of the apartment we could see and hear now that shots were being fired off. Were we in time?

We dashed upstairs. As we came down the hall we caught a glimpse of Wu Fang and his underlings at our door. They had almost broken through.

They were too late to get Kennedy, but we were too late to get them.

Wu knocked out the foremost policeman and dashed down the hallway with another after him. He managed to gain the roof and slamming the door up there braced it on the other side. Then, crossing the roofs, he succeeded in reaching another apartment and escaping.

"Craig," I shouted, pulling on the battered but still locked door. "This is Walter."

The door opened and we piled into Kennedy's room.

There sat Long Sin, at last manacled and bound, sullen, in a chair. Elaine breathed a sigh of relief as she seized both of Kennedy's hands.

"You—you got him at last!" she cried.

"Yes," he answered, caressing her hand gently, "but there is still the master criminal."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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(TO BE CONTINUED.)

RULES OF UP-TO-DATE ZOO

Compiled for the Benefit of Visitors Who Without Proper Guidance Might Get Into Trouble.

All persons are prohibited from playing with the animals. If you are a monkey, don't recognize your friends at the zoo. Fraternizing with the animals is considered a serious offense, no matter if the animal shows more intelligence than the one trying to torment him.

It shall be unlawful to stroke the whiskers of Caesar, the male lion, or to pull the tails of any of the lions at any time. Visitors must not interfere with the food that is given the lions or put their hands into the mouths of the bears.

Making eyes at the baboons and shaking hands with the monkeys are not permitted at any time. Visitors must not pull the horns of the buffalo or strike the ears of the ostrich. Children are warned not to ride on the backs of the deer.

Violations of these park regulations will be punishable by solitary confinement in the dog pound for six months.—Springfield News.

His Bid.

Between the blonde young woman on the other side of the car and her stout neighbor next to the left there intervened a space perhaps four inches in width. Clinging to the strap just in front of the blonde woman was a cheerful individual whose uncertain footing was, it seemed, not wholly due to the jolting and jerking of the common carrier. Presently he fastened an ingratiating smile upon the young woman.

"Madam," murmured he, "if you lemme sit down in that place there by you I'd—vote for woman suffrage."—New York Evening Post.

The indications are that Europe, at least, will have an old-fashioned Fourth of July.

Makes Hard Work Harder

A bad back makes a day's work twice as hard. Backache usually comes from weak kidneys, and if headaches, dizziness or urinary disorders are added, don't wait—get help before the kidney disease takes a grip—before dropsy, gravel or Bright's disease sets in. Doan's Kidney Pills have brought new life and new strength to thousands of working men and women. Used and recommended the world over.

An Indiana Case

Harrison LeVell, 811 N. Sexton St., Rushville, Ind., says: "For fourteen years I have had attacks of kidney trouble, being obliged to get up at night to pass the kidney secretions.