Murder Masquerade

Inez Haynes Irwin

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WEDNESDAY-Continued

I wondered why Patrick was ask ing questions so far from the mark. But I knew he had his own circuitous way of approaching the thing he wanted most to know. I

"Did you see Molly?"

"Yes. I had two reasons for coming. One was and I did see her." One was to see Molly "When did you see Molly?"

"She met me at the Marshland She came over on the nine o'clock train. We drove the whole morning long and had lunch together. Then she went back on the 2:20 train.'

"She came back to Satuit alone?" "I wasn't with her."

"Where did you go then?" "Well, I told you that I had two objects in coming to Satuit. The first was to see Molly and the second was to see Ace Blaikie. When I put Molly on the train for Satuit, went back there myself in my

"Did you see Ace?"

'Yes, I had an appointment with

"How had you made that appointment?" "By mail."

"Can you remember what you said in the letter?"

"Not exactly. It was brief-only a few sentences. In effect, I wrote that there were some things I must discuss with him and that I would meet him in some quiet place where we could talk privately. I asked him not to tell my people that was coming. That was all, I think.

"Where did you meet Ace?" "In Locust Lane." And what time?"

"Half past three in the after-

"You two men were alone?" "As far as I know."
"Molly did not join you?"

Walter gave a swift dissenting nod of his head. "Was your talk with Ace amica-

A sardonic smile brought strange

havoc to Walter's pleasant look. "Quite the contrary." "How would you yourself describe

your interview?

Walter considered the matter with an appearance of great conscientiousness. "I would say that in psychology it was characterized by all the emotions and in diction by all the phrases of two men who were ready to beat each other's

"I get you perfectly," Patrick commented. "In other words, you had an argument."

Patrick let silence seep into the room for a considerable interval. Then he said, "I've got to do something now, that I don't any more enjoy doing than you'll enjoy having me do. I hate to ask the questions I've got to ask. Of course, you know as well as I do, what my first question is going to be. I want to ask you what you and ove

Something apparently leaped suddenly into his mind for he turned like a shot to Molly. "Molly," he "I must remind you that as Walter's wife, you would not be compelled by any court of law to testimony that concerned

"But I want to tell everything," Molly replied with her splendid candid fearlessness. "If there's any detail which Walter can't remem ber and I can. I shall be very glad to supply it to you."
"Ace and I," Walter said, "were

talking about Molly." "You had quarreled and were quarreling about Molly?" Patrick

suggested Yes, we had! We were!" Walter stopped short and looked at Molly. She looked at him. For a perceptible interval, the glances from those two pairs of young eyes

interlocked. Never in any human gaze had I seen such a passion of doration and assurance as was in Walter's look: never such a worship and faith as was in Molly's. Patrick and I watched that beau-

tiful phenomenon, silent. I felt the tears pricking behind my eyeballs. Patrick's look grew, as I knew it always did when he was touched definitely more non-committal.
"I think, Pat," Walter started,

"that the time has come for me to tell you about my whole relation with Ace Blaikie. It concerns Molly of course."
"Go on!" Patrick said.

"You will remember," Walter said and strangely enough he ad-dressed himself to me, "that I acted as Ace's secretary for two will perhaps remember, Aunt Mary, if you remember dates, that Molly and I became en-

gaged while I was Ace's secretary; that six months later Molly broke engagement and that, six months later, she became engaged

"I remember all that," I said. "I understand," Walter went on, "that Satuit has rocked with rumors about that broken engagement. Almost every theory has been advanced to account for it and almost everything that could be said has been said. None of them is true. Oh, I do think that one or two people conjectured that Ace Blaikie deliberately set himself to the work of breaking our engagement. That was true. But how it was done, nobody but Molly and I have the remotest idea."
Walter paused and his look hard-

ened. I was astonished at the change that came over him. Suddenly he looked, not so much ten years older, as ten years wiser, more knowledgeable, I would put it. His air became hard and unrelenting. I had the feeling that if Ace Blaikie had not been dead, there would have been hatred in it, bitter, biting hatred.

