

Triumphs of M. Jonquelle

By MELVILLE DAVISSON POST
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THE OLD HOME TOWN

By Stanley



THE FORTUNE TELLER
Begin Here Today.

Seated in the quiet of his Paris study, M. JONQUELLE, greatest of French detectives, reads from his father's diary the tale of a crime that took place years ago in far-off Virginia.

The diary tells how the son of PEXTON MARSHALL, who his father's will because he believed his father at his death had been strangely influenced by the Englishman.

MR. GOSFORD, and that under this influence had left Gosford all his \$20,000 estate instead of keeping his promise and leaving his son \$30,000.

The writer of the diary recounts how his father and the lawyer, MR. LEWIS, were suspicious of Gosford. The son admits he took the will and surrenders it to the executor who are gathered in the plantation library with Gosford and the old doctor, GAELKI.

Go on With the Story.
CHAPTER III

It was my father who broke the silence.

"Gosford," he said, "what scheme were you and Marshall about?"

"You may wonder, sir," replied the Englishman, continuing to write his notes, "I shall not tell you."

"But I will tell you," said the boy. "My father thought that the states in this republic could not hold together very much longer. He believed that the country would divide, and the South set up an independent government. He hoped this might come about without a war. He was in horror of a war. He had traveled; he had seen nations and read their history, and he knew what they were talking when they urged war."

He gazed and looked at Gosford.

"My father was convinced that the South would finally set up an independent government, but he hoped a war might not follow. He believed that if this new government were immediately recognized by Great Britain, the North would accept the inevitable and there would be no bloodshed. My father went to England with this scheme. He met Mr. Gosford somewhere on the ship, I think. And Mr. Gosford succeeded in convincing my father that if he had a sum of money he would win over certain powerful persons in the English government, and so pave the way to an immediate recognition of the Southern Republic by Great Britain. He followed my father home and hums about him, and so finally got his will. My father was careful; he wrote nothing. Mr. Gosford wrote nothing; there is no evidence of this plan, but my father told me, and it is true."

My father stopped by the table and lifted his great shoulders.

"And so," he said, "Pexton Marshall imagined a plan like that, and left its execution to a Mr. Gosford!"

The Englishman put down his pen and addressed my father.

"I would advise you, sir, to require a little proof for your conclusions. This is a very pretty story, but it is prefaced by an admission of no evidence, and it comes as a special pleading for a criminal act. Now, sir, if I chose, if the bequest required it, I could give a full explanation, with more substance of monies borrowed by the decedent in his travels and to be returned to me. But the will, sir, stands for itself, as Mr. Lewis will assure you."

My father seemed brought up in a cold-sweat. His face was tense and disturbed. He stood by the table, and now, as by accident, he put out his hand and took up the Japanese crystal supported by the necks of the three bronze storks. He appeared unconscious of the act, for he was in deep reflection. The weight in his hand drew his attention, he glanced at the thing. Something about it struck him, for his manner changed. He spread the will out on the table and began to move the crystal over it, his face close to the pages. Presently he bent forward, and he stooped over, staring into the Oriental crystal, like those practitioners of black art who predict events from what they pretend to see in those spheres of glass.

Mr. Gosford, sitting at his ease, in victory, regarded me rather with a supercilious, ironical smile.

"Sir," he said, "are you, by chance a fortune-teller?"

"A misfortune-teller," replied my father, his face still held above the crystal.

"I see here a misfortune to Mr. Anthony Gosford, I predict, from what I see in that will, the release this bequest of monies to Pexton Marshall's son."

"Sir," said the Englishman, now provoked into a temper, "do you enjoy this foolery?"

"You are not interested in crystal gazing, Mr. Gosford?" replied my father in a tranquil voice. "Well, I find it most diverting. Permit me to piece out your fortune or rather your misfortune. Mr. Gosford! By chance you fell in with this fortune-teller, Marshall, wormed into his confidence, pretended a relation to great men in England, followed and persuaded him until, in his ill-health, you got this will. You saw it written two years ago. When Marshall fell ill, you hurried here, learned from the dying man that the will remained and where it was. You made sure by pretending to write letters in this room, bringing your portfolio with ink and pen and a pad of paper. Then, at Marshall's death, you inquired of Lewis for legal measures to discover the dead man's will. And when you had the room ransacked, you run after the law."

My father paused.

"That is your paw, Mr. Gosford. Now let me tell your future. I see you in joy at the recovered will. I see you, pleased at your foresight in getting a direct copy of the will, the rare you used on Marshall to leave no evidence of his plan, lest the authorities discover it. For I see, Mr. Gosford, that it was your intention all along to keep this sum of money for your own use and pleasure. But alas, Mr. Gosford, it

was not to be! I see you writing this release; and Mr. Gosford, my father's voice went up full and strong—"I see you writing it in terror—swear on your face!"

