



and be my Love

By PEGGY DERN

WNU RELEASE



THE STORY THUS FAR: Jim MacTavish admits to Meg that Alicia had led him on and made a fool of him. It had seemed to amuse her. In their misery Jim and Megan are reconciled. It was a relief when neither one was called to the inquest, and they waited anxiously for Larry to return to tell them what had been found. "She was killed with a knife—which we found where old Amos saw a ghost burying it," he explained. Bob Reynolds, the detective, could find no fingerprints due to a heavy rain later. Old Amos was interviewed again to get more information on the size of the ghost, how it acted, and the exact time he saw it. Both Meg and her father were breathing easier.

CHAPTER XIV

Annie chuckled richly. "Effen y'all had seed him w'en he come bustin' into de house dat night, Mist' Larry, y'all would a'knowed right den he'd seed plenty!" she assured him.

"We still are not quite sure about that eight-foot-high ghost with the glaring yellow eyes," Laurence told Annie, "but Reynolds is talking to Amos now, trying to see if he can't get him to scale the ghost down somewhat, so we can feel that it was human!"

He turned to Megan as Annie padded away. "It was a knife," he answered the look of questioning in her eyes, and Megan caught her breath and went white as the collar of her trim morning frock. "Bob feels sure it is—the knife."

She did not speak, but her eyes pleaded with him and Laurence went on quietly, "There's not much possibility of fingerprints. The knife was buried halfway up the hill, and it rained later on that night, and of course, the dew is very heavy this time of the year. It was just an ordinary kitchen knife, such as any hardware store sells by the gross every year—probably every kitchen in Pleasant Grove has one or two exactly like it."

Megan was conscious that she was breathing a little more easily. She said hurriedly, lest Laurence should notice that, "Then—you aren't much better off than you were before so far as identification. Have you any suspects?"

Laurence grinned. "You should have heard Ma Stuart at the inquest," he said dryly. "According to her, there wasn't a man, woman or child in Pleasant Grove who didn't have a motive for wanting the Stevenson woman out of the way. She mentioned a few of the reasons. Some of the people mentioned resented it quite a bit, and fistcuffs were barely avoided. The search for alibis became quite intensive, but except for two or three, all were eliminated as suspects. And the evidence against the two or three is slim."

Megan touched dry lips with her tongue and steadied her voice to ask faintly, "Who—are the—ones who couldn't manage an alibi?"

"Well, the Teasley boy and his wife and baby seemed to have excellent reason for disliking Mrs. Stevenson," said Laurence reluctantly. "It seems, according to Ma Stuart, that Mrs. Stevenson made a remark that tended to discredit the legitimacy of the Teasley baby, and that Will Teasley publicly slapped her face in front of the Mercantile a week ago."

"I remember that," said Megan. "Do you?" asked Laurence quickly. "Do you remember how Mrs. Stevenson took it?"

"Well, it was pretty unpleasant, of course—but Will Teasley's a Pleasant Grove boy, and his wife has lived here all her life, except for the year she worked in town, so everybody sided with Will," Megan remembered aloud. "Alicia sort of staggered, and her face got very white, and then she laughed and said, 'What is the old-fashioned crack about a hit dog always howls loudest?' And walked away."

Laurence nodded. "That checks with Ma Stuart's testimony," he admitted.

"And finding the knife doesn't help a bit?" asked Megan. "Afraid not," admitted Laurence frankly. "Though if we can get any sort of description of Amos, about the so-called 'ghost' it might help."

He grinned at her and said, "Notice I said 'we'? I'm sort of unofficial assistant to Bob—because I know the town and the people," he explained.

A little later Bob came in, greeted Megan pleasantly, and lifted his shoulders and spread his hands palm upward in a gesture of discouragement and futility. "I can't get anything out of that old man to save my life," he admitted. "He goes on saying 'hit wuz 'bout eight feet tall, boss—an' 'hit wuz all white and jes' floated' 'long—and had big glaring yaller eyes like a cat—dat's all I know.'"

"I wonder what Amos had been drinking," Laurence said lightly. "Some of that 'white mule' they brew up over at Frogtown would make a fellow see pink cows and green elephants."

"That's the darndest thing of all—he swears he hadn't had a drink, and Annie backs him up," exploded Bob furiously. "I could understand his telling such a tall tale if he'd had a few shots—"

"But you did find the knife there

right where he said the 'ghost' stood. Doesn't that prove that it isn't entirely a tall tale?" protested Megan, resenting their casual assumption that Amos was a complete stranger to the truth.