"The exact truth of the matter is that Ace fell desperately in love with Molly. I didn't blame him for that." Here Walter's smile came back. "I have never blamed any man for falling in love with Molly. The wonder to me is that every man in the world is not at her feet. I am not naturally a jealous person and I wasn't and never have been the least bit jealous of Ace. I have known from the mo-ment that we became engaged that Molly loved me and would always love me. But after a while, I could see that Ace was making a genuine play for Molly. I realized that



Ace Fell Desperately in Love With Molly.

the first thing I had to do was to resign as Ace's secretary. Then I thought I'd have a talk with him warn him to lay off Molly. didn't go much further than that in my mind. But I had a dim suspicion that if he didn't keep off, de spite the disparity in our ages, I

was going to beat the face off him. "Was Ace conscious of the change in your attitude?" Patrick "I'll say he was. I did my

work, but we never exchanged a

word which did not concern business. Now I have to go back and tell you something about myself. It happens that I have a faculty for imitating signatures. worked for Ace, I signed two-thirds of his letters and nobody ever noticed the difference. Several times when Ace needed money, he had asked me to make out the check and sign his name to it. Then would beat it down to the bank and cash it for him. The checks all went through. Naturally I gave Ace the money. Anyway, one Saturday night I gave Ace notice that I was quitting my job. He said he was glad that I'd come to that conclusion because he had several weeks before come to the same conclusion. And then to my astoo ishment, he said that I'd got to leave town if I wanted to keep out of jail. Naturally, I asked what he meant by that. He said that because he respected my father and mother so much he would lodge no complaint against me if I lef Satuit, but if I stayed, he would have me arrested for forgery-on the score of those checks. He said he had a whole sheet of paper on which I had practiced writing his name. That was most likely true. He said that he had taken the checks I had signed to a handwriting expert, all shuffled up with checks which bore his genuine sig nature and that the expert had picked out the forgeries. I said, 'But you know very well I gave you the money.' He said, 'Yes, but prove it!'"

Walter paused. I looked from the expression which was wiping out all the young contours of his face, to Molly. Molly's Botticellian hues had turned

steely.
"What happened?" "Well Pat, I'm telling you about the epoch in my life of which I'm most ashamed," Walter admitted. "I have to admit to you that—that—
that—" Walter choked hack the epithet and began again. "I have to admit to you that Ace Blaiki put it over on me. I was frightened, not on my own account, but for my father and mother."

"At once. She didn't know what to do. We were like the babes in the wood. We clung to each other, but we did not know what to do; and because we were so inexperienced, we lay down to the situa-tion. Molly and I pretended to

"Did you tell Molly?"

break our engagement. In reality it was never broken. I left Satuit and went to New York where I got a job, and a good one. I've given that up. I can always get a job. In the meantime, Ace was devilling Molly. I did not know how much, of course. After a while she realized that in order to protect me, she must get engaged to She wrote me that. But she said, 'I'll die before I marry

"Have you those letters?"

"All of them. Then one day, I waked up with the realization that, in spite of my feeling for m; mother and father, I would rather go to prison and work out my sentence than submit to what I submitting to. I wrote that to Molly and she wrote back that she agreed with me absolutely. said in effect, 'Let's get married. If Ace Blaikie chooses to act in this horrible way, let him do it. If you are arrested and tried and sen enced, I'll stand by. And when you come out of jail, we'll take up our life just where we left it and go all the way together.' So I made up my mind to that. First of all, I came back in May to have another fight with Ace."

"Do you remember what you said to him when you met him in Locust Lane?"

"Not all of course. Nobody ever remembers the whole of a long conversation, but I remember telling him that I'd kill him before I'd let Molly marry him."

I drew a long hissing breath of warning. All three looked into my direction and smiled, Patrick in a grim amusement, Walter with a detached humor, Molly in a soothing tenderness.

"I returned to New York. However, Molly and I made our plans. We agreed that 'ust as soon as I could wind up my job, I'd slip back. Then we'd walk off and get married."

"How did you h ppen to choose the time of the Stow party?"

"Just because it came at the right time. I had the money I needed. Then I knew everybody in Satuit would be thinking of the masquerade. Besides Molly and I had had so many swell times at the Stow masquerades, that we wanted to go. So, as I told you the other day, I came on secretly and stayed in Aunt Mary's Little

"And you had no contact with Ace at all?" Patrick inquired. "None

"You did not see him all day Friday?"
"Not until the masquerade."

"And did you speak to him at the masquerade?"

