The STRANGE CASE OF CAVENDISH

RANDALL PARRISH

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

C. T. FARISH

1-3--20

Digitized by Google

Collectors'
Old Book Shop
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

THE STRANGE CASE OF CAVENDISH

RANDALL PARRISH

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

THE STRANGE CASE OF CAVENDISH

BY

RANDALL PARRISH

AUTHOR OF "THE DEVIL'S OWN," "WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING," "MY LADY OF THE NORTH," ETC.

NEW YORK

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

Digitized by Google

Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COPYRIGHT, 1918,
BY RANDALL PARRISH

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	The Reaching of a Decision	9
II	The Body on the Floor	15
III	Mr. Enright Declares Himself	21
IV	A Breath of Suspicion	27
V	On the Track of a Crime	32
VI	At Steinway's	37
VII	Miss Donovan Arrives	45
VIII	A Gang of Enemies	52
IX	A Night and a Morning	60
X	At a New Angle	67
XI	Dead or Alive	76
XII	Viewed from Both Sides	85
XIII	The Shot of Death	95
XIV	Lacy Learns the Truth	104
XV	Miss La Rue Pays a Call	114
XVI	Captured	124
XVII	In the Shoshone Desert	134
XVIII	In Mexican Power	144
XIX	Westcott Finds Himself Alone	153
XX	To Compel an Answer	162
XXI	The Marshal Plays a Hand	172
XXII	The Rock in the Stream	183
XXIII	The Escape	193
XXIV	The Cave in the Cliff	203

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXV	In the Dark Passage	212
XXVI	The Reappearance of Cavendish	219
XXVII	A Dangerous Prisoner	228
XXVIII	With Back to the Wall	239
XXIX	A Needle in a Haystack	251
XXX	On the Edge of the Cliff	262
XXXI	With Force of Arms	274
XXXII	In the Two Cabins	286
XXXIII	The Real Mr. Cavendish	294
XXXIV	Miss Donovan Decides	302

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

THE STRANGE CASE OF CAVENDISH

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

THE STRANGE CASE OF CAVENDISH

CHAPTER I: THE REACHING OF A DECISION

FOR the second time that night Frederick Cavendish, sitting at a small table in a busy café where the night life of the city streamed continually in and out, regarded the telegram spread out upon the white napery. It read:

Bear Creek, Colorado,
4/2/15.

FREDERICK CAVENDISH,
College Club,
New York City.
Found big lead; lost it again. Need you badly.
WESTCOTT.

For the second time that night, too, a picture rose before him, a picture of great plains, towering mountains, and open spaces that spoke the freedom and health of outdoor living. He had known that life once before, when he and Jim Westcott had prospected and hit the trail together, and its appeal to him now after three years of shallow sightseeing in the city was deeper than ever.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"Good old Jim," he murmured, "struck pay-dirt at last only to lose it and he needs me. By George, I think I'll go."

And why should he not? Only twenty-nine, he could still afford to spend a few years in search of living. His fortune left him at the death of his father was safely invested, and he had no close friends in the city and no relatives, except a cousin, John Cavendish, for whom he held no love, and little regard.

He had almost determined upon going to Bear Creek to meet Westcott and was calling for his check when his attention was arrested by a noisy party of four that boisterously took seats at a near-by table. Cavendish recognised the two women as members of the chorus of the prevailing Revue, one of them Celeste La Rue, an aggressive blonde with thin lips and a metallic voice, whose name was synonymous with midnight escapades and flowing wine. His contemptuous smile at the sight of them deepened into a disgusted sneer when he saw that one of the men was John Cavendish, his cousin.

The two men's eyes met, and the younger, a slight, mild-eyed youth with a listless chin, excused himself and presented himself at the elder's table.

"Won't you join us?" he said nervously.

Frederick Cavendish's trim, bearded jaw tightened and he shook his head. "They are not my people," he said shortly, then retreating, begged, "John, when are you going to cut that sort out?"

"You make me weary!" the boy snapped. "It's easy enough for you to talk when you've got all the money—that gives you an excuse to read me moral homilies every time I ask you for a dollar, but Miss La Rue is as good as any of your friends any day."

The other controlled himself. "What is it you want?" he demanded directly: "Money? If so, how much?"

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"A hundred will do," the younger man said eagerly. "I lost a little on cards lately, and have to borrow. To-night I met the girl——"

Frederick Cavendish silenced him and tendered him the bills. "Now," he said gravely, "this is the last, unless—unless you cut out such people as Celeste La Rue and others that you train with. I'm tired of paying bills for your inane extravagances and parties. I can curtail your income and what's more, I will unless you change."

"Cut me off?" The younger Cavendish's voice took on an incredulous note.

The other nodded. "Just that," he said. "You've reached the limit."

For a moment the dissipated youth surveyed his cousin, then an angry flush mounted into his pasty face.

"You—you—" he stuttered, "—you go to hell."

Without another word the elderly Cavendish summoned the waiter, paid the bill, and walked toward the door. John stared after him, a smile of derision on his face. He had heard Cavendish threaten before.

"Your cousin seemed peeved," suggested Miss La Rue.

"It's his nature," explained John. "Got sore because I asked him for a mere hundred and threatened to cut off my income unless I quit you two."

"You told him where to go," Miss La Rue said, laughing. "I heard you, but I don't suppose he'll go—he doesn't look like that kind."

"Anyhow, I told him," laughed John; then producing a large bill, cried: "Drink up, people, they're on me—and goody-goody cousin Fred."

When Frederick Cavendish reached the street and the fresh night air raced through his lungs he came

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

to a sudden realisation and then a resolution. The realisation was that since further pleading would avail nothing with John Cavendish, he needed a lesson. The resolution was to give it to him. Both strengthened his previous half-hearted desire to meet Westcott, into determination.

He turned the matter over in his mind as he walked along until reflection was ended by the doors of the College Club which appeared abruptly and took him in their swinging circle. He went immediately to the writing-room, laid aside his things and sat down. The first thing to do, he decided, was to obtain an attorney and consult him regarding the proper steps. For no other reason than that they had met occasionally in the corridor he thought of Patrick Enright, a heavy-set man with a loud voice and given to wearing expensive clothes.

Calling a page boy, he asked that Enright be located if possible. During the ensuing wait he outlined on a scrap of paper what he proposed doing. Fifteen minutes passed before Enright, suave and apparently young except for growing baldness, appeared.

"I take it you are Mr. Cavendish," he said, advancing, "and that you are in immediate need of an attorney's counsel."

Cavendish nodded, shook hands, and motioned him into a chair. "I have been called suddenly out of town, Mr. Enright," he explained, "and for certain reasons which need not be disclosed I deem it necessary to execute a will. I am the only son of the late William Huntington Cavendish; also his sole heir, and in the event of my death without a will, the property would descend to my only known relative, a cousin."

"His name?" Mr. Enright asked.

"John Cavendish."

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The lawyer nodded. Of young Cavendish he evidently knew.

"Because of his dissolute habits I have decided to dispose of a large portion of my estate elsewhere in case of my early death. I have here a rough draft of what I want done." He showed the paper. "All that I require is that it be transposed into legal form."

Enright took the paper and read it carefully. The bulk of the $1,000,000 Cavendish estate was willed to charitable organisations, and a small allowance, a mere pittance, was provided for John Cavendish. After a few inquiries the attorney said sharply: "You want this transcribed immediately?"

Cavendish nodded.

"Since it can be made brief I may possibly be able to do it on the girl's machine in the office. You do not mind waiting a moment?"

Cavendish shook his head, and rising, the attorney disappeared in the direction of the office. Cavendish heaved a sigh of relief; now he was free, absolutely free, to do as he chose. His disappearance would mean nothing to his small circle of casual friends, and when he was settled elsewhere he could notify the only two men who were concerned with his whereabouts—his valet, Valois, and the agent handling the estate. He thought of beginning a letter to John, but hesitated, and when Enright returned he found him with pen in hand.

"A trifling task," the attorney smiled easily. "All ready for your signature, too. You sign there, the second line. But wait—we must have witnesses."

Simms, the butler, and the doorman were called in and wrote their names to the document and then withdrew, after which Enright began folding it carefully.

"I presume you leave this in my care?" he asked shortly.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Cavendish shook his head: "I think not. I prefer holding it myself in case it is needed suddenly. I shall keep my rooms, and my man Valois will remain there indefinitely. Now as to your charges."

A nominal sum was named and paid, after which Cavendish rose, picked up his hat and stick and turned to Enright.

"You have obliged me greatly," he smiled, "and, of course, the transaction will be considered as strictly confidential." And then seeing Enright's nod bade him a courteous "Good night."

The attorney watched him disappear. Suddenly he struck the table with one hand.

"By God!" he muttered, "I'll have to see this thing a little further."

Wheeling suddenly, he walked to a telephone booth, called a number and waited impatiently several moments before he said in intense subdued tones: "Is this Carlton's Café? Give me Jackson, the head-waiter. Jackson, is Mr. Cavendish—John Cavendish—there? Good! Call him to the phone will you, Jackson? It's important."

