

SIGHT UNSEEN

by MARY ROBERTS RINEHART



To my surprise, it was Sperry, accompanied by two ladies, one of them heavily veiled. It was not until I had ushered them into the reception room and lighted the gas that I saw who they were. It was Elinor Wells, in deep mourning, and Clara, Mrs. Dane's companion and secretary.

While I am quite sure that I was not thinking clearly at the opening of the inquiry, I know that I was puzzled at the presence of Mrs. Dane's secretary, but I doubtless accepted it as having some connection with Clara's notes. And Sperry made no comment on her at all.

Mrs. Wells suggested that we come here, "because," he began, "we may need a legal mind on this. I'm not sure, or rather I think it unlikely. But just in case—suppose you tell him, Elinor."

I have no record of the story Elinor Wells told that night in our little reception room, with Clara sitting in a corner, grave and white. It was Elinor's story, inordinate. But I got it all at last.

Charlie Ellingham had killed Arthur Wells, but in a struggle. In fact the story was so complicated, she did not say herself, or her motives. She had wanted Arthur, and Arthur had not succeeded as he had promised. They were in debt and living beyond their means. But even that, she hesitated to add would not have mattered, had he not been brutal with her. He had made her life wretched.

She on the subject of Charlie Ellingham was dramatic. She knew that there had been talk, but there had been no real talk for it. She had turned to him for comfort, and he had turned away. She didn't know how he felt, and didn't want to know. She would like to see him and destroy some notion he had written her. She was shaking and nervous. He had been so kind to her, and now she was so afraid.

On the night of Arthur Wells' death they were dressing for a ball. She had made a private arrangement with Ellingham to play a headache at the last moment and let Arthur go alone. But he had been so insistent that she had been forced to go, and she had sent the governess, Suzanne Gautier, out to telephone Ellingham not to come, but he was not at home, and the message was left with his valet. As it turned out, he had already started.

Elinor was dressed, all but her hair down and she had put on a necklace to wait for the governess to return and help her. Arthur was in his dressing room and she heard him grumbling about having to shave for his safety razor.

He got out a case of razors and searched for the strap. When she reached where the strap was, it was too late. The letters had been mailed, and he was coming toward her, and she was in his hand.

She was terrified. He had a revolver, but she had a knife. He wanted something and she was afraid. She saw his hand as he went toward the window and she had been hidden from the children and she was caught. Charlie Ellingham heard her. The door had been left unlocked by the governess and she was in the lower hall. He ran up and the two men grappled. The first shot was fired by Arthur as he was coming. The second, she was doubtful about. She thought the revolver was in Arthur's hand. It was all horrible. He went down like a stone in the hallway outside the door.

They were nearly mad, the two of them. They had dragged the body in, and then faced each other. Ellingham was for calling the police at once and surrendering, but she had kept him away from the telephone. She maintained, and I think it very possible, that her whole thought was for the children, and the effect on their after lives of such a scandal. And after all, nothing could help the man on the floor.

It was while they were trying to formulate some concerted plan that they heard footsteps below, and, thinking it was Mademoiselle Gautier, she drove Ellingham into the rear of the house, from which later he managed to escape. But it was Clara who was coming up the stairs.

Charlie Ellingham. I couldn't. I told her we had been struggling and I was afraid I had shot him. She is quick. She knew just what to do. We worked fast. She said a suicide would not have fired one shot into the ceiling, and she fixed that. It was terrible. And all the time he lay there with his eyes half open.

The letters, it seems, were all over the place Elinor thought of the curtain, cut a receptacle for them but she was afraid of the police. Finally she gave them to Clara who was to take them away and burn them.

They did everything they could think of, all the time waiting for Suzanne Gautier's return. Elinor hid the second empty chamber of the revolver, dragged the body out of the hall and washed the carpet, and called Doctor Sperry, not knowing that he was at Mrs. Dane's and could not come.

Clara had only a little time and with the letters in her handbag she started down the stairs. There she heard some one, possibly Ellingham, on the back stairs, and in her haste, she fell, hitting her knee, and she must have dropped the handbag at that time. They knew now that Hawkins had found it later on. But for a few days they didn't know, and hence the advertisement.

"I think we would better explain Hawkins," Sperry said. "Hawkins was married to Miss Clara here, some years ago, while she was with Mrs. Wells. They had kept it a secret and recently she has broken with him."

"He was infatuated with another woman," Clara said briefly. That's a personal matter. It has nothing to do with the case.

"It explains Hawkins' letter," I said. "I don't know how that medium knew everything that happened." Clara was in excellent luck. "She knew it all, even the library part. I can tell you, Mr. Johnson, I was close to finding a dozen times before I finally did it."

"Did you know of our scandal?" I asked Mrs. Wells.