For the first time there was a little asperity in Walter's tone. think I told you before that I did

"Then I am to understand." Patrick summed it up, "both from you and Molly that you saw Ace Blaikie only once between the time you left Satuit and the night of the masquerade — and that one time was in Locust Lane on Decoration

'That's correct," Walter said. Patrick looked inquiringly at Mol-

"That is correct," Molly said. Patrick bent forward until his elows rested on his knees. He contemplated with a steady, down-shot gaze his neat and well-polished shoes. "Well," he said after a while, "go home, children! But I'll have to repeat. Walter, stick around. I don't know when I'll need you."

THURSDAY

Again I spent a troubled night. It was not so much that I did not sleep. I slept fitfully; for now exhausted nature was demanding her toll. It was more that dreams bothered me-broken dreams without logic or continuity, great, looming, shadowy scenes which glided with an incredible ease and rapidity, one into the other, blended for an interval and then by some inconceivable magic separated and changed again. Worries! And all major worries! Walter and Molly! Margaret Fairweather! And-my thoughts always broke here and melted into a kind of dim, troubled confusion.

However, I was up and dressed as soon as I had finished my breakfast. When I came downstairs. I found Sylvia occupying herself with Dorinda Belle on the piazza.

"How does it happen that you're not down at the Merry Mere?" I demanded.

"Nancy isn't coming over to day," Sylvia informed me. "And I thought I'd stay up here. I think I'll make a new dress for Dorinda Belle."

She was sitting on a little footstool beside one of the Gloucester hammocks. Beside her was her little work-basket.

Over the cusions lay bits of

dress material which I had given her from time to time; patches of silk and chiffon; snippets of ribbon; tags of lace. She was threading an enormous darning-needle. I took it that Dorinda Belle's sorry wardrobe-much the worse for play near the water-was about to be replen-

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Golden State

Parade at Angels Camp, California.

Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

HOLD they are not worth a dollar." That is what Daniel Webster thought of California, and other southwestern lands, when it was proposed that we take them as indemnity after the war with Mexico. "What sympa-thy," he added, "can there be between the people of . . . California and . . . the Eastern states . . .?"

Webster gave that opinion of California in the senate only 88 years

Today it is the wealthiest state west of the Mississippi, and has some 6,158,000 people. One of them said to a visitor: "It took my folks 200 years to get to California. They landed in Virginia about 1650, and moved west with the frontier. My father got here in the 1850s."

Up in Humboldt county at a "For-ty-niner's ball," for which men grow full beards, a sweet, bright-eyed lady said: "My dress must be all of years old. It was old when my mother brought it around the Horn, from Nova Scotia." Her men fought grizzly bears and Klamath India panned gold, and cut timber to build schooners. Only once in 15 or 20 years did they get down to San Francisco, and then by sea; no railroad reached northwest California till long after she was grown.

"My father was general Mariano Vallejo, the last Mexican officer to command this post," proudly as-serted Senora Luisa V. Emparan of "He was born at Monterey. Here are his silver mounted saddle, his sword, spurs, and pistols. After America acquired California he became a patriotic, influential citizen of the United States.

In such ways came the whites who people this land - divergent races, from sources far apart.

Many Came From Foreign Lands. In Napa county you see how French, Italian, and German grape growers form yet another racial strain. In 1880 one-third of all people then here had come from foreign lands, a fact which was profoundly to influence the human and economic geography of this oldest and largest of all Pacific Coast

Seek quiet country lanes that lead to long-established homes of both native American and foreign stock, and you sense the social maturity of this complex yet mellow land Monterey was a seat of Spanish culture before Washington, D. C., was even surveyed. Russians had built Fort Ross, and were growing wheat and trading counterfeit wampum for otter skins before peace ended the War of 1812. Ever since Hubert Howe Ban-

croft's painstaking researches, writers have told and retold the story of early California - and they still make use of Bancroft's incomparable source material, preserved now at the state university in Berkeley. To see what the white man has done with work, tools, and science in developing this region as it is now, consider the place where his labors began. Ride through 'Mother Lode country," where the first pick marks on this now lush, opulent land were made by the gold eekers. Every hillside, gully, and stream bed shows the scars of

shafts, tunnels, and frantic digging. Ruined huts and half - deserte ghost towns" dot these gold fields from which bearded men in redflannel shirts gouged nuggets and panned the yellow dust. Melancholy Columbia is adumbrative of all these early camps. In its old Wells-Fargo stagecoach office you see the clumsy scales on which, records prove, more than \$30,000,000 in gold was weighed. In boom days 15,000 people lived and worked here; now the village is shrunk to a bare 250.