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER II: THE BODY ON THE FLOOR

THE early light of dawn stealing in faintly through the spider-web of the fire-escape ladder, found a partially open window on the third floor of the Waldron apartments, and began slowly to brighten the walls of the room within. There were no curtains on this window as upon the others, and the growing radiance streamed in revealing the whole interior. It was a large apartment, furnished soberly and in excellent taste as either lounging-room or library, the carpet a dark green, the walls delicately tinted, bearing a few rare prints rather sombrely framed, and containing a few upholstered chairs; a massive sofa, and a library table bearing upon it a stack of magazines.

Its tenant evidently was of artistic leanings for about the room were several large bronze candle-sticks filled with partially burned tapers. A low bookcase extended along two sides of the room, each shelf filled, and at the end of the cases a heavy imported drapery drawn slightly aside revealed the entrance to a sleeping apartment, the bed's snowy covering unruffled. Wealth, taste and comfort were everywhere manifest.

Yet, as the light lengthened, the surroundings evidenced disorder. One chair lay overturned, a porcelain vase had fallen from off the table-top to the floor and scattered into fragments. A few magazines had fallen also, and there were miscellaneous papers scattered about the carpet, one or two of them torn as though jerked open by an impatient hand. Still others lying near the table

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

disclosed corners charred by fire, and as an eddy of wind whisked through the window and along the floor it tumbled brown ashes along with it, at the same time diluting the faint odour of smoke that clung to the room. Back of the table a small safe embedded in the wall stood with its door wide open, its inner drawer splintered as with a knife blade and hanging half out, and below it a riffle of papers, many of them apparently legal documents.

But the one object across which the golden beams of light fell as though in soft caress was the motionless figure of a man lying upon his back beside the table near the drapeless window. Across his face and shoulders were the charred remains of what undoubtedly had been curtains on that window. A three-socketed candle-stick filled with partially burned candles which doubtless had been knocked from the table was mute evidence of how the tiny flame had started upon its short march. As to the man's injuries, a blow from behind had evidently crushed his skull and, though the face was seared and burned, though the curtain's partial ashes covered more than a half of it, though the eye-lashes above the sightless eyes were singed and the trim beard burned to black stubs, the face gave mute evidence of being that of Frederick Cavendish.

In this grim scene a tiny clock on the mantel began pealing the hour of eight. As though this were a signal for entrance, the door at the end of the bookcase opened noiselessly and a man, smooth faced, his hair brushed low across his forehead, stepped quietly in. As his eyes surveyed the grewsome object by the table, they dilated with horror; then his whole body stiffened and he fled back into the hall, crashing the door behind him.

Ten minutes later he returned, not alone, however.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

This time his companion was John Cavendish but partially dressed, his features white and haggard.

With nervous hands he pushed open the door. At the sight of the body he trembled a moment, then, mastering himself, strode over and touched the dead face, the other meanwhile edging into the room.

"Dead, sir, really *dead?*" the late comer asked.

Cavendish nodded: "For several hours," he answered in an unnatural voice. "He must have been struck from behind. Robbery evidently was the object—cold-blooded robbery."

"The window is open, sir, and last night at twenty minutes after twelve I locked it. Mr. Cavendish came in at twelve and locking the window was the last thing I did before he told me I could go."

"He left no word for a morning call?"

Valois shook his head: "I always bring his breakfast at eight," he explained.

"Did he say anything about suddenly leaving the city for a trip West? I heard such a rumour."

"No, sir. He was still up when I left and had taken some papers from his pocket. When last I saw him he was looking at them. He seemed irritated."

There was a moment's silence, during which the flush returned to Cavendish's cheeks, but his hands still trembled.

"You heard nothing during the night?" he demanded.

"Nothing, sir. I swear I knew nothing until I opened the door and saw the body a few moments ago."

"You'd better stick to your story, Valois," the other said sternly. "The police will be here shortly. I'm going to call them, now."

He was calm, efficient, self-contained now as he got Central Station upon the wire and began talking.

"Hello, lieutenant? Yes. This is John Cavendish of

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

the Waldron apartments speaking. My cousin, Frederick Cavendish, has been found dead in his room and his safe rifled. Nothing has been disturbed. Yes, at the Waldron, Fifty-Seventh Street. Please hurry."

Perhaps half an hour later the police came—two bull-necked plain-clothes men and a flannel-mouthed "cop."

With them came three reporters, one of them a woman. She was a young woman, plainly dressed and, though she could not be called beautiful, there was a certain patrician prettiness in her small, oval, womanly face with its grey kind eyes, its aquiline nose, its firm lips and determined jaw, a certain charm in the manner in which her chestnut hair escaped occasionally from under her trim hat. Young, aggressive, keen of mind and tireless, Stella Donovan was one of the few good woman reporters of the city and the only one the *Star* kept upon its pinched pay-roll. They did so because she could cover a man-size job and get a feminine touch into her story after she did it. And, though her customary assignments were "sob" stories, divorces, society events and the tracking down of succulent bits of general scandal, she nevertheless enjoyed being upon the scene of the murder even though she was not assigned to it. This casual duty was for Willis, the *Star's* "police" man, who had dragged her along with him for momentary company over her protest that she must get a "yarn" concerning juvenile prisoners for the Sunday edition.

"Now, we'll put 'em on the rack." Willis smiled as he left her side and joined the detectives.

A flood of questions from the officers, interspersed frequently with a number from Willis, and occasionally one from the youthful *Chronicle* man, came down upon Valois and John Cavendish, while Miss Donovan, silent and watchful, stood back, frequently letting her eyes ad-

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

mire the tasteful prints upon the walls and the rich hangings in the room of death.

Valois repeated his experience, which was corroborated in part by the testimony of John Cavendish's valet whom he had met and talked with in the hall. The valet also testified that his employer, John Cavendish, had come home not later than twelve o'clock and immediately retired. Then John Cavendish established the fact that ten minutes before arriving home he had dropped Celeste La Rue at her apartment. There was no flaw in any of the stories to which the inquisitors could attach suspicion. One thing alone seemed to irritate Willis.

"Are you sure," he said to Cavendish, "that the dead man is your cousin? The face and chest are pretty badly burned you know, and I thought perhaps——"

A laugh from the detectives silenced him while Cavendish ende[illegible] any fleeting doubts with a contemptuous gaze.

"You can't fool a man on his own cousin, youngster," he said flatly. "The idea is absurd."

The crime unquestionably was an outside job; the window opening on the fire-escape had been jimmied, the marks left being clearly visible. Apparently Frederick Cavendish had previously opened the safe door—since it presented no evidence of being tampered with—and was examining certain papers on the table, when the intruder had stolen up from behind and dealt him a heavy blow probably, from the nature of the wound, using a piece of lead pipe. Perhaps in falling Cavendish's arm had caught in the curtains, pulling them from the supporting rod and dragging them across the table, thus sweeping the candlestick with its lighted tapers down to the floor with it. There the extinguished wicks had ignited the draperies, which had fallen across the stricken man's face and body. The clothes, torso, and legs, had

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

been charred beyond recognition but the face, by some peculiar whim of fate, had been partly preserved.

The marauder, aware that the flames would obliterate a portion, if not all of the evidence against him, had rifled the safe in which, John testified, his cousin always kept considerable money. Scattering broadcast valueless papers, he had safely made his escape through the window, leaving his victim's face to the licking flames. Footprints below the window at the base of the fire-escape indicated that the fugitive had returned that way. This was the sum of the evidence, circumstantial and true, that was advanced. Satisfied that nothing else was to be learned, the officers, detectives, Willis, and Miss Donovan and the pale *Chronicle* youth withdrew, leaving the officer on guard.

The same day, young John, eager to be away from the scene, moved his belongings to the Fairmount Hotel, and, since no will was found in the dead man's papers, the entire estate came to him, as next of kin. A day or two later the body was interred in the family lot beside the father's grave, and the night of the funeral young John Cavendish dined at an out-of-the-way road-house with a blonde with a hard metallic voice. Her name was Miss Celeste La Rue.

And the day following he discharged François Valois without apparent cause, in a sudden burst of temper. So, seemingly, the curtain fell on the last act of the play.

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER III: MR. ENRIGHT DECLARES HIMSELF

ONE month after the Cavendish murder and two days after he had despatched a casual, courteous note to John Cavendish requesting that he call, Mr. Patrick Enright, of Enright and Dougherty, sat in his private office on the top floor of the Collander Building in Cortlandt Street waiting for the youth's appearance. Since young Cavendish had consulted him before in minor matters, Mr. Enright had expected that he would call voluntarily soon after the murder, but in this he was disappointed. Realising that Broadway was very dear to the young man, Enright had made allowances, until, weary of waiting, he decided to get into the game himself and to this end had despatched the note, to which Cavendish had replied both by telephone and note.

"He ought to be here now," murmured Mr. Enright sweetly, looking at his watch, and soon the expected visitor was ushered in. Arising to his feet the attorney extended a moist, pudgy hand.

"Quite prompt, John," he greeted. "Take the chair there—and pardon me a moment."

As the youth complied Enright opened the door, glanced into the outer room, and gave orders not to be disturbed for the next half-hour. Then, drawing in his head, closed the door and turned the key.

