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CHAPTER XIV

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The Murderr Speaks.

Who turned on the lights I do not sknow. As soon as they flashed on, we looked at each other inquiringly, our eyes filled with fear. Who had cried out in terror and broken the circle? Bartley motioned to us te sit down again, and took his stand back of the table. He seemed to me to be very weary, and his eyes rested on us sadly, as if he web reluctant to proceed further. It was not until we moved realtessly under his intent gaze that he said, "I am not going to make any comment on what we have just seen." He paused for a second, then added impressively, "But I think I ought to tell you that I know who killed both Siyke and Briffeur."

There was a nurmur of astonishment. Currie looked at me appealingly, but I knew no more than he. Roche whispered to Black, and they exchanged looks of bewilderment.
Bartley still hesitated, as if he were very reluctant to continue.

"I know that some of you doubt it we can prove that Mr. Siyke was mur-

"I know that some of you doubt it we can prove that Mr. Slyke was mur-dered. You say there are no clues and I admit that I have never seen a and I admit that I have never seen a case in which there were so few. There is no doubt, however, that he was murdered, though it is difficult to say what the motive was. In the case of Briffeur, it was very simple," "Simple" Roche gasped.

"Yes, simple. There was but one reason and one way, and even one person, that could have killed him." This statement was too much for Roche: he shook his heard in disbe-

This statement was too much for Roche; he shook his heard in disbe

person, that could have killed him."
This statement was too much for Roche; he shook his heard in disbellef.

"Let's consider Mr. Slyke's death for a moment." Bartley continued. "After the party was over, Slyke asked Mr. Lawrence to stay behind and offered to sell him some whisky. They had a drink, then Lawrence went home. But we found three glasses, showing that someone besides Lawrence had drunk with Siyke. Let us say this third person killed Slyke. Understand me: I do not believe that, when he came, he had any intention of killing him—that came later. We will assume that Slyke and this third person went upon the balcony, for what reason I cannot say, but I am sure that Slyke was the one that suggested going there. No murderer would have selected it, voluntarily, as a place in which to kill his victim."

He paused for a second, then continued: "After Slyke had been killed, the thought occurred to the murderer that it was possible to make his death look like suicide. He undressed the body in the room above the bedroom, and later carried his clothing downstairs, placing it on a chair beside the bed. But he overlooked a stocking that had fallen on the floor behind the door of the room above. Criminals, no matter how shrewd, always make some mistake that betrays them; this person drew the bed-clothes up around Slyke's neck. If he had not done that, I doubt if we would ever have suspected that Slyke was murdered. The shot took effect at once. It would have been impossible for him to have drawn the bed-clothes up around his own neck, and placed his hands by his side before he died."

The doctor's voice sounded perplexed as he said, "But, Mr. Bartley,

piaced his hands by his side before he died."

The doctor's voice sounded perplexed as he said, "But, Mr. Bartley, this is ail a rather fine-spun theory," "I expected that someone would say that." Bartley smiled, "It is more than an unsupported theory. However, let us proceed. The murderer went down to the living room and brought back with him two cards, which he threw on the floor of the room where the glasses were. If its being suicide was questioned, then the finding of the cards would throw suspicion on the members of the card party."

"He was a pretty cool hand," Black

"Yes, he was cool enough. He went downstairs into the room where the dog was—"Oche commenced.

Barttey did not let him finish. "Yes, "The dog should have barked.

I know. The dog should have barked.
The reason he did not was because
the man was no stranger to him."
The doctor spoke once more, "But
you have not prowed any of these
things are so; you are just suppostine."

you have not proved any to things are so; you are just supposing."
"No," came the answer, "I have not, but let us consider some of the points that have been proved. Slyke tried to telephone several times during the evening and failed to get his party each time."

Roche and Black were astonished. This was the first time they had heard anything about the telephone calls.
"When he failed again and again to got the person he wanted." Bartley continued the call and the call

At the same of

and locate him tor him. All calls from here go through the Saratoga exchange, and it was very easy to find out whom he wanted. But that is not all. On a magazine found on the table beside the whisky glasses were a number of little circles drawn with a pencil, circles that ran into each other."

a pencil, circles that ran into each other."