"Yes, I may as well tell you that I haven't been in Florida. How could the children see there but I—"

"Did you tell Charlie Ellingham about them?"

After the second one I warned him and I think he went to the house. One bullet was somewhere in the ceiling, or in the floor of the passageway. I thought it ought to be found. I don't know whether he found it or not. I've been afraid to see him. She sat, clasping and unclasping her hands in her lap. She was a proud woman, and surrender had come hard. The article was mailed to her. She looked as though she had not slept for days.

"You think I am frightened," she said slowly. "And I am terribly frightened. But not about discovery. That has come and cannot be helped."

"We are house-cleaning. A housemaid was washing closets. I supposed she found it, and thinking it was one of Mrs. Dane's, took it downstairs. That is, unless—"

It was clear, that like Elinor, she had a supernatural explanation in her mind. She looked gaunt and haggard.

"Mr. Ellingham was anxious to get it," she finished. "He had taken Mr. Johnson's overcoat by mistake one night when you were both in the house, and the notes were in it. He saw that the stick was important."

"Clara," Sperry asked, "did you see the day you advertised for your own, another similar advertisement?"

"I saw it. It frightened me."

"None, whatever."

"Did you ever see Miss Jeremy before the first sitting or ever hear of her?"

"Never."

"Or between the seances?"

"No."

Elinor rose and drew her veil down. "We must go," she said. "Surely now you will cease those terrible investigations. I cannot stand much more. I am going mad."

"There will be no more seances," Sperry said gravely.

The letters are found. Hawkins says he has it. The curtain was much safer. That part's safe enough, unless it made a hole in the floor above."

"Oh, if you're going to read a lot of irrelevant matter—"

Relevant nothing! Wake up, Horace! But remember this. I'm not explaining the physical phenomena. We will never do that. It wasn't extraordinary, as such things go. Our little medium in a trance condition has read poor Clara's mind. It's all here all that Clara knew and nothing that she didn't know. A mindreader friend Horace. And Heaven help me when I marry her!"

As I have said, the Neighborhood Club ended its investigations with this conclusion, which I believe is properly reached. It is only fair to state that there are those among us who have accepted the theory in the Wells case, but who have preferred to consider that behind both it and the physical phenomena of the seances, there was an intelligence which directed both, an intelligence not of this world as we know it. Both Herbert and Alice Robinson are now pronounced spiritualists, although, Miss Jeremy, now Mrs. Sperry, has definitely abandoned all investigative work.

Personally, I have evolved no theory. It seems beyond dispute that certain individuals can read minds and that these same or other so-called "mediums" are capable of liberating a form of invisible energy, which, however they turn to no further account than the useless tinkling of bells, moving of small tables, and moving about of dices, objects, etc., is, in fact, the solution of the Wells case as one of mind reading is more satisfactory than explanatory. For mental waves remain a mystery, acknowledged, as is electricity, but of a nature as yet unraveled.

Thoughts are things. That is all we know.

Mrs. Dane, I believe had suspected the solution from the start.

The Neighborhood Club has recently disbanded. We tried other things but we had been spoiled. Our Kluge winner was a failure. We read a play or two, with Sperry's wife reading the heroine, and the rest of us taking other parts. She has a lovely voice, has Mrs. Sperry. But it was all stale and unprofitable after the Wells affair. With Herbert on a lecture tour on spirit realism, and Mrs. Dane at a sanitarium for the winter, we have given it up and my wife and I spend our Monday evenings at home.

THE END

A crop of oats and lespedeza hay from four acres on an Edgecombe County farm returned the owner \$375 at a cost of \$84.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
North Carolina, Watauga County, in the Superior Court, C. E. Cornelius and wife, Mrs. C. F. Cornelius, vs. Carl B. Wats, John S. Wats, Charles A. Wats, James S. Wats, Garvin P. Wats, M. V. Wats, George Wats, Mrs. A. W. Cook, and Mrs. M. H. Cook, heirs at law of G. S. Wats.

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE
Having qualified as executor of the will of L. J. Harrison, deceased, this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned within twelve months from date, otherwise this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the estate will please come forward and make settlement.

NOTICE OF SALE
North Carolina, Watauga County. By virtue of the power of sale contained in a certain deed of trust executed to A. V. Howell, Trustee, by G. L. Phillips and Alice Phillips, his wife, on the 1st day of March 1930, to secure the sum of \$2642.00, with interest on same, which deed of trust is recorded in the office of the register of deeds of Watauga County in book 14 and page 208, and default having been made in the payment of the debt secured by the said deed of trust, I will on Monday February 3, 1932 at 1 p. m. sell to the highest bidder for cash the following described real estate.