"John," he resumed smoothly, "I have been somewhat surprised that you failed to consult me earlier regarding the will of your late cousin Frederick."

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"His—his will!" John leaned forward amazed, as he stared into the other's expressionless face. "Did—did he leave one?"

"Oh! that's it," the attorney chuckled. "You didn't know about it, did you? How odd. I thought I informed you of the fact over the phone the same night Frederick died."

"You told me he had called upon you to prepare a will—but there was none found in his papers."

"So I inferred from the newspaper accounts," Enright chuckled dryly, his eyes narrowing, "as well as the information that you had applied for letters of administration. In view of that, I thought a little chat advisable—yes, quite advisable, since on the night of his death I *did* draw up his will. Incidentally, I am the only one living aware that such a will was drawn. You see my position?"

Young Cavendish didn't; this was all strange, confusing.

"The will," resumed Mr. Enright, "was drawn in proper form and duly witnessed."

"There can't be such a will. None was found. You phoned me shortly before midnight, and twenty minutes later Frederick was in his apartments. He had no time to deposit it elsewhere. There is no such will."

Enright smiled, not pleasantly by any means.

"Possibly not," he said with quiet sinister gravity. "It was probably destroyed and it was to gain possession of that will that Frederick Cavendish was killed."

John leaped to his feet, his face bloodless: "My God!" he muttered aghast, "do you mean to say——"

"Sit down, John; this is no cause for quarrel. Now listen. I am not accusing you of crime; not intentional crime, at least. There is no reason why you should not naturally have desired to gain possession of the will. If an accident happened, that was your misfortune. I

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

merely mention these things because I am your friend. Such friendship leads me first to inform you what had happened over the phone. I realised that Frederick's hasty determination to devise his property elsewhere was the result of a quarrel. I believed it my duty to give you opportunity to patch that quarrel up with the least possible delay. Perhaps this was not entirely professional on my part, but the claims of friendship are paramount to mere professional ethics."

He sighed, clasping and unclasping his hands, yet with eyes steadily fixed upon Cavendish, who had sunk back into his chair.

"Now consider the situation, my dear fellow. I have, it is true, performed an unprofessional act which, if known, would expose me to severe criticism. There is, however, no taint of criminal intent about my conduct and, no doubt, my course would be fully vindicated, were I now to go directly before the court and testify to the existence of a will."

"But that could not be proved. You have already stated that Frederick took the will with him; it has never been found."

"Quite true—or rather, it may have been found, and destroyed. It chances, however, that I took the precaution to make a carbon copy."

"Unsigned?"

"Yes, but along with this unsigned copy I also retain the original memoranda furnished me in Frederick Cavendish's own handwriting. I believe, from a legal standpoint, by the aid of my evidence, the court would be very apt to hold such a will proved."

He leaned suddenly forward, facing the shrinking Cavendish and bringing his hand down hard upon the desk.

"Do you perceive now what this will means? Do you

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

realise where such testimony would place you? Under the law, providing he died without a will, you were the sole heir to the property of Frederick Cavendish. It was widely known you were not on friendly terms. The evening of his death you quarrelled openly in a public restaurant. Later, in a spirit of friendship, I called you up and said he had made a will practically disinheriting you. Between that time and the next morning he is murdered in his own apartments, his safe rifled, and yet, the only paper missing is this will, to the existence of which I can testify. If suspicion is once cast upon you, how can you clear yourself? Can you prove that you were in your own apartments, asleep in your own bed from one o'clock until eight? Answer that."

Cavendish tried, but although his lips moved, they gave utterance to no sound. He could but stare into those eyes confronting him. Enright scarcely gave him opportunity.

"So, the words won't come. I thought not. Now listen. I am not that kind of a man and I have kept still. No living person—not even my partner—has been informed of what has occurred. The witnesses, I am sure, do not know the nature of the paper they signed. I am a lawyer; I realise fully the relations I hold to my client, but in this particular case I contend that my duty as a man is of more importance than any professional ethics. Frederick Cavendish had this will executed in a moment of anger and devised his estate to a number of charities. I personally believe he was not in normal mind and that the will did not really reflect his purpose. He had no thought of immediate death, but merely desired to teach you a lesson. He proposed to disappear—or at least, that is my theory—in order that he might test you on a slender income. I am able to look upon the whole matter from this standpoint, and base my conduct accord-

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

ingly. No doubt this will enable us to arrive at a perfectly satisfactory understanding."

The lawyer's voice had fallen, all the threat gone, and the younger man straightened in his chair.

"You mean you will maintain silence as to the will?"

"Absolutely; as a client your interests will always be my first concern. Of course I shall expect to represent you in a legal capacity in settling up the estate, and consequently feel it only just that the compensation for such services shall be mutually agreed upon. In this case there are many interests to guard. Knowing, as I do, all the essential facts, I am naturally better prepared to conserve your interests than any stranger. I hope you appreciate this."

"And your fee?"

"Reasonable, very reasonable, when you consider the service I am doing you, and the fact that my professional reputation might so easily be involved and the sums to be distributed, which amount to more than a million dollars. My silence, my permitting the estate to go to settlement, and my legal services combined, ought to be held as rather valuable—at, let us say, a hundred thousand. Yes, a hundred thousand; I hardly think that is unfair."

Cavendish leaped to his feet, his hand gripping his cane.

"You damned black——"

"Wait!" and Enright arose also. "Not so loud, please; your voice might be heard in the outer office. Besides it might be well for you to be careful of your language. I said my services would cost you a hundred thousand dollars. Take the proposition or leave it, Mr. John Cavendish. Perhaps, with a moment's thought, the sum asked may not seem excessive."

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"But—but," the other stammered, all courage leaving him, "I haven't the money."

"Of course not," the threat on Enright's face changing to a smile. "But the prospects that you will have are unusually good. I am quite willing to speculate on your fortunes. A memoranda for legal services due one year from date—such as I have already drawn up—and bearing your signature, will be quite satisfactory. Glance over the items, please; yes, sit here at the table. Now, if you will sign that there will be no further cause for you to feel any uneasiness—this line, please."

Cavendish grasped the penholder in his fingers, and signed. It was the act of a man dazed, half stupefied, unable to control his actions. With trembling hand, and white face, he sat staring at the paper, scarcely comprehending its real meaning. In a way it was a confession of guilt, an acknowledgment of his fear of exposure, yet he felt utterly incapable of resistance. Enright unlocked the door, and projected his head outside, comprehending clearly that the proper time to strike was while the iron was hot.

Calling Miss Healey, one of his stenographers, he made her an official witness to the document and the signature of John Cavendish.

Not until ten minutes later when he was on the street did it occur to John Cavendish that the carbon copy of the will, together with the rough notes in his cousin's handwriting, still remained in Enright's possession. Vainly he tried to force himself to return and demand them, but his nerve failed, and he shuffled away hopelessly in the hurrying crowds.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IV: A BREATH OF SUSPICION

AS François Valois trudged along the night streets toward his rooming house his heart was plunged in sorrow and suspicion. To be discharged from a comfortable position for no apparent reason when one contemplated no sweet alliance was bad enough, but to be discharged when one planned marriage to so charming a creature as Josette La Baum was nothing short of a blow. Josette herself had admitted that and promptly turned François's hazards as to young Cavendish's motives into smouldering suspicion, which he dared not voice. Now, as he paused before a delicatessen window realising that unless he soon obtained another position its dainties would be denied him, these same suspicions assailed him again.

Disheartened, he turned from the pane and was about to move away, when he came face to face with a trim young woman in a smart blue serge. "Oh, hello!" she cried pleasantly, bringing up short. Then seeing the puzzled look upon the valet's face, she said: "Don't you remember me? I'm Miss Donovan of the *Star*. I came up to the apartments the morning of the Cavendish murder with one of the boys."

Valois smiled warmly; men usually did for Miss Donovan. "I remember," he said dolorously.

The girl sensed some underlying sorrow in his voice and with professional skill learned the cause within a minute. Then, because she believed that there might be more to be told, and because she was big-hearted and

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

interested in every one's troubles, she urged him to accompany her to a near-by restaurant and pour out his heart while she supped. Lonely and disheartened, Valois accepted gladly and within half an hour they were seated at a tiny table in an Italian café.

"About your discharge?" she queried after a time.

"I was not even asked to accompany Mr. Frederick's body," he burst out, "even though I had been with him a year. So I stayed in the apartment to straighten things, expecting to be retained in John Cavendish's service. I even did the work in his apartments, but when he returned and saw me there he seemed to lose his temper, wanted to know why I was hanging around, and ordered me out of the place."

"The ingrate!" exclaimed the girl, laying a warm, consoling hand on the other's arm. "You're sure he wasn't drinking?"

"I don't think so, miss. Just the sight of me seemed to drive him mad. Flung money at me, he did, told me to get out, that he never wanted to see me again. Since then I have tried for three weeks to find work, but it has been useless."

While she gave him a word of sympathy, Miss Donovan was busily thinking. She remembered Willis's remark in the apartments, "Are you sure of the dead man's identity? His face is badly mutilated, you know"; and her alert mind sensed a possibility of a newspaper story back of young Cavendish's unwarranted and strange act. How far could she question the man before her? That she had established herself in his good grace she was sure, and to be direct with him she decided would be the best course to adopt.