"Oh, now, see here, Bob—be reasonable," Larry snapped. "If Amos had hidden the knife there, would he have told about it? Look, fella, I know Amos. He would never voluntarily go near a place like that, at night—especially with a murder on his mind. And if he had—if he had been so frightened by what he had done that that fear overrode any other—wild horses could never have made him tell a living soul about it. Look at it from a sane standpoint. If he had hidden it there, the object would have been to keep anybody from ever finding it. Why, then, would he turn right around and insist on telling me about it, and being perfectly willing to tell you? He even went with us this morning and pointed out the spot where the 'ghost' bent down. Use your head, man."

Bob grinned. "Sure—sure—lay off, pal! I only said that I don't believe



"Now, see here, Miss MacTavish, you're not going to tell me you believe in ghosts?" he protested.

in ghosts, yet I can't picture a human being eight feet tall, wrapped in a white sheet and with glaring yellow eyes doing a murder and then picking that spot to hide the weapon. In fact, I can't picture a human being eight feet tall—period! Maybe you can suggest something?"

Laurence shook his head. "It's got me licked," he admitted. "Miss MacTavish?" suggested Bob and she had to steady herself and tell herself that she was a fool to be frightened of that question in his eyes.

"I don't believe in ghosts—but I do believe Amos' story," was all she could manage.

Bob sighed, ran his fingers through his hair, leaving it standing on end, and said helplessly. "Well, I think we're licked, too. Though we'll keep slugging away at the case, of course, hoping that something will turn up—"

"You couldn't be persuaded, of course, to accept Ma Stuart's suggestion that you just drop the whole matter with the thought that whoever did it, did Pleasant Grove a great service?" suggested Laurence wryly.

Megan gasped. "Oh, no, Larry—did she really say that?"

"She did!" said Bob laughing. "Boy, what a character! She gave the department a going over that it hasn't had since they drafted our captain for a job in the Marine Training Camp! I would like to know that lady better—under, of course, pleasanter circumstances."

"She's really a grand person," Megan said eagerly. "Everybody loves her."

Megan hesitated and colored. "Well—Alicia liked to—stir things up," she admitted reluctantly. "I think she was very bored here, and she admitted frankly that she only came here to live because her income had shrunk, and because her money went farther here. And to keep things stirred up gave her—well, something to relieve her boredom, I suppose. She did not lie, that is, not to any great extent. She simply had a way of digging out truths that people wanted hidden and dropped them publicly where they would be most certain to stir up trouble."

"She sounds like a lady who was a self-elected candidate for a murder, at that," Bob commented.

Annie appeared at the door behind him, unobtrusive, yet obviously excited. Her eyes were rolling and her voice was high as she answered Megan's questioning look. "Dey's a lady hyah, Miss Meggie—hit's Mist' Fallon's sish'."

Megan said quietly, "That night you fell and hurt your ankle?"

Megan caught her breath and felt as though every drop of blood in her body had congealed about her heart. Her eyes were wide and frightened, and she was suddenly conscious that Bob Reynolds was watching her narrowly, an odd light in his eyes.

"Of course, Annie, I'll see her," she made herself say swiftly, then steadying her voice with an effort. "If you'll excuse me—?"

But Bob Reynolds said casually, with a look in his eyes that was not at all casual. "Why not see her in here, Miss MacTavish?"

Megan looked sharply at him and said instantly, "But why? It's no doubt a personal matter—I mean it can't possibly have any connection—"

But beneath the look in his eyes her voice broke.

"Of course not," Bob agreed amiably, but still with that wary look in his eyes. "But just the same—"

And behind Annie, Megan saw, with a feeling of shock, Martha Fallon, short, stocky, commonplace looking. Her neat dark percale dress and the smoothness of her hair that was streaked with gray only emphasized the look of barely restrained terror in her eyes; just as the inexperienced daubs of rouge and the powder that was not quite smooth only emphasized the pallor of her drawn face.

She came into the room and Annie faded out of the doorway. But Megan knew subconsciously that Annie had only slipped back a little into the shadows and that she was listening with almost visibly distended ears.

Miss Martha nodded to Megan and addressed herself to Bob, after giving Laurence a steady, straight look.

"You're the detective-fellow?" she asked Bob curtly.

"Yes, Miss Fallon—my name's Reynolds," answered Bob. Martha nodded and said, "Well, my name's not Fallon. I'm Tom Fallon's sister-in-law, not his sister. My name's Evans—Martha Evans."

Laurence unobtrusively turned a chair towards her and she nodded her thanks and sank into it with a movement that was almost of collapse, as though her knees were shaking violently, and she was very glad of the support the chair gave her.

"So you found it," she said when she had drawn a deep breath and Megan, sick with pity and bewilderment, saw the work-roughened hands gripped so tightly together that the knuckles were small white mounds.

Bob said gently, "Found what, Miss Evans?"

She looked up at him so sharply that the sunlight fell harshly on the round lenses of her old-fashioned spectacles and she made a sound that was half a snort, half a sniff of contempt.

"The knife, of course," she answered curtly.