Being a certain tract or parcel of land lying on the waters of Cove Creek in the above county and state and bounded as follows: Beginning on a white oak on the east side of a branch near the Lee Moore house, running north 17 degrees west 60 poles to a chestnut in the old line, then north 43 degrees west 6 poles to a beech on the bank of the branch, then north 20 degrees east 22 poles to a stake in the old line near John Ward chestnut oak, an old white oak corner, then north 17 degrees west 72 poles to a sugar tree corner, then north with the Hilliard line 25 poles to a large oak, from said large oak, north 6 poles to an ash, the Hilliard corner, then west 48 poles to a stake on the top of a ridge, from a large oak on the top of the ridge north 80 degrees west 28 poles to a stake, then north 48 degrees west 12 poles to a hickory in the Hilliard line, then west with said line 52 poles to a large Spanish oak, then south 18 poles to a chestnut, then east 13 poles to a stake, then south 32 poles to a chestnut oak then east 2 poles to a stake in the John Ward line, then south 49 poles to a chestnut oak corner to John Ward's entry, then east 34 poles to a hickory corner, the Lee-on-Mast entry, then south 8 poles to a stake, then south 25 degrees east 6 poles to a stake, then south 35 degrees east with the top of the ridge 52 poles to a stake, then south 13 degrees east 14 poles to a stake on top of said ridge, then south 27 degrees east 49 poles to a stake in the branch near Lee Moore stable, then north 70 degrees east 21 poles to the beginning, containing 80 acres more or less, with the exception of one acre sold to John McBride off the north side of the above tract.

This land will be sold subject to the Federal Land Bank of Columbia for \$.

This December 18, 1931.
A. V. HOWELL, Trustee.

Read the Ads—They Are Messengers of Thrift!

HI-LAND DRY CLEANING CO.
Dry Cleaning, Pressing and Hat Blocking
Phone 50, Boone, N. C.

QUIET YOUR NERVES
This Delightful Way
MRS. Alice Fischer (picture above) says she is "the happiest woman in the world."

"I often used to wish I was dead. Couldn't sleep, couldn't enjoy myself. It seems as though I had tried every nerve medicine made, but without any benefit until I tried Dr. Miles' Efferescent Nerve Tablets. They certainly proved their worth for me. I am the happiest woman in the world and I don't mean maybe."

Mrs. Alice Fischer
If you are Nervous, Sleepless, Cranky, Blue, If you have Nervous Headaches, Nerve Indigestion, take Dr. Miles' Efferescent Nerve Tablets.

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North Carolina, County of Watauga. In the matter of Bank of Blowing Rock, Blowing Rock, N. C.
NOTICE TO CREDITORS TO FILE CLAIM
Under authority of Subsection 10 of Section 218 (c), Consolidated Statutes, all persons who have claims against the above named bank are hereby notified to present proof of claim at Blowing Rock on or before the 15th day of March 1932.

Failure to present claim on or before the above date bars the claim not presented, except as to the assets of the bank in the hands of the Commissioner of Banks for the account of said bank at the time the claim is presented.

Objection to the allowing of any claim may be made by an interested person by filing such objection in the pending action in the office of the Clerk of the Court of this county and by serving a copy thereof on the Commissioner of Banks or the Liquidating Agent of this bank. This the 15th day of December, 1931.

A. M. BURNS, JR.
Liquidating Agent of the Bank of Blowing Rock, Blowing Rock, N. C. Note—in filing claims for Cashier's Checks or Bank Drafts or Certificates of Deposit the particular instrument must be surrendered when proof of claim is presented.



SOUR STOMACH
JUST a tasteless dose of Phillips Milk of Magnesia in water. That is an all-time effective, yet harmless. It has been the standard antacid for 56 years. One spoonful will neutralize at once many times its volume in acid. It is the right way, the quick, pleasant and efficient way to kill the excess acid. The stomach becomes sweet, the pain departs. You are happy again in five minutes.

But don't depend on crude methods. Try the best way yet evolved in all the years of searching. That is Phillips Milk of Magnesia.

Be sure to get the genuine Phillips Milk of Magnesia, the kind that the physicians prescribe.

"Milk of Magnesia" has been the U. S. Registered Trade Mark of The Charles H. Phillips Chemical Company and its predecessor Charles H. Phillips since 1875.

COLIC
A CRY in the night. Colic No cause for alarm if Castoria is handy. This pure vegetable preparation brings quick comfort, and can never harm. It is the sensible thing when children are ailing. Whether it's the stomach, or the little bowels, colic or constipation, or diarrhea. When tiny, the remedy is needed, or the breath is bad. Whenever there's need of gentle regulation. Children love the taste of Castoria, and its mildness makes it safe for frequent use.

And a more liberal dose of Castoria is always better for growing children than strong medicine meant only for adult use.

Fletcher's CASTORIA

Bud 'n' Bub
By ED KRESSY