"Mr. Valois," she said kindly, "would you mind if I asked you a question or two more?"

"No," the man returned.

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"All right. First, what sort of a man was your master?"

Valois answered almost with reverence:

"A nice, quiet gentleman. A man that liked outdoors and outdoor sports. He almost never drank, and then only with quiet men like himself that he met at various clubs. Best of all, he liked to spend his evenings at home reading."

"Not much like his cousin John," she ventured with narrowing eyes.

"No, ma'am, God be praised! There's a young fool for you, miss, crazy for the women and his drinking. Brought up to spend money, but not to earn any."

"I understand that he was dependent upon Frederick Cavendish."

"He was, miss," Valois said disgustedly, "for every cent. He could never get enough of it, either, although Mr. Frederick gave him a liberal allowance."

"Did they ever quarrel?"

"I never heard them. But I do know there was no love lost between them, and I know that young John was always broke."

"Girls cost lots on Broadway," Miss Donovan suggested, "and they keep men up late, too."

Valois laughed lightly. "John only came home to sleep occasionally," he said; "and as for the women—one of them called on him the day after Mr. Frederick was killed. I was in the hall, and saw her go straight to his door—like she had been there before. A swell dresser, miss, if I ever saw one. One of those tall blondes with a reddish tinge in her hair. He likes that kind."

Miss Donovan started imperceptibly. This was interesting; a woman in John Cavendish's apartment the day after his cousin's murder! But who was she? There were a million carrot-blondes in Manhattan. Still, the

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

woman must have had some distinguishing mark; her hat, perhaps, or her jewels.

"Did the woman wear any diamonds?" she asked.

"No diamonds," Valois returned; "a ruby, though. A ruby set in a big platinum ring. I saw her hand upon the knob."

Miss Donovan's blood raced fast. She knew that woman. It was Celeste La Rue! She remembered her because of a press-agent story that had once been written about the ring, and from what Miss Donovan knew of Miss La Rue, she did not ordinarily seek men; therefore there must have been a grave reason for her presence in John Cavendish's apartments immediately after she learned of Frederick's death.

Had his untimely end disarranged some plan of these two? What was the reason she had come in person instead of telephoning? Had her mysterious visit anything to do with the death of the elder Cavendish?

A thousand speculations entered Miss Donovan's mind.

"How long was she in the apartment?" she demanded sharply.

"Fifteen or twenty minutes, miss—until after the hallman came back. I had to help lay out the body, and could not remain there any longer."

"Have you told any one else what you have told me?"

"Only Josette. She's my *fiancée*. Miss La Baum is her last name."

"You told her nothing further that did not come out at the inquest?"

Valois hesitated.

"Maybe I did, miss," he admitted nervously. "She questioned me about losing my job, and her questions brought things into my mind that I might never have thought of otherwise. And at last I came to believe that it wasn't Mr. Frederick who was dead at all."

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The valet's last remark was crashing in its effect.

Miss Donovan's eyes dilated with eagerness and amazement.

"Not Frederick Cavendish! Mr. Valois, tell me—why?"

The other's voice fell to a whisper.

"Frederick Cavendish, miss," he said hollowly, "had a scar on his chest—from football, he once told me—and the man we laid out, well, of course his body was a bit burned, but he appeared to have no scar at all!"

"You know that?" demanded the girl, frightened by the import of the revelation.

"Yes, miss. The assistant in the undertaking rooms said so, too. Doubting my own mind, I asked him. The man we laid out had no scar on his chest."

Miss Donovan sprang suddenly to her feet.

"Mr. Valois," she said breathlessly, "you come and tell that story to my city editor, and he'll see that you get a job—and a real one. You and I have started something, Mr. Valois."

And, tossing money to cover the bill on the table, she took Valois's arm, and with him in tow hurried through the restaurant to the city streets on one of which was the *Star* office, where Farriss, the city editor, daily damned the doings of the world.

That night when Farriss had heard the evidence his metallic eyes snapped with an unusual light. Farriss, for once, was enthusiastic.

"A great lead! By God, it is! Now to prove it, Stella"—Farriss always resorted to first names—"you drop everything else and go to this, learn what you can, spend money if you have to. I'll drag Willis off police, and you work with him. And damn me, if you two spend money, you've got to get results! I'll give you a week—when you've got something, come back!"

Digitized by Google

Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER V: ON THE TRACK OF A CRIME

IN the city room of the *Star,* Farriss, the city editor, sat back in his swivel chair smoking a farewell pipe preparatory to going home. The final edition had been put to bed, the wires were quiet, and as he sat there Farriss was thinking of plunging "muskies" in Maine streams. His thoughts were suddenly interrupted by a clatter of footsteps, and, slapping his feet to the floor, he turned to confront Willis and Miss Donovan.

"Great God!" he started, at their appearance at so late an hour.

Miss Donovan smiled at him. "No; great luck!"

"Better than that, Mr. Farriss," echoed Willis. "We've got something; and we dug all week to get it."

"But it cost us real money—enough to make the business office moan, I expect, too," Miss Donovan added.

"Well, for Pete's sake, shoot!" demanded Farriss. "Cavendish, I suppose?"

The two nodded. Their eyes were alight with enthusiasm.

"In the first place," said the girl, with grave emphasis, "Frederick Cavendish did not die intestate as supposed. He left a will."

Farriss blinked. "By God!" he exclaimed. "That's interesting. There was no evidence of that before."

"I got that from the servants of the College Club," Willis interposed. "The will was drawn the night before the murder. And the man that drew it was Patrick Enright, of Enright and Dougherty. Cavendish took away

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

a copy of it in his pocket. And, Mr. Farriss, I got something else, too—Enright and young John Cavendish are in communication further. I saw him leaving Enright's office all excited. Following my hunch, I cultivated Miss Healey, Enright's stenographer, and learned that the two had an altercation and that it was evidently over some document."

Farriss was interested.

"Enright's in this deep," he muttered thoughtfully, "but how? Well—what else?"

Stella Donovan began speaking now:

"I fixed it with Chambers, the manager of the Fairmount, to get Josette La Baum—she's Valois's *fiancée,* you remember—into the hotel as a maid. Josette 'soaped the keyhole' of the drawers in John Cavendish's rooms there. I had a key made from the soap impression, and from the contents of the correspondence we found I learned that Celeste La Rue, the blonde of the Revue, had got some kind of hold on him. It isn't love, either; it's something stronger. He jumps when she holds the hoop."

"La Rue's mixed up in this deeply, too," Willis cut in. "Neither one of us could shadow her without uncovering ourselves, so we hired an International operative. They cost ten dollars a day—and expenses. What he learned was this—that while she was playing with young Cavendish and seeing him almost daily, the lovely Celeste was also in communication with—guess who!"

"Enright?" Farriss ventured.

"Exactly—Enright," he concluded, lighting his half-smoked cigarette.

"Well," the city editor tapped his desk; "you two have done pretty well, so far. You've got considerable dope. Now, what do you make of it?"

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

He bent an inquiring gaze on both the girl and the youth.

"You do the talking, Jerry," Miss Donovan begged Willis; "I'm very tired."

Willis was only too eager; Willis was young, enthusiastic, reliable—three reasons why the *Star* kept him.

"It may be a dream," he said, smiling, "but here is the way I stack it up. The night after he quarrelled with John, Frederick Cavendish called in Enright and made a will, presumably, cutting John off with practically nothing.

"Immediately after Frederick's departure, Enright calls Carlton's Café and talks to John Cavendish, who had been dining there with Celeste La Rue.

"It is reasonable to suppose that he told him of the will. Less than five hours afterward Frederick Cavendish is found dead in his apartments. Again it is reasonable to suppose that he was croaked by John Cavendish, who wanted to destroy the will so that he could claim the estate.

"These Broadway boys need money when they travel with chorines. Anyhow, the dead man is buried, and John starts spending money like water. One month later he receives a letter—Josette patched the pieces together—asking him to call at Enright's office.

"What happened there is probably this: Young Cavendish was informed of the existence of the will, and it was offered to him at a price which he couldn't afford to pay—just then.

"Perhaps he was frightened into signing a promise to pay as soon as he came into the estate—tricked by Enright. Enright, as soon as he heard no will had been found in Frederick's effects, may have figured that perhaps John killed him, or even if he did not, that, nevertheless,

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

he could use circumstances to extract money from the youngster, who, even if innocent, would fear the trial and notoriety that would follow if Enright publicly disclosed the existence of that will.

"John Cavendish may be innocent, or he may be guilty, but one thing is certain—he's being badgered to death by two people, from what little we know. One of them is the La Rue woman; the other is Enright.

"Now I wonder—Mr. Farriss, doesn't it occur to you that they may be working together like the woman and the man in the Skittles case last year? You remember then they got a youngster in their power and nearly trimmed him down to his eye-teeth!"

Farriss sat reflecting deeply, chewing the stem of his dead pipe.