Ghost Towns Are Numerous.

All through Sierra foothills you find these fading towns, with such names as Rough and Ready, Slug Gulch, You Bet, and Grizzly Flats. At Hangtown (now Placerville) long stood the big tree on whose stout limbs two men could be strung up at once. In Tuolumne county is the cabin of Bret Harte, whose charac-ters in "Tennessee's Pardner" and drawn from hereabouts.

Another shack is labeled "Mark Twain's Cabin." Violent, murder-ous, and thieving though life in these diggings was, Twain was able later to say: "Always do right; it will gratify some and astonish the rest!' In those halcyon mining days he wrote "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." Each spring now the once hedonic town of Angels Camp

with gluttonous avidity on the fat legs of these prize-winning frogs.

Though from these gophered hills some gold seekers took their dizzy millions, the real contribution of the Gold Rush to California's destiny is often overlooked. Think of the blacksmiths, carpenters, cowboys, farmers, doctors, lawyers, and teachers who came with the gold - hunting horde. They cleared land, built towns and roads, sent East for wives, raised husky "Sons of the Golden West," and spread the raw canvas for this 1936 picture of north ern California at work.

Few, comparatively, got rich in the mines; that wasn't economic production, anyway. They simply found the gold, at first, and took it. In time, mining settled down to a business of deep shafts, stamp mills, smelters, timbered tunnels, roads, and towns. All this meant more food, machinery, lumber, transportation, clothing, amuse-ments. To supply these, farms to grow meat and grain developed; owns with factories, schools, and music halls grew up to take care of mines, of farms, of each other.

Law grew, too, from this pioneer experience—the doctrines of appropriation and use, the laws of mining, water rights, and grazing. Students of jurisprudence say it is seldom that the customs of a people have had their origin, development, and final adoption by a legislature all within one lifetime, as came to pass here.

Sutter Founded Sacramento.

John A. Sutter, Swiss adventurer, built a trading post on land given him by the Mexicans. That was the beginning of Sacramento, in 1839. It was a strategic location; soil was rich, the river afforded easy transport to San Francisco, and the new town was right in the path of settlers coming from the East through Emigrant Gap. Sure, swift steps in the rise of that town epitomize the American conquest of his region. First Sutter fought the Indians, then hired them to farm his lands, run his cattle, and work about his "fort."

Kit Carson and John C. Fremont came here for fresh horses.

Into Sutter's Fort (now Sacramen to), in 1841, drove the first immigrant wagon train to cross the Plains. From here men went, in 1847, to rescue the Donner party, snowed in and fighting starvation

Sutter's hired man, digging to build a sawmill, found gold at Coloma in 1848, and started the great stampede. This lawless horde robbed and ruined Sutter; he died poor. Others held the fort, and traded furiously. They charged \$64 to shoe a horse; \$2,000 a ton to haul freight to the mines. It cost a pinch of gold dust to buy a drink of whiskey, and only men with big hands were hired to tend bar! Dance halls never closed; even to day one advertises itself as "Bon Ton Dance Hall. Beautiful Girls Galore." Miners, coming to celebrate, brought their gold in an old sock, or in yeast cans! Modern youths buy a strip of tickets, each good for a dance with a "taxi girl." California became a state in 1850. That year more than 42,000 miners swarmed through Sutter's Fort, from the East. About it a wild lawless town was growing, a town of tents and rough boards, of saloons, eating places, stores, and black-smith shops. Most goods came first

up the Sacramento river. State Almost Divided Once.

to San Francisco by sea, and then

Jumping from Monterey to San Jose, Vallejo, and Benicia, the state capital got to Sacramento in 1854. Many a bitter battle has been fought at this capital, none more exciting than that which once almost divided California into two states. Only the diverting advent of the Civil war From Missouri came the Pony Ex-

press in 1860. Next spring riders carried Lincoln's inaugural address through from "St. Joe" in seven days and seventeen hours-the est trip on record. Then a halfletter cost \$5; one now is flown by overnight plane for six