"What has that to do with it?" saked Black, voicing his wonder, "A great deal. Those same circles were on the handle of the knife with which Briffeur was killed. I have also a little piece of paper with similar circles drawn on it, and I know the person who drew them. It has been proved scientifically that if a person is playing with a pencil and begins to make figures unthinkingly on anything, his subconscious mind will trick him into always drawing the same design. I found the circles on the magazine in Slyke's room, on the knife that killed Briffeur, and again on the piece of paper. I know to whom Slyke telephoned, and I know also a person who saw the murderer enter

Slyke telephoned, and I know also a person who saw the murderer enter the house to call on Slyke the night he was killed."

We leaned forward breathlessly to catch his words, which came with a cold, cutting edge, as he added crisply. "Now, knowing all this, don't you think the person that drew the circles, that was telephoned to, that was seen going into Slyke's, has something to explain? Don't you think so, Doctor King?"

There was no answer, and Bartley

Doctor King?"

There was no answer, and Bartley demanded sternly, "Doctor King, you are not going to deny, are you, that you killed those two men?"

The question was so unexpected that I sat stunned. He was the last man I should have suspected. Currie cried, "My G—d, John," and fell stlent. The doctor's face had gone a dead white, and he sank limply back in his chair. Without raising his eyes, he stammered, scarcely above a whisper, the words drawn from him against his will, "No-o—no—I killed them both."

ne stammered, scarcely above a whisper, the words drawn from him against his will, "No-o-no-I killed them both."

The next instant he realized what he had said and half rose from his chair, then fell back, clasping his head in his hands. I could not believe my ears. That Bartley should suspect the doctor of the murders seemed incredible enough; but that it was true was beyond belief. Roche looked first at the doctor, then-at-Bartley, his eyes bulging with aston-ishment. Black alone seemed to realize all that the doctor's admission entailed. Currle was still too dazed to understand, for King had been a good friend of his.

Bartley broke the silence with, "We have proved that the doctor is the guilty party, He himself has admitted it. I have suspected him for some time, but when he gave that I was right."

The doctor was still sitting with his head in his hands, and Bartley glanced down at him pityingly before he continued to the rest of us, "From the first, I suspected that whoever had killed Siyke had some knowledge of medicine. The average layman would not have known how to place the revolver in Siyke's hand in such a way that it would appear to be suicide. The point that puzzled me was that the eyes were almost closed. If the guilty person knew enough to place the revolver in Siyke's hand before it stiffened, he should have known that he eyes ought to be open. Miss Potter explained this discrepancy by saying that she had closed the even her. the revolver in Slyke's hand before it stiffened, he should have known that the eyes ought to be open. Miss Potter explained this discrepancy by saying that she had closed the eyes herself, frightened by their stare. Then I was baffled. True, there were the circles on the magazine, but I did not know who made them and there seemed no way of finding out. Then one day, while I was in the doctor's office, he kept drawing little figures on a pad before him as he talked. When he was called to the 'phone, I took out the piece of paper on which he had been drawing and had carelessly thrown it into a waste-paper basket as he passed. On it were the same figures that I had found on the magazine cover. Even then I was slow to believe he could be the murderer, bough science had proved that a per-

mind and action.

in mind when you go marketing.

the knife hands were the circles such as I had found showhers. Scorees had scratched them on it in a moment of idleness. It was a treach his fact of idleness. It was a treach his front; he was the only one directly in pront of Briffeur, and the only one who could have thrown it. We had all agreed that Briffeur was killed because he knew who had murdered Slyke, and that the same man murdered them both. There is another poof, also. The only person, outside of the family, that the dog liked was Doctor King. The day we found Slyke dead the dog came in, growled at the reset of us but let King pat him."