"There's something going on—that's as plain as a red banner-head. You've got a peach of a start, so far, and done good pussyfooting—you, too, Stella—but there's one thing that conflicts with your hypothesis——"

The two leaned forward.

"Valois's statement that he was almost positive that the dead man was not Cavendish," the city editor snapped.

"I now believe Valois is mistaken, in view of developments," said Willis with finality. "So does Stella—Miss Donovan, I mean. Remember the body was charred across the face and chest—and Valois was excited."

Farriss was silent a moment.

"Stick to it a while longer," he rapped out; "and get La Rue and Cavendish together at their meeting-place, if you can discover it."

"We can!" interjected Willis. "That's something I learned less than an hour ago. It's Steinway's Café, the place where the police picked up Frisco Danny and Mad

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Mike Meighan two years ago. I followed them, but could not get near enough to hear what they said."

"Then hop to it," Farriss rejoined. "Stick around there until you get something deeper. As for me—I'm going home. It's two o'clock."

Digitized by Google
Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VI: AT STEINWAY'S

IT was the second night after Farriss had given them his instructions that Miss Donovan and Willis, sitting in the last darkened booth in Steinway's Café, were rewarded for their vigil. The booth they occupied was selected for the reason that it immediately joined that into which Willis had but three days before seen Cavendish and the La Rue woman enter, and now as they sat toying with their food, their eyes commanding the entire room, they saw a woman swing into the café entrance and enter the booth directly ahead of them.

"La Rue!" whispered Willis to Miss Donovan.

Ten minutes later a young man entered the café, swept it quickly with his eyes, then made directly for the enclosure occupied by his inamorata. The man was Cavendish.

In the booth behind, Miss Donovan and Willis were all attention, their ears strained to catch the wisps of conversation that eddied over the low partition.

"Pray for the orchestra to stop playing," whispered Miss Donovan, and, strangely enough, as she uttered the words the violins obeyed, leaving the room comparatively quiet in which it was not impossible to catch stray sentences of the subdued conversation.

"Well, I'm here." It was John's voice, an ill-humoured voice, too. "But this is the last time, Celeste. These meetings are dangerous."

"Yes—when you talk so loud." Her soft voice scarcely reached the listeners. "But this time there was a good

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

reason." She laughed. "You didn't think it was love, did you, deary?"

"Oh, cut that out!" disgustedly. "I have been foolish enough to satisfy even your vanity. You want more money, I suppose."

"Well, of course," her voice hardening. "Naturally I feel that I should share in your good fortune. But the amount I want now, and must have to-night—to-night, John Cavendish—is not altogether for myself. I've heard from the West."

"My God! Has he been located?"

"Yes, and is safe for the present. Here, read this telegram. It's not very clear, but Beaton wants money and asks me to bring it."

"You? Why does he need you?"

"Lack of nerve, I guess; he's out of his element in that country. If it was the Bowery he'd do this sort of job better. Anyhow, I'm going, and I want a roll. We can't either of us afford to lie down now."

Cavendish half smothered an oath.

"Money," he ejaculated fiercely. "That is all I hear. Enright has held me up something fierce, and you never let me alone. Suppose I say I haven't got it."

"Why, then, I'd laugh at you, that's all. You may not love me any more, my dear, but surely you have no occasion to consider me a fool. I endeavour to keep posted on what the court is doing in our case; I am naturally interested, you know. You were at the Commercial National Bank this afternoon."

"How the devil did you know that?"

"I play my cards safe," she laughed mirthlessly. "I could even tell you the size of your check, and that the money is still on your person. You intended to place it in a safe-deposit box and keep it hidden for your own use."

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"You hellion, you!" Cavendish's voice rose high, then later Miss Donovan heard him say more softly: "How much do you want?"

"Ten thousand. I'm willing enough to split fifty-fifty. This Colorado job is getting to be expensive, deary. I wouldn't dare draw on you through the banks."

Miss Donovan had only time to nudge Willis enthusiastically before she overheard the next plea.

"Celeste, are you trimming me again?"

"Don't be a fool!" came back in subdued tones. "Do you think that telegram is a fake? My Gawd—that is what I want money for! Moreover, I should think you would be tickled, Johnnie boy, to get me out of town—and the price is so low."

In the back booth Willis muttered:

"God, things are going great." Then he bent his ear to sedulous attention and again he could hear the voice of Cavendish.

"You've got to tell me what you're going to do with the money," it said.

The La Rue woman's answer could not be heard; evidently it was a whispered one, and therefore of utmost importance. Came a pause, a clink of glasses, and then a few straggling words filtered over the partition.

"Isn't that the best way?" Celeste La Rue's voice was easily recognisable. "Of course it will be a—well, a mere accident, and no questions asked."

"But if the man should talk!"

"Forget it! Ned Beaton is an oyster. Besides, I've got the screws on him. Come on, Johnnie boy, don't be a fool. We are in this game and must play it out. It has been safe enough so far, and I know what I am doing now. You've got too much at stake to haggle over a few thousand, when the money has come to you as easily

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

as this has. Why, if I'd breathe a word of what I know in this town——"

"For God's sake, not so loud!"

"Bah! No one here is paying any attention to us. Enright is the only one who even suspicions, and his mouth is shut. It makes me laugh to think how easily the fools were gulled. We've got a clear field if you will only let me play the game out in my own way. Do I get the money?"

He must have acceded, for his voice no longer rose to a high pitch. Presently, when the orchestra began playing again, Miss Donovan and Willis judged the pair were giving their attention to the dinner. Finally, after an hour had passed, Cavendish emerged from the booth, went to the check-room, and hurriedly left the café. Waiting only long enough to satisfy herself that Cavendish was gone, Celeste La Rue herself emerged from the booth and paused for a moment beside its bamboo curtains. Then turning suddenly, she made her way, not toward the exit of the café, but to another small booth near the check-room, and into this she disappeared.

But before she had started this short journey, a yellow piece of paper, closely folded, slipped from her belt where it had been tucked.

"It's the telegram! The one of which they were speaking." Miss Donovan's voice whispered dramatically as her eyes swept the tiny clue within their ambit.

Willis started. He almost sprung from the booth to pick it up, but the girl withheld him with a pressure of the hand.

"Not yet," she begged. "Wait until we see who leaves the other booth into which La Rue just went."

And Willis fell back into the seat, his pulse pounding. Presently, with startled eyes, they beheld Celeste la Rue leave the booth, and then five minutes later a well-dressed

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

man, a suave, youthful man with a head inclined toward baldness.

"Enright!" muttered Willis.

"Enright," echoed Miss Donovan, "and, Jerry, our hunch was right. He and La Rue are playing Cavendish—and for something big. But now is our time to get the telegram. Quick—before the waiter returns."

At her words Willis was out of the booth. As Miss Donovan watched, she saw him pass by the folded evidence. What was wrong? But, no—suddenly she saw his handkerchief drop, saw him an instant later turn and pick it up, and with it the telegram. Disappearing in the direction of the men's room, he returned a moment later, paid the check, and with Miss Donovan on his arm left the café.

Outside, and three blocks away from Steinway's, they paused under an arc-light, and with shaking hands Willis showed her the message. There in the flickering rays the girl read its torn and yet enlightening message.

lorado, May 19, 1915.

him safe. Report and collect.
come with roll Monday sure
've seen papers. Remember Haskell.

NED.

"It's terribly cryptic, Jerry," she said to the other, "but two things we know from it."

"One is that La Rue's going to blow the burg some day—soon."

"The other, that 'Ned' is Ned Beaton, the man mentioned back there in Steinway's. Whatever his connection is, we don't know. I think we had better go to Farriss, don't you?"

"A good hunch," Willis replied, taking her arm. "And

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

let's move on it quick. One of us may have to hop to Colorado if Farriss thinks well of what we've dug up."

"I hope it's you—you've worked hard," said Miss Donovan.

"But you got the big clue of it all—the telegram," gallantly returned her companion, as he raised his arm to signal a passing cab which would take them to the *Star* office.

Once there, in their enthusiasm they upset the custom of the office and broke into Farriss's fullest hour, dragged him from his slot in the copy desk and into his private office, which he rarely used. There, into his impatient ears they dinned the story of what they had just learned, ending up by passing him the telegram.

For a mere instant he glanced at them, then his lips began to move. "Beaton—Ned—Ned Beaton—Ned Beaton," he mused, and then sat bolt upright in his chair, while he banged the desk with a round, hard fist. "Hell's bells!" he ejaculated. "You've run across something. I know that name. I know the man. Ned Beaton is a 'gun,' and he pulled his first job when I was doing 'police' in Philadelphia for the *Record*. Well, well, my children, this is splendid! And what next?"

"But, Mr. Farriss, where is he?" put in Stella Donovan. "Where was the message sent from? Colorado, yes, but where in Colorado? That's the thing to find out."

"I thought it might be the last word in the message—Haskell," ventured Willis.

Mr. Farriss paused a moment, then,

"Boy!" he yelled through the open door.

"Boy, get me an atlas here quick, or I'll hang your hair on a proof-hook!"

A young hopeful, frightened into frenzy, obeyed with alacrity, and Farriss, seizing the atlas from his hand,

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

thumbed it until he found a map of Colorado. Together the three pored over it.