Building east from Sacramento in 1869, the Central Pacific met the Union Pacific railroad at Promon-tory Point, in Utah; Senator Stanford drove a golden spike. Isola-tion was ended. Men and goods moved west at unheard - of rates, at speed thought miraculous

Today Sacramento railroad shops are among the world's largest. About the old fort, where pioneer blacksmiths shod mules, filed saws, and whittled out pick handles for stages a "jumping frog" contest; entries come even from distant Arkansas. Guests with what Pope called "nice foppish gusto" look

IMPROVED ***** UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL CUNDAY JCHOOL Lesson

By REV. HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. © Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for January 31 FINANCIAL COST OF ALCOHOLIC

LESSON TEXT—Proverbs 21:17: 23:20, 21; Matthew 24:45-51; John 6:25, 27, 35. GOLDEN TEXT—Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Isalah 55:2.

PRIMARY TOPIC-Why a Servant Lost His Job. JUNIOR TOPIC—Why a Servant Lost His INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC-

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Alcoholic Beverages—a Financial Asset or Liability?

Temperance Sunday brings a greatly needed opportunity to consider the entire question of intoxi-cating liquors. When the prohibition amendment was under fire the proponents of repeal contended that it would reduce taxes, cut down unemployment, eliminate bootleg liquor, return men and women to temperate and decent habits. It is worthwhile noting that not a single one of these expected benefits has

Taxes on liquor have not reduced general taxes. After all, what decent American would want his taxes cut with "blood-money"? Bootlegging thrives more flagrantly than ever. Evasion of liquor taxes indicates that about half of America's liquor is "bootleg." The specter of unemployment still stalks the land. And are our people temperate? One could laugh if it were not so tragic! The consumption of liquor is fast becoming a national disgrace. And the tragedy is that Christians have for the most part supinely said "What can I do?" and have done nothing.

The repeal of prohibition was brought about by the indifference of American voters. The issue was finally settled by the votes of less than 23 per cent of the registered Where were the other 77 voters. per cent ? Where are they now?

But our lesson goes deeper than the matter of intoxicating liquor. It deals with two contrasted modes of living. What a man is deter-mines what he does. If he lives for the flesh he will pander to its tastes. If he lives in the Spirit he will not only be right in his atti-tude toward liquor but toward every phase of life, yes, even toward eat

Let us consider these two ways of life-and weigh carefully our own life decision. In which way do I walk? Remember that one may live to the flesh even though he is not a winebibber. It is a matter of heart interest and relationship to

I. Living in the Flesh. The word flesh in Scripture does not refer to our physical flesh and blood, except as it is dominated by self-will. But when self-will rules the body, and God's will is ruled out, a man lives in the flesh.

Our lesson gives a terrifying picture of such a life. It makes a man a senseless lover of pleasure for pleasure's sake (Prov. 21:17). He is a lover of wine, a glutton (Prov. 23:20, 21), careless (Matt. 24:48), disorderly and unfaithful (v. 49). and a professed follower of Christ because of what it brings him (John 6:26). His end even in this world is disgrace and poverty, in the world to come, eternal judgment (Matt. 24:51).

II. Living in the Spirit.

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). therefore admonished to "walk in the Spirit," that is, to submit their lives to the control and guidance of the Spirit of God. In other words seek God's will, not self-will.

What kind of men and women are those who live in "the spirit"? re-reading of our lesson texts reveals them as, wise, faithful, diligent, temperate, not following the Lord because of any gain to them-

What is their reward? In this life they are entrusted with more work for their Master (Matt. 24:47). The reward for Christian work well done is more work. So if you are lazy, don't begin. But if the fires of holy ambition to serve him burn within your soul, go on, and he will lead you further on until at last in the world to come you will have the all-sufficient reward of his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

All brave men love; for he only is brave who has affections to fight for, whether in the daily battle of life or in physical contests.-Hawthorne.

Truth in Little Things I have seldom known any one who

deserted truth in trifles, that could be trusted in matters of importance. -Paley. Pinnacle of Knowledge

The end of all learning is to know

God, and out of that knowledge to love and imitate him.—Milton. Acts of Charity One act of charity will teach us more of the love of God than a thou-and sermons. Lacy Squares Form a Spread or Scarf



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