The doctor raised his head, his face white save for two red spots in either white save for two red spots in either

The doctor raised his head, his face white save for two red spots in either cheek. His eyes were pools of blaz-



ing light. He looked at us wildly for ing light. He looked at us wildly look a second, then threw out his hands and in a voice, low at first but growing louder as he continued, he admitted, "yes, I killed them. I never intended to do so, God knows! It all goes back some time—"

tended to do so, God knows! It all goes back some time—"
Baïrley interrupted him. "To the time when you got mixed up with Siyke and Betrifeur, selling whisky?"
"Yes—yes, that was it. It goes back to that." His volce failered, then he recovered. "I came back from the war, broke. Slyke suggested that I go in with him on running whisky. I had a camp and fast motorboat on Lake Champlain; it was all I did have. He suggested we run the whisky down the lake from Canada to myamp, then bring it on here and hide it in the vault. He never played fair with us; he cheated us again and again. That's why Briffeur suggested we break into the house and see if he had told the truth about the amount of money he said he got for it. He kept the records of all our sales in his safe. We tried to—you know the rest about the robbery."

His volce trailed off into a whisper.

know the rest about the robbery."
His voice trailed off into a whisper.
I recalled that he had been shell-shocked, and wondered if he could stand the strain he was undergoing.
"The night I was at Currie's to diner and met Mr. Bartley it was Slyke who called me up on the 'phone."
His voice was shrill now, and I thought he would break down at any women!

moment.
"He said he wished to see me, and I started over here. I ran into Briffeur, who told me that Slyke had sold the rest of the whisky for \$23,000. Well—where was I?" He stopped, confused, and passed his hand over

one day, while I was in the doctor's office, he kept drawing little figures on a pad before him as he talked. When he was called to the 'phone, I took out the plece of paper on which he had been drawing and had carelessly thrown it into a waste-paper basket as he passed. On it were the same figures that I had found on the magazine cover. Even then I was slow to believe he could be the murderer, though science had proved that a person always draws the same design. I found the same symbols on the knife handle. There was but one way he could have been killed."

"My G—d, how?" Roche gasped out. "The knife blow came from the front. You who sat next to the chaufteur heard nothing. No one could have crept up on him without making some sound. Therefore the knife had to be thrown."

"Thrown?" we gasped.

"Yes. That was the only way it could have reached him. The blow came from directly in front of Briffer. It could only be thrown. Upon

ectly and of the right kind of

the knife with you?" Bartley asked.

He thought for a moment. It seemed hard for him to gather himself together enough to answer, "I don't know—oh, yes, I had used it to cut a strap on my car. When I arrived here the day of the inquest, I found I had left it on, the floor and I put it in my bag. There was a bag on the table all the time, you remember."

ber."

It was easy to see that the doctor
was in such a nervous collapse that
he could say no more; he slumped
down in his chair and closed his eyes.
There was some whispered conversation between Roche and Bartley; and
then, as it not liking the task, Rochewent over and placed his hand on the
dector's problem. At his truch the

then, as if not liking the task, Roche went over and placed his hand on the doctor's shoulder. At his touch the doctor's shoulder. At his touch the doctor stiffened. He knew too well what it meant. Shaking off the hand he slowly rose and walked, with an effort, to where Bartley stood.

"Mr. Bartley," he said, his voice trembling, "will you shake hands with me? I hear you no ill will. It's a long journey before me."

Into Bartley's eyes came a look of comprehending pitty, and even admiration. He grasped his hand and silently the two men, one a murderer the other the detective that had apprehended him, looked into each other's eyes. Then slowly their handifell apart and Roche led Doctor King from the room.

None of us spoke until Bartley.

None of us spoke until Bartle,
None of us spoke until Bartle,
broke the silence by saying, almost it
a whisper, "Poor chap! God alont
knows what he has gone through."
Suddenly Currie demanded, "John
what about those slates and that aw
ful ghost? I never was so scared it
my life."
For the first the control of the control of the first t

For the first time a smile crossed Bartley's face. "The states? Why I wrote the messages."

"Ine states? Why I wrote the messages."

"You! But we washed them," Cur rie exclaimed.

"Surely, you washed them. That was the whole trick. I wrote those messages with a came!'s hair brush in hydrochoric acid with a bit of zinc in it. When that mixture is washed with water, the writing is blotted our until the slate dries again. You remember I always washed one side first; that was the side with the writing on it. Then I let you wash the other; and, of course, that made you sure that there was nothing on the slate. Had you not seen it washed with your own eyes? When the slate dried, the writing simply reappeared."

Miss Potter had been sitting, over

muss Potter had been sitting, over come by what had taken place. But as Bartley's explanation ceased she cried, "Then I did not receive a message from Mr. Slyke?"

"No, Miss Potter." Bartley said

"No, Miss Potter." Bartley said

"But the raps?" she questioned.

"Oh, I produced the raps. Almost all of that sort of thing is a fake, you know. You remember that I had you place your hand on the table. Then I rose and turned out the lights When I came back I slipped you the thumb and little fluger of my right hand, You thought, of course, that both my hands were being held. They were not. You only held one, while the other was free to give the raps. The medium was tied and gagged, but you can't tie one of those chaps so surely that they cannot speak and move when they want to."

Currie gave a long sigh of disappointment. "Then I never saw a ghost at all?"

"No, Bob," came the answer, "you

pointment. "Then I never saw a jhost at ail?"

"No, Bob." came the answer, "you did not. Everything was staged to lead up to the words you heard that figure say. What you saw was one of the medium's assistants palitted with phosphorus so that he would glow in the dark. He was covered with a black velvet bag, made in sections; and another man, wearing black gloves and a mask to make him invisible, removed the sections of the bag one by one. This gave him the appearance of materializing suddenly out of the air. The head was a mask modeled from a photograph of Slyke. When the figure vanished, the second man had simply covered him from head to foot with a black cloth, thus blotting him from your sight. The whole trick has been used again and again by so-called mediums."

Black rose to his feet saying, "Mr.

again by so-called mediums."

Black rose to his feet saying, "Mr. Bartley, you have solved three problems by one solution—the two murders and the robbery."

As Bartley was about to answer the telephone rang and he left the room as if he had anticipated the message. We could hear his cool, low voice say, "Yes, this is Mr. Bartley, Yes, Roche. No. I am not surprised. It's the best thing, after all, that could have happened."

When he returned to us his face was very grave and sad, yet with something of relief in it.

"Roche tells me," he said slowly.

something of relief in it.
"Hoche tells me," he said slowly.
"that when he reached the station
King was dead. Suicide."
The news did not startle me. I,
too, felt relieved. Bartley was silent
a moment, playing with the bug before him on the table. Suddenly he
raised his head.

rore nim on tentole. To raised his head.

"You know he wished to say goodby to me. I knew then what he was going to do. I could have had him searched and have prevented it, but it he better so. He has not been himself for months; we will never know all that he has suffered. I am sorry for him. What a great darkness must have covered his life for the last few days! Now it is over."

He was silent again for a moment, and then added, "He took the best way out of the affair."

[THE END.]

Pursuant to an order of Hon-ernard B. Ackerman, Surrogate of Allegany County, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against Roxana B. Burrows, late of

given to all persons having claims against Roxans B. Burrows, late of Andover, in the County of Allegany, deceased, that they are required to present the same with the vouches thereof, to Frank W. Burrows, the executor of the last will and testament of the said deceased, at the Burrows National Bank in the Village of Andover, N. Y., on or before the fifteenth day of July, 1923.

FRANK W. BURROWS,

Executor.

Robbins, Phillips & Robbins, Attorneys for Executor, Hornell, N. Y.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Poruant to an order of Hon. Bernard B. Ackerman, Surrogate of the County of Allegany, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against the estate of Orange Smith, late of the Town of Andover, N. Y., deceased, to present the same with proper vouchers thereof to the undersigned Executors, at the Law Office of Crayton L. Earley in the Village of Andover, N. Y., on or before the 3th day of September, 1923.

Dated February 26, 1923.

HARRY G. SMITH,
EUGENE SMITH,
EUGENE SMITH,
Executors.

NOTICE!

NOTICE!
Proposals for the position of foreman on the mile of county road to be built by the Town of Andover will be received by the Town Board at the office of Henry Stephens, at 1:30 o'clock, on April 30, 1923.

ROBT. BRUNDAGE,
Town Clerk.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN
That my wife, Frances Hurlburt,
has left my bed and board without
just cause or provocation, and I
hereby forbid any person trusting
her, or giving credit to her on my ac-Dated, April 16, 1923. — 7 EMON R. HURLBURT



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