"There it is!" Stella Donovan cried suddenly. "Down toward the bottom. Looks like desert country."

"Pretty dry place for Celeste," laughed Willis. "I might call her up and kid her about it if——"

Farriss looked at him sourly. "You might get a raise in salary," he snapped sharply, "if you'd keep your mind on the job. What you *can* do is call up, say you're the detective bureau, and ask carelessly about Beaton. That'll throw a scare into her. You've got her number?"

"Riverside 7683," Willis said in a businesslike voice. "The Beecher apartments. I'll try it."

He disappeared into the clattering local room, to return a moment later, white of face, bright of eye, and with lips parted.

"What's the dope?" Farriss shot at him.

"Nothing!" cried the excited young man. "Nothing except that fifteen minutes ago Celeste La Rue kissed the Beecher apartments good-bye and, with trunk, puff, and toothbrush, beat it."

"To Haskell," added the city editor, "or my hair is pink. And by God, I believe there's a story there. What's more, I believe we can get it. It's blind chance, but we'll take it."

"Let Mr. Willis——" began Miss Donovan.

"Mind your own business, Stella," commanded Farriss, "and see that your hat's on straight. Because within half an hour you're going to draw on the night cashier for five hundred dollars and pack your little portmanteau for Haskell."

Willis's face fell. "Can't I go, too?" he began, but Farriss silenced him on the instant.

"Kid," he said sharply but kindly, "you're too good

Digitized by Google Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

a hound for the desert. The city needs you here—and, dammit, you keep on sniffing."

Turning to the unsettled girl beside him, he went on briskly:

"Work guardedly; query us when you have to; be sure of your facts, and consign your soul to God. Do I see you moving?"

And when Farriss looked again he did.

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VII: MISS DONOVAN ARRIVES

WHEN the long overland train paused a moment before the ancient box car that served as the depot for the town of Haskell, nestled in the gulch half a mile away, it deposited Miss Stella Donovan almost in the arms of Carson, the station-agent, and he, wary of the wiles of women and the ethics of society, promptly turned her over to Jim Westcott, who had come down to inquire if the station-agent held a telegram for him—a telegram that he expected from the East.

"She oughtn't to hike to the Timmons House alone, Jim," Carson said. "This yere is pay-day up at the big mines, an' the boys are havin' a hell of a time. That's them yellin' down yonder, and they're mighty likely to mix up with the Bar X gang before mornin', bein' how the liquor is runnin' like blood in the streets o' Lundun, and there's half a mile between 'em."

In view of these disclosures, Miss Donovan welcomed the courteous acquiescence of Westcott, whom she judged to be a man of thirty-one, with force and character—these written in the lines of his big body and his square, kind face.

"I'm Miss Stella Donovan of New York," she said directly.

"And I," he returned, with hat off in the deepening gloom, "am Jim Westcott, who plugs away at a mining claim over yonder."

"There!" laughed the girl frankly. "We're introduced. And I suppose we can start for the Timmons House."

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

As her words trailed off there came again the sound of yelling, sharp cries, and revolver shots from the gulch below where lights twinkled faintly.

Laughing warmly, Westcott picked up her valise, threw a "So-long" to Carson, and with Miss Donovan close behind him, began making for the distant lights of the Timmons House. As they followed the road, which paralleled a whispering stream, the girl began to draw him out skilfully, and was amazed to find that for all of his rough appearance he was excellently educated and a gentleman of taste. Finally the reason came out.

"I'm a college man," he explained proudly. "So was my partner—same class. But one can't always remain in the admirable East, and three years ago he and I came here prospecting. Actually struck some pay-dirt in the hills yonder, too, but it sort of petered out on us."

"Oh, I'm sorry." Miss Donovan's condolence was genuine.

"We lost the ore streak. It was broken in two by some upheaval of nature. We were still trying to find it when my partner's father died and he went East to claim the fortune that was left. I couldn't work alone, so I drifted away, and didn't come back until about four months ago, when I restaked the claim and went to work again."

"You had persistence, Mr. Westcott," the girl laughed.

"It was rewarded. I struck the vein again—when my last dollar was gone. That was a month ago. I wired my old partner for help, but——" He stopped, listening intently.

They were nearing a small bridge over Bear Creek, the sounds of Haskell's revellers growing nearer and louder. Suddenly they heard an oath and a shot, and the next moment a wild rider, lashing a foaming horse with a stinging quirt, was upon them. Westcott barely

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

had time to swing the girl to safety as the tornado flew past.

"The drunken fool!" he muttered quietly. "A puncher riding for camp. There will be more up ahead probably."

His little act of heroism drew the man strangely near to Miss Donovan, and as they hurried along in the silent night she felt that above all he was dependable, as if, too, she had known him months, aye years, instead of a scant hour. And in this strange country she needed a friend.

"Now that I've laid bare my past," he was saying, "don't you think you might tell me why you are here?"

The girl stiffened. To say that she was from the New York *Star* would close many avenues of information to her. No, the thing to do was to adopt some "stall" that would enable her to idle about as much as she chose. Then the mad horseman gave her the idea.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "I forgot I hadn't mentioned it. I'm assigned by *Scribbler's Magazine* to do an article on 'The Old West, Is It Really Gone?' and, Mr. Westcott, I think I have a lovely start."

A few moments later she thanked Providence for her precaution, for her companion resumed the story of his mining claim.

"It's mighty funny I haven't heard from that partner. It isn't like him not to answer my wire. That's why I've waited every night at the depot. No, it's not like 'Pep,' even if he does take his leisure at the College Club."

Miss Donovan's spine tingled at the mention of the name: "Pep," she murmured, trying to be calm. "What was his other name?"

"Cavendish," Westcott replied. "Frederick Cavendish."

A gasp almost escaped the girl's lips. Here, within

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

an hour, she had linked the many Eastern clues of the Cavendish affair with one in the West. Was ever a girl so lucky? And immediately her brain began to work furiously as she walked along.

A sudden turn about the base of a large cliff brought them to Haskell, a single street running up the broadening valley, lined mostly with shacks, although a few more pretentious buildings were scattered here and there, while an occasional tent flapped its discoloured canvas in the night wind. There were no street lamps, and only a short stretch of wooden sidewalk, but lights blazed in various windows, shedding illumination without, and revealing an animated scene.

They went forward, Westcott, in spite of his confident words, watchful and silent, the valise in one hand, the other grasping her arm. The narrow stretch of sidewalk was jammed with men, surging in and out through the open door of a saloon, and the two held to the middle of the road, which was lined with horses tied to long poles. Men reeled out into the street, and occasionally the sharp crack of some frolicsome revolver punctuated the hoarse shouts and bursts of drunken laughter. No other woman was visible, yet, apparently, no particular attention was paid to their progress. But the stream of men thickened perceptibly, until Westcott was obliged to shoulder them aside good-humouredly in order to open a passage. The girl, glancing in through the open doors, saw crowded bar-rooms, and eager groups about gambling tables. One place dazzlingly lighted was evidently a dance-hall, but so densely jammed with humanity she could not distinguish the dancers. A blare of music, however, proved the presence of a band within. She felt the increasing pressure of her escort's hand.

"Can we get through?"

"Sure; some crowd, though. 'Tisn't often as bad as

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

this; miners and punchers all paid off at once." He released her arm, and suddenly gripped the shoulder of a man passing. He was the town marshal.

"Say, Dan, I reckon this is your busy night, but I wish you'd help me run this lady through as far as Timmons; this bunch of long-horns appear to be milling, and we're plum stalled."

The man turned and stared at them. Short, stockily built, appearing at first view almost grotesque under the broad brim of his hat, Stella, recognising the marshal, was conscious only of a clean-shaven face, a square jaw, and a pair of stern blue eyes.

"Oh, is that you, Jim?" he asked briefly. "Lord, I don't see why a big boob like you should need a guardian. The lady? Pardon me, madam," and he touched his hat. "Stand back there, you fellows. Come on, folks!"

The little marshal knew his business, and it was also evident that the crowd knew the little marshal. Drunk and quarrelsome as many of them were, they made way—the more obstreperous sullenly, but the majority in a spirit of rough good humour. The time had not come for war against authority, and even the most reckless were fully aware that there was a law-and-order party in Haskell, ready and willing to back their officer to the limit. Few were drunk enough as yet to openly defy his authority and face the result, as most of them had previously seen him in action. To the girl it was all terrifying enough—the rough, hairy faces, the muttered threats, the occasional oath, the jostling figures—but the two men, one on each side of her, accepted the situation coolly enough, neither touching the revolver at his belt, but, sternly thrusting aside those in their way, they pressed straight through the surging mass in the man-crowded lobby of the disreputable hotel.

The building itself was a barnlike structure, unpainted,

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

but with a rude, unfinished veranda in front. One end contained a saloon, crowded with patrons, but the office, revealed in the glare of a smoky lamp, disclosed a few occupants, a group of men about a card-table.

At the desk, wide-eyed with excitement, Miss Donovan took a service-worn pen proffered by landlord Pete Timmons, whose grey whiskers were as unkempt as his hotel, and registered her name.

