

THE GREAT MYSTERY SERIAL

THE WINDOW at the WHITE CAT

A SERIAL STORY BY MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

Author of THE MAN IN LOWER TEN, SEVEN DAYS, THE CIRCULAR STAIRCASE, WHEN A MAN MARRIES, etc.

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

Miss Letitia, although I had a good...

and wouldn't know a pearl from a pickled onion...

CHAPTER IV.

A Thief in the Night.

The windows being wide open, it was not long before a great noise came whirling in...

Miss Letitia's troubles I dismissed shortly. While it was odd that only one pearl should have been taken...

white of the cement walk. The steps had ceased, but there was a sound of fumbling...

There were no night lights; the darkness was total. I found the stairs before I expected to...

My candlestick had rolled under the table, and after crawling around on my hands and knees...

I had finished my second cigar, and was growing more and more wakeful...



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Wigwag—"Is that your dog, Sap-head?"

"Who in the devil's name are you?" he asked wildly.

"My name is Knox," I said coolly, feeling for my handkerchief...

"Knox?" Instead of showing relief, his manner showed greater concentration than ever...

"I have something in my head where you hit me," I said. "Perhaps that is it."

But my sarcasm was lost on him. "I am Harry Wardrop," he said...

"and I have been robbed, Mr. Knox. I was trying to get in the house without waking the family..."

"What was in the bag?" I asked, stepping to the edge of the porch and looking around...

"Valuable papers," he said shortly. He seemed to be dazed and at a loss what to do next...

"You are certain you left it here?" I asked. The thing seemed incredible in the quiet and peace of that neighborhood...

"Where you are standing." Once more I began a desultory search, going down the steps and looking among the cannas that bordered the porch...

"Here it is," I said, not so gracious as I might have been; I had suffered considerably for that traveling bag. The sight of it restored Wardrop's poise at once...

"By Jove, I'm glad to see it," he said. "I can't explain, but—remendous things were depending on that bag, Mr. Knox. I don't know how to apologize to you; I must have nearly brained you."

"You did," I said grimly, and gave him the bag. The moment he took it I knew there was something wrong; he hurried into the house and lighted the traveling bag with shaking fingers. It was empty!

He stood for a moment, staring incredulously into it. Then he held it down on the table and turned on me, as I stood beside him.

"It's a trick!" he said furiously. "You've hidden it somewhere. This is not my bag, you've substituted one just like it."

"Don't be a fool," I retorted. "How could I substitute an empty satchel for yours when up to fifteen minutes ago I had never seen you or your grip either? Use a little common sense. Some place tonight you have put down that bag, and some clever thief has substituted a similar one. It's an old trick."

He dropped into a chair and buried his face in his hands. (To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

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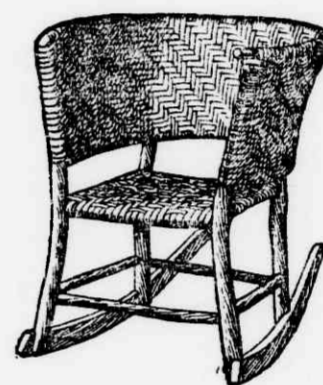
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