Bob made a short, swiftly controlled movement, but his face was guarded, so that only if you had been watching him closely could you have noticed that involuntary start of surprise.

"Suppose you tell us about the knife, Miss Evans," Bob said gently.

Miss Martha nodded. "What else do you think I came here for?" she sniffed, and abruptly she added, "Only the Stevenson woman wasn't killed with that knife, young man."

"No?" asked Bob very swiftly, very politely, almost as though his interest had been too casual to make the statement of any importance.

"No!" the word came explosively. "Then why was it necessary to hide it so—er—melodramatically?" wondered Bob aloud.

Miss Martha breathed deeply and with difficulty.

"Because," she told him—and Megan's eyes were thick with tears for the stark agony that shone so clearly in the tired, faded eyes behind those old-fashioned spectacles—"because—my sister is a—mental case," she managed at last.

Bob waited.

Laurence was very still, watching Miss Martha, his arms folded across his chest, leaning against the big old-fashioned rolltop desk where Megan kept her accounts and books.

Megan was on the very edge of her chair, her body tense and still, almost rigid, as she watched Miss Martha; and so deep, so intense was her pity and her sympathy that her own body felt some of the suffering that stood forth so starkly in Miss Martha's tired eyes.

"You mean," said Bob, after a moment designed to give Miss Martha a respite so that she could breathe again, "that your sister was not accountable for her actions—"

"I mean, young man, that my sister—had periods of lucidity," she said harshly. "But Tom, her husband, didn't know that those periods were coming less frequently and lasting for shorter periods of time. I couldn't bear to tell him; he thought, poor soul, that she was getting better—that there was hope for her. But I didn't deceive myself. Even if I had wanted to—her attack on me one night—" Her voice broke and her face worked convulsively, but she did not lower her head, nor make any effort to hide her face from them.

Megan said quietly, "That night you fell and hurt your ankle?"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. THUNDQUIST, D. D. Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for October 13

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PAUL MAKES A NEW START

LESSON TEXT—Acts 26:9-18; 1 Corinthians 15:12-14.

MEMORY SELECTION—This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.—1 Timothy 1:15.

All that a man has by nature is not enough. We saw last week the preparation by heredity, education and environment which Paul had for a place of leadership. But it was not enough. The capable, well-born, well-trained young Jewish aristocrat had to be born again spiritually before he could do God's work.

Careful Bible students regard the conversion of Paul and the resurrection of Christ as the two outstanding events of the New Testament. Without the resurrection of Jesus, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (whom we know as Paul the apostle) would not have been possible, and at the same time his conversion is one of the strongest proofs of the resurrection.

We find him in three relationships.

I. By Nature—Contrary to Christ (Acts 26:9-12).

It is not enough, as some of us suppose, that a man be sincere. Paul was entirely sincere in his conviction that he ought to persecute the Christians. He did it with a good conscience (Acts 23:1), for a man's conscience commends him for doing what he believes to be right, even though he may be wrong in his thinking.

He was sincere, but he was anti-Christian. By nature man is at enmity with God. No good thing dwells in the flesh apart from the redeeming grace of God (Rom. 8:7; James 4:4; Rom. 7:18).

Stricken, probably by the faithful testimony of Stephen, to even greater zeal against the followers of Christ, Paul had to find new worlds to conquer, so he set out "breathing out threatenings and slaughter to destroy the church in Damascus" as he had sought to do in Jerusalem.

He was a bold persecutor, doing all he could "contrary to the name of Jesus" (v. 9), until he met the Lord himself on the Damascus road. Ah, that meeting made him a different man and he became

II. By Faith—Converted to Christ (Acts 26:13-18).

Stricken down by a brilliant heavenly light, he found himself talking to the Lord Jesus. He heard from his holy lips the solemn indictment of those who persecute God's people—"Why persecutest thou me?" He who lays unkind hands upon, or brings untrue accusation against, God's children had better beware, for so closely is our Lord identified with his people that when they suffer, it is he who bears the hurt.

In a single sentence the Lord disposed of the persecuting zeal and the sinful skepticism of this proud young Pharisee, and Saul entered into Damascus not as the haughty persecutor, but as a man trembling and astonished. He spent three days shut in with his own soul and God; not seeing, not caring to eat, but entering into communion with God. By God's grace the old life was pulled up by the roots as it was displaced by the new life in Christ Jesus.

God had a great commission awaiting Paul as soon as he was ready for it (vv. 16-18). He was to be the apostle to the Gentiles, and that includes so many of us. The gospel which had come first to the Jews, was now to go out into all the world and to all people.

The change in Paul was a drastic one. He was as one who was alive from the dead. It was not a case of adjusting or refurbishing the old persecutor Saul—here was a new creature in Christ, ordained to good works (Eph. 2:8-10).