"A telegram came to-day for you, ma'am," Peter said in a cracked voice, and tossed it over.

Miss Donovan tore it open. It was from Farriss. It read:

If any clues, advise immediately. Willis digging hard. Letter of instruction follows.

FARRISS.

The girl folded the message, thrust it in her jacket-pocket, then turning to the marshal and Westcott, gave each a firm hand.

"You've both been more than kind," she said gratefully.

"Hell, ma'am," Dan deprecated, "that warn't nothin'!" And he hurried into the street as loud cries sounded outside.

"Good night, Miss Donovan," Westcott said simply. "If you are ever frightened or in need of a friend, call on me. I'll be in town two days yet, and after that Pete here can get word to me." Then, with an admiring, honest gaze, he searched her eyes a moment before he turned and strolled toward the rude cigar-case.

"All right, now, ma'am?" Pete Timmons said, picking up her valise. The girl nodded, and together they went up the rude stairs to her room where Timmons paused at the door.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"Well, I'm glad you're here," he said, moving away. "We've been waitin' for you to show. I may be wrong, ma'am, but I'd bet my belt that you're the lady that's been expected by Ned Beaton."

"You're mistaken," she replied shortly.

As she heard him clatter down the stairs, Miss Stella Donovan of the New York *Star* knew that her visit would not be in vain.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VIII: A GANG OF ENEMIES

THE miner waited, leaning against the desk. His eyes had followed the slender figure moving after the rotund Timmons up the uncarpeted stairs until it had vanished amid the shadows of the second story. He smiled quietly in imagination of her first astonished view of the interior of room eighteen, and recalled to mind a vivid picture of its adornments—the bare wood walls, the springless bed, the crack-nosed pitcher standing disconsolate in a blue wash-basin of tin; the little round mirror in a once-gilt frame with a bullet-hole through its centre, and the strip of dingy rag-carpet on the floor —all this suddenly displayed by the yellowish flame of a small hand-lamp left sitting on the window ledge.

Timmons came down the stairs, and bustled in back of the desk, eager to ask questions.

"Lady a friend o' yours, Jim?" he asked. "If I'd a knowed she wus comin' I'd a saved a better room."

"I have never seen her until to-night, Pete. She got off the train, and Carson asked me to escort her up-town —it was dark, you know. How did she like the palatial apartment?"

"Well, she didn't say nothin'; just sorter looked around. I reckon she's a good sport, all right. What do ye suppose she's come yere for?"

"Not the slightest idea; I take it that's her business."

"Sure; but a feller can't help wonderin', can he? Donovan," he mused, peering at the name; "that's Irish, I take it—hey?"

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

"Suspiciously so; you are some detective, Pete. I'll give you another clue—her eyes are Irish grey."

He sauntered across to the stove, and stood looking idly at the card-players, blue wreaths of tobacco smoke circling up from the bowl of his pipe. Some one opened the street door, letting in a babel of noise, and walked heavily across the office floor. Westcott turned about to observe the newcomer. He was a burly, red-faced man, who had evidently been drinking heavily, yet was not greatly under the influence of liquor, dressed in a checked suit of good cut and fashion, but hardly in the best of taste. His hat, a Stetson, was pushed back on his head, and an unlighted cigar was clinched tightly between his teeth. He bore all the earmarks of a commercial traveller of a certain sort—a domineering personality, making up by sheer nerve what he might lack in brains. But for his words the miner would have given the fellow no further thought.

"Say, Timmons," he burst forth noisily, and striding over to the desk, "the marshal tells me a dame blew in from New York to-night—is she registered here?"

The landlord shoved the book forward, with one finger on the last signature.

"Yep," he said shortly, "but she ain't the one you wus lookin' for—I asked her that, furst thing."

"Stella Donovan—huh! That's no name ever I heard; what's she look like?"

"Like a lady, I reckon; I ain't seen one fer quite a spell now."

"Dark or light?"

"Waal, sorter medium, I should say; brown hair with a bit o' red in it, an' a pair o' grey eyes full of fun—some girl, to my notion."

The questioner struck his fist on the wood sharply.

"Well, what the devil do you suppose such a woman

Digitized by Google Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

has come to this hole clear from New York for, Timmons? What's her game, anyhow?"

"Blessed if I know," and the proprietor seated himself on a high stool. "I didn't ask no questions like that; maybe the gent by the stove there might give yer all the information yer want. He brought her up from the dapoo, an' kin talk English. Say, Jim, this yere is a short horn frum New York, named Beaton, an' he seems ter be powerfully interested in skirts—Beaton, Mr. Jim Westcott."

The two men looked at each other, the miner stepping slightly forward, and knocking the ashes out of his pipe. Beaton laughed, assuming a semblance of good nature.

"My questions were prompted solely by curiosity," he explained, evidently not wholly at ease. "I was expecting a young woman, and thought this new arrival might prove to be my friend."

"Hardly," returned Westcott dryly. "As the landlord informed you, Miss Donovan is a lady."

If he expected this shot to take effect he was disappointed, for the grin never left Beaton's face.

"Ah, a good joke; a very good joke, indeed. But you misunderstand; this is altogether a business matter. This young woman whom I expect is coming here on a mining deal—it is not a love affair at all, I assure you."

Westcott's eyes sparkled, yet without merriment.

"Quite pleased to be so assured," he answered carelessly. "In what manner can I satisfy your curiosity? You have already been informed, I believe, that the person relative to whom you inquire is a Miss Stella Donovan, of New York; that she has the appearance and manners of a lady, and possesses brown hair and grey eyes. Is there anything more?"

"Why, no—certainly not."

"I thought possibly you might care to question me re-

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

garding my acquaintance with the young woman?" Westcott went on, his voice hardening slightly. "If so, I have not the slightest objection to telling you that it consists entirely of acting as her escort from the station to the hotel. I do not know why she is here, how long she intends staying, or what her purpose may be. Indeed, there is only one fact I do know which may be of interest to you."

Beaton, surprised by the language of the other, remained silent, his face turning purple, as a suspicion came to him that he was being made a fool of.

"It is this, my friend—who she is, what she is, and why she happens to be here, is none of your damn business, and if you so much as mention her name again in my presence you are going to regret it to your dying day. That's all."

Beaton, glancing about at the uplifted faces of the card-players, chose to assume an air of indifference, which scarcely accorded with the anger in his eyes.

"Ah, come now," he blurted forth, "I didn't mean anything; there's no harm done—let's have a drink, and be friends."

Westcott shook his head.

"No, I think not," he said slowly. "I'm not much of a drinking man myself, and when I do I choose my own company. But let me tell you something, Beaton, for your own good. I know your style, and you are mighty apt to get into trouble out here if you use any Bowery tactics."

"Bowery tactics!"

"Yes; you claim to live in New York, and you possess all the earmarks of the East-Side bad man. There is nothing keeping you now from roughing it with me but the sight of this gun in my belt, and a suspicion in your mind that I may know how to use it. That suspicion is

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

correct. Moreover, you will discover this same ability more or less prevalent throughout this section. However, I am not looking for trouble; I am trying to avoid it. I haven't sought your company; I do not want to know you. Now you go back to your bar-room where you will find plenty of your own kind to associate with. It's going to be dangerous for you to hang around here any longer."

Beaton felt the steady eyes upon him, but was carrying enough liquor to make him reckless. Still his was naturally the instinct of the New York gunman, seeking for some adventure. He stepped backward, feigning a laugh, watchful to catch Westcott off his guard.

"All right, then," he said, "I'll go get the drink; you can't bluff me."

Westcott's knowledge of the class alone brought to him the man's purpose. Beaton's hand was in the pocket of his coat, and, as he turned, apparently to leave the room, the cloth bulged. With one leap forward the miner was at his throat. There was a report, a flash of flame, the speeding bullet striking the stove, and the next instant Beaton, his hand still helplessly imprisoned within the coat-pocket, was hurled back across the card-table, the players scattering to get out of the way. All the pent-up dislike in Westcott's heart found expression in action; the despicable trick wrought him to a sudden fury, yet even then there came to him no thought of killing the fellow, no memory even of the loaded gun at his hip. He wanted to choke him, strike him with his hands.

"You dirty coward," he muttered fiercely. "So you thought the pocket trick was a new one out here, did you? Come, give the gun up! Oh! so there is some fight left in you? Then let's settle it here."

It was a struggle between two big, strong men—the one desperate, unscrupulous, brutal; the other angry

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

enough, but retaining self-control. They crashed onto the floor, Westcott still retaining the advantage of position, and twice he struck, driving his clenched fist home. Suddenly he became aware that some one had jerked his revolver from its holster, and, almost at the same instant a hard hand gripped the neck-band of his shirt and tore him loose from Beaton.

"Here, now—enough of that, Jim," said a voice sternly, and his hands arose instinctively as he recognised the gleam of two drawn weapons fronting him. "Help Beaton up, Joe. Now, look yere, Mr. Bully Westcott," and the speaker shook his gun threateningly. "As it happens, you have jumped on a friend o' ours, an' we naturally propose to take a hand in this game—you know me!"

Westcott nodded, an unpleasant smile on his lips.