"The Devil take your nonsense!" cried the Englishman.

My father stood up with a twisted, ironical smile.

"If you doubt my skill, Mr. Gosford, as a fortune or rather a misfortune-teller, I will ask Mr. Lewis and Herman Gaekli to tell me what they see."

The two men crossed the room and stooped over the paper, while my father held the crystal. The manner and the bearing of the men changed. They grew on the instant tense and fired with interest.

"I see it!" said the old doctor, with a queer, foreign expletive.

"And I," cried Lewis, "see something more than Pendleton's vision. I see the penitentiary in the distance."

The Englishman sprang up with an oath and leaned across the table. Then he saw the thing.

"My father's hand held the crystal above the figures of the bequest written in the body of the will. The focused lens of glass magnified to a great diameter, and under the vast enlargement a thing that would escape the eyes stood out. The top curl of a figure 3 had been erased, and the bar of a 5 added. One could see the broken fibers of the paper on the outline of the curl, and the bar of the five lay across the top of the three and the top of the 5 behind it like a black lath tacked across two uprights.

The figure 3 had been changed to 5 so cunningly as to deceive the eye, but not to deceive the vast magnification of the crystal. The thing stood out big and crude like a carpenter's patch.

Gosford's face became expressionless like wood, his body rigid; then he stood up and faced the three men across the table.

"Quite so!" he said in his vacuous English voice. "Marshall wrote a 3 by inadvertence and changed it. He borrowed my penknife to erase the figure."

My father and Lewis gaped like men who see a penny slip out through an unimagined passage. There was silence. Then suddenly, in the strained stillness of the room, old Doctor Gaekli laughed. Gosford lifted his long pink face, with its crooked beard bringing out the ugly mouth.

"Why do you laugh, my good man?" he said.

"I laugh," replied Gaekli, "because a figure 5 can have so many colors." And now my father and Lewis were no less astonished than Mr. Gosford.

"Colors?" they said, for the changed figure in the will was black.

"Why, yes," replied the old man, "it is very pretty."

He reached across the table and drew over Mr. Gosford's memorandum beside the will.

"You are progressive, sir," he went on; "you write in iron-nutrat ink, just mad, commercially, in this year of 'fifty-six by Mr. Stephena. But we write here as Marshall wrote in 'fifty-four, with log-wood."

He turned and fumbled in his little case of bottles.

"I carry a bit of acid for my people's indications. It has other uses." He whipped out the stopper of his vial and dabbed Gosford's notes and Marshall's signature.

"See!" he cried, "your writing is blue, Mr. Gosford, and Marshall's red!"

With an oath the trapped man struck at Gaekli's hand. The vial fell and cracked on the table. The hydrochloric acid spread out over Marshall's will. And under the chemical reagent the figure in the bequest of fifty thousand dollars changed beautifully; the bar of the 3 turned blue, and the remainder of

it a deep purple-red like the body of the will.

"Gaekli," cried my father, "you have trapped a rogue!"

"And I have lost a measure of good acid," replied the old man. And he began to gather up the bits of his broken bottle with an indispensable.

A man never knows when he's got enough of anything—love, jazz, experience or a woman—until he's had too much.

but it is responsible for many good and noble things, which he might never have done, if he weren't ashamed not to do them.

Funny, but a man may exchange his car every year, and get a new sweetheart every few weeks, yet he will cling to the same old pipe, the same old collar-button, or the same old shoe-horn clear down to the grave.

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Buy her a Jordan for Christmas. Advt.-327-255.

other flame has burnt out, or the other woman has left him cold.

A great deal more would be accomplished in this world, if most men did not work themselves to death trying to convince their firms and their wives they are indispensable.

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MEDITATIONS OF A MARRIED WOMAN

BY HELEN ROWLAND, SPEAKING OF MEN.

Never ask a man "why" he loves you—because, by the time he has found his reason, he will undoubtedly have lost his enthusiasm.

One of the things that gives a witty woman pause is that quizzical, defiant look in a man's eye, when he suspects that she has the laugh on him.

Blessed be the fat! A life-mate should be chosen for his disposition—and the best dispositions come wrapped in a modicum of flesh. First, their good-nature and cheerfulness make them fat—and then their fat keeps them equable and cheerful.

Most men are like persimmons; they may respond a little to the sun of your smile—but it takes a touch of frost, to make them sweet and tender.

"Keep the home fires burning," and a husband will always come back to warm himself, when the



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The Spectacles Pictured Here Are Reduced in Price to \$6.00

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