III. By Grace—Confessing Christ (1 Cor. 15:10).

Twenty years had passed since Paul's conversion. He had been out serving Christ, in season and out of season. He had known persecution, suffering and opposition. Now he was writing, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, about the resurrection, telling of those who had seen the risen Christ. He included himself as one born out of his time.

It is a personal vision of the living Saviour which vitalizes the spirit of a witness and makes his testimony ring true. Paul saw Christ. We too may see Him with the eye of faith, and by His grace become witnesses.

Effort and labor are involved. This matter of witnessing is not something which automatically does itself. "I labored more abundantly," said Paul, and yet he knew that it was the grace of God in him which accomplished the result (see v. 10 and Phil. 2:13).

That is it! The grace of God working on and in and through a man. And at the same time, that man laboring diligently that the grace bestowed upon him should not be found vain. It is in this manner God's work gets done on earth!

The Home Town Reporter in WASHINGTON

By Walter Shead WNU Correspondent

WNU Washington Bureau 1616 Eye St., N. W.

Party Lines Crumbled In 79th Congress

TO ANYONE who has spent considerable time here in Washington watching governmental operation, and more particularly the action of members of congress, the thought is bound to intrude itself . . . is our two-party system of government working?

Do we have the checks and balances in congress that we should have with the two-party system? And when we watch these elected representatives of the people in action on the floor of the senate and the house, another natural reaction is the question, "What is a Democrat?" or "What is a Republican?" "Are party lines vanishing?"

Of course, the only and obvious answer is that a Democrat is a man who espouses the principles of the Democratic party, while a Republican is one who espouses the principles and beliefs of the Republican party. Following through on this catechism, the next question is "What are the party principles?" The answer is that although they change somewhat from time to time, the only steadfast measure of party principles are those which the regularly elected delegates of the two parties declare in their platforms when they meet in solemn convention every four years.

Then when a candidate for public office declares that he is a Democrat and asks for votes of the people, it is presumed, unless he declares otherwise, that he is running for that office as a believer in or a supporter of the party's principles, namely the Democratic platform. And the same thing holds true on the Republican side.

The only measuring stick we have to determine whether a political party is carrying out its party platform, which is its pledge to the people of performance, is when it passes, or at least attempts to pass, legislation which would put its platform pledges into action.

Many on Wrong Side

So, after either a Democrat or a Republican has been elected to congress and comes down here to Washington and votes against his party or against his party's attempts to carry out party programs, what would you call him?

For instance, the record in the 79th congress shows that on issues where a majority of the Democratic party voted one way and a majority of the Republican party voted the other, only 18 Democratic senators and 14 Republican senators voted consistently with their party. The record shows that Sen. Harry F. Byrd (Dem.) of Virginia, voted against the Democratic party 63 per cent of the time; that Sen. Peter Gerry (Dem.) of Rhode Island, voted against a majority of his party 54 per cent of the time; and that Sen. Lee (Pappy) O'Daniel (Dem.) of Texas, voted against the Democratic party 88 per cent of the time. On the Republican side, Sen. George Aiken of Vermont voted against the Republican party 80 per cent of the time; Sen. Wayne Morse, Oregon, voted against his party 70 per cent of the time; and Charles W. Tobey of New Hampshire voted against his GOP colleagues 51 per cent of the time. So on the basis of their votes, these three Democrats were better "Republicans" than most Republican senators, and the three GOP solons were better "Democrats" than most of the Democratic senators. There are those who declare that such senators as these are "Independents."

Southern Reactionaries

Fifteen Democratic senators voted against their party from 33 to 50 per cent of the time. They were Bailey, N. C.; Bilbo, Miss.; Burch, Va.; Connally, Tex.; Eastland, Miss.; George, Ga.; Hoey, N. C.; McCarran, Nev.; Overton, La.; Stewart, Tenn.; Swift, Ala.; Thomas, Okla.; Tydings, Md.; and Wheeler, Mont. Four Republicans are in the 33 to 50 per cent class in voting against their party. They are Austin, Vt.; Knowland, Calif.; Langer, N. D.; and Saltonstall, Mass. All except two of the Democrats in this class are from the southern states and their record of opposition to the Democratic majority was more pronounced in the closing months of the session from May 1 to Aug. 2, the date congress adjourned.

It is only fair to state that there were stalwarts in both parties who could be counted upon to support their party's program at least 90 per cent of the time. The consistent Democrats were:

Barkley, Ky.; Briggs, Mo.; Chavez, N. M.; Green, R. I.; Guffey, Pa.; Hayden, Ariz.; Hill, Ala.; McMahon, Conn.; Magnuson, Wash.; Mitchell, Wash.; Murdock, Utah; Myers, Pa.; O'Mahoney, Wyo.; Taylor, Ida.; Thomas, Utah; Tunnell, Del.; Kilgore, W. Va.; and Wagner, N. Y.

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