"I do, Lacy," he said coolly, "and that if there is any dirty work going on in this camp, it is quite probable you and your gang are in it. So, this New Yorker is a protégé of yours?"

"That's none of your business; we're here for fair play."

"Since when? Now listen; you've got me covered, and that is my gun which Moore has in his hand. I cannot fight you alone and unarmed; but I can talk yet."

"I reckon yer can, if that's goin' ter do yer eny good."

"So the La Rosita Mining Company is about to be revived, is it? Eastern capital becoming interested. I've heard rumours of that for a week past. What's the idea? struck anything?"

Lacy, a long, rangy fellow, with a heavy moustache, and a scar over one eye, partially concealed by his hat brim, grinned at the others as though at a good joke.

"No, nuthin' particular as yet," he answered; "but you

Digitized by Google Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

hev', an' I reckon thet's just about as good. Tryin' ter keep it dark, wasn't yer? Never even thought we'd caught on."

"Oh, yes, I did; you flatter yourselves. I caught one of your stool-pigeons up the gulch yesterday, and more than ten days ago Moore and Edson made a trip into my tunnel while I happened to be away; they forgot to hide their trail. I knew what you were up to, and you can all of you look for a fight."

"When your partner gets out here, I suppose," sneered Lacy.

"He'll be here."

"Oh, will he? Well, he's a hell of a while coming. You wired him a month ago, and yer've written him twice since. Oh, I've got the cases on you, all right, Westcott. I know you haven't got a cent left to go on with, and nowhere to get eny except through him." He laughed. "Ain't that right? Well, then, yer chances look mighty slim ter me just at present, ol'-timer. However, there's no fight on yet; will yer behave yerself, an' let this man Beaton alone if I hand yer back yer gun?"

"There is no choice left me."

"Sure; that's sensible enough; give it to him, Moore."

He broke the chamber, shaking the cartridges out into his palm; then handed the emptied weapon over to Westcott. His manner was purposely insulting, but the latter stood with lips firmly set, realising his position.

"Now, then, go on over thar an' sit down," continued Lacy. "Maybe, if yer wait long enough, that partner o' yours might blow in. I got some curiosity myself as to why that girl showed up ter-night under yer guidance, an' why yer so keen ter fight about her, Jim; but I reckon we'll clear that up ter-morrow without makin' yer talk."

"You mean to question Miss Donovan?"

"Hell, no; just keep an eye on her. 'Tain't likely she's

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

in Haskell just fer the climate. Come on, boys, let's liquor. Big Jim Westcott has his claws cut, and it's Beaton's turn to spend a little."

Westcott sat quietly in the chair as they filed out; then took the pipe from his pocket and filled it slowly. He realised his defeat, his helplessness, but his mind was already busy with the future.

Timmons came out from behind the desk a bit solicitous.

"Hurt eny?" he asked. "Didn't wing yer, or nuthin'?"

"No; the stove got the bullet. He shot through his pocket."

"Whut's all the row about?"

"Oh, not much, Timmons; this is my affair," and Westcott lit his pipe with apparent indifference. "Lacy and I have got two mining claims tapping the same lead, that's all. There's been a bit o' feeling between us for some time. I reckon it's got to be fought out, now."

"Then yer've really struck ore?"

"Yes."

"And the young woman? Hes she got enything ter do with it?"

"Not a thing, Timmons; but I want to keep her out of the hands of that bunch. Give me a lamp and I'll go up-stairs and think this game out."

Digitized by Google

Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IX: A NIGHT AND A MORNING

STELLA DONOVAN never forgot the miseries of her first night in Haskell. When old man Timmons finally left her, after placing the flaring lamp on a chair, and went pattering back down the bare hall, she glanced shudderingly about at her unpleasant surroundings, none too pleased with the turn of events.

The room was scarcely large enough to contain the few articles of furniture absolutely required. Its walls were of unplaned plank occasionally failing to meet, and the only covering to the floor was a dingy strip of rag-carpet. The bed was a cot, shapeless, and propped up on one side by the iron leg of some veranda bench, while the open window looked out into the street. There was a bolt, not appearing particularly secure, with which Miss Donovan immediately locked the door before venturing across to take a glance without.

The view was hardly reassuring, as the single street was still the scene of pandemonium, the saloon and dance-hall almost directly opposite, operating in full blast. Oaths and ribald laughter assailed her ears, while directly beneath, although out of her view, a quarrel threatened to lead to serious consequences. She pulled down the window to shut out these sounds, but the room became so stuffy and hot without even this slight ventilation, as to oblige her opening it again. As a compromise she hauled down the curtain, a green paper affair, torn badly, and which occasionally flapped in the wind with a startling noise.

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The bed-clothing, once turned back and inspected, was of a nature to prevent the girl from disrobing; but finally she lay down, seeking such rest as was possible, after turning the flickering flames of the lamp as low as she dared, and then finally blowing it out altogether. The glare from the street crept in through the cracks in the curtain, playing in fantastic light and shadow across ceiling and wall, while the infernal din never ceased.

Sleep was not to be attained, although she closed her eyes and muffled her ears. The misshapen bed brought no comfort to her tired body, for no matter how she adjusted herself, the result was practically the same. Not even her mind rested.

Miss Donovan was not naturally of a nervous disposition. She had been brought up very largely to rely upon herself, and life had never been sufficiently easy for her to find time in which to cultivate nerves. Her newspaper training had been somewhat strenuous, and had won her a reputation in New York for unusual fearlessness and devotion to duty. Yet this situation was so utterly different, and so entirely unexpected, that she confessed to herself she would be very glad to be safely out of it.

A revolver shot rang out sharply from one of the rooms below, followed by the sound of loud voices, and a noise of struggle. The startled girl sat upright on the cot, listening, but the disturbance ceased almost immediately, and she finally lay down again, her heart still beating wildly. Her thoughts, never still, wandered over the events of the evening—the arrival at Haskell station, the strange meeting with Westcott, and the sudden revelation that he was the partner of Frederick Cavendish.

The big, good-natured miner had interested her from the first as representing a perfect type of her preconceived ideal of the real Westerner. She had liked the firm character of his face, the quiet, thoughtful way in

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

which he acted, the whole unobtrusive bearing of the man. Then, as they had walked that long mile together in the darkness, she had learned things about him—little glimpses of his past, and of dawning hopes—which only served to increase her confidence. Already he had awakened her trust; she felt convinced that if she needed friendship, advice, even actual assistance, here was one whom she could implicitly trust.

The racket outside died away slowly. She heard various guests return to their rooms, staggering along the hall and fumbling at their doors; voices echoed here and there, and one fellow, mistaking his domicile entirely, struggled with her latch in a vain endeavour to gain entrance. She was upon her feet, when companions arrived and led the invader elsewhere, their loud laughter dying away in the distance. It was long after this before nature finally conquered and the girl slept outstretched on the hard cot, the first faint grey of dawn already visible in the eastern sky.

She was young, though, and she awoke rested and refreshed, in spite of the fact that her body ached at first from the discomfort of the cot. The sunlight rested in a sheet of gold on her drawn curtain, and the silence of the morning, following so unexpectedly the dismal racket of the night, seemed to fairly shock her into consciousness. Could this be Haskell? Could this indeed be the inferno into which she had been precipitated from the train in the darkness of the evening before? She stared about at the bare, board walls, the bullet-scarred mirror, the cracked pitcher, before she could fully reassure herself; then stepped upon the disreputable rug, and crossed to the open window.

Haskell at nine in the morning bore but slight resemblance to that same environment during the hours of darkness—especially on a night immediately following

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

pay-day at the mines. As Miss Donovan, now thoroughly awake, and obsessed by the memory of those past hours of horror, cautiously drew aside the corner of torn curtain, and gazed down upon the deserted street below, she could scarcely accept the evidence of her own eyes.

True, there were many proofs visible of the wild riot of the evening before—torn papers, emptied bottles, a shattered sign or two, an oil-lamp blown into bits by some well-directed shot, a hat lying in the middle of the road, and a dejected pony or two, still at the hitching-rack, waiting a delayed rider. But, except for these mute reminiscences of past frolic, the long street seemed utterly dead, the doors of saloons and dance-halls closed, the dust swirling back and forth to puffs of wind, the only moving object visible being a gaunt, yellow dog trotting soberly past.

However, it was not upon this view of desolation that Miss Donovan's eyes clung. They had taken all this in at a glance, startled, scarcely comprehending, but the next instant wandered to the marvellous scene revealed beyond that squalid street, and those miserable shacks, to the green beauty of the outspread valley, and the wondrous vista of mountain peaks beyond.

She straightened up, emitting a swift breath of delight, as her wide-open eyes surveyed the marvellous scene of mingled loveliness and grandeur. The stream, curving like a great snake, gleamed amid the acres of green grass, its swift waters sparkling in the sun. Here and there it would dip down between high banks, or disappear for a moment behind a clump of willows, only to reappear in broader volume. Beyond, seemingly at no distance at all, yet bordered by miles of turf and desert, the patches of vivid green interspersed with the darker colouring of spruce, and the outcropping of brown rocks, the towering peaks of a great mountain-

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY