

Latest Craig Kennedy Detective Stories

By ARTHUR B. REEVE

HERE'S the most remarkable appeal," observed Kennedy, one morning, as he tossed to me a letter, "What do you think of that?"

It read: My Dear Professor Kennedy: I do not know me, but I have heard a great deal about you. Please, I beg of you, do not disregard this letter. At least try to satisfy the appeal I am making.

I am here at the Belleclaire Sanatorium, run by Dr. Bolton Burr, of Montrose. It is really a private sanatorium. I am making an appeal. After my baby was born I devoted myself to it. But, in spite of everything, it died. Meanwhile my husband neglected me terribly. After the baby's death I was a nervous wreck, and I came up here to rest. Now I find I am being held as an insane patient. I cannot get out. I do not even know whether this letter will reach you. But the chambermaid here has told me she will post it for me.

I am ill and nervous—a wreck, but not insane, although they will tell you that the twilight-sleep treatment affected my mind—sleeping what is happening here will eventually drive me insane if some one does not come to my rescue. Can you get in to see me as a friend? I will leave all to you after that.

Yours anxiously, Janet (Mrs. Roger) Cranston.

"What do you make of it yourself?" I returned, handing back the letter. "Are you going to take it up?" He slowly looked over the letter again.

"Judging by the handwriting," he replied, thoughtfully, "I should say that the writer is laboring under keen excitement—though there is no evidence of insanity on the face of it. Yes; I think I'll take up the case."

"But how are you going to get in?" I asked. "They'll never admit you will."

Kennedy pondered a minute. "I'll get in all right," he said, at length; "come on—I'm going to call on Roger Cranston."

"Roger Cranston?" I repeated, dumbfounded. "Why, he'll never help you get to one he's in on."

"Well, I'll have to take a chance," returned Kennedy, hurrying me out of the laboratory.

Roger Cranston was a well-known lawyer and man about town. We found him in his office on lower Broadway. He was young and distinguished-looking, which probably accounted for the fact that his office had become a sort of fashionable center of domestic relations.

"In a friend of Dr. Bolton Burr, of Montrose," introduced Kennedy. Cranston looked at him keenly, but Kennedy was a good actor. "I have been studying some of the patients at the sanatorium, and I have seen Mrs. Cranston there."

"Indeed?" responded Cranston. "I'm all broken up about it myself."

"I could not resist thinking that he took very calmly, however."

"I should like very much to make what we call a psychanalysis of Mrs. Cranston's mental condition," Kennedy explained.

after the death of her child. She was in a terrible state. But we are slowly building up her shattered nerves by plain, simple living and a tonic."

"Was she committed by her husband?" queried Kennedy, unexpectedly.

Whether or not Doctor Burr felt suspicious of us I could not tell. But he seemed eager to justify himself.

"I have the papers committing her to my care," he said, rising and opening a safe in the corner.

He laid before us a document in which appeared the names of Roger Cranston and Julia Giles.

"Who is this Julia Giles?" asked Kennedy, after he had read the document.

"One of our nurses," returned the doctor. "She has had Mrs. Cranston under observation ever since she arrived."

"I should like to see both Miss Giles and Mrs. Cranston," insisted Kennedy. "It is not that Mr. Cranston is in any way dissatisfied with your treatment, but he thought that perhaps I might be of some assistance to you."

Kennedy's manner was ingratiating but firm, and he hurried on, lest it should occur to Doctor Burr to call up Cranston. The doctor, still twirling the card, finally led us through the wide central hall and up an old-fashioned winding staircase to a large room on the second floor.

He tapped at the door, which was opened, disclosing an interior tastefully furnished.

Doctor Burr introduced us to Miss Giles, conveying the impression, which Kennedy had already given, that he was a specialist, and I an assistant.

Janet Cranston was a young and also remarkable beautiful girl. One could see traces of sorrow in her face, which was exceedingly, though not unpleasantly pale. The restless brilliancy of her eyes spoke of some physical, if not psychical, disorder.

She was dressed in deep mourning, which heightened her pallor and excited a feeling of mingled respect and interest. Thick brown curls of chestnut hair were arranged in such a manner as to give an extremely youthful appearance to her delicate face. Her emotions were expressed by the constant motion of her slender fingers.

Miss Giles was a striking woman of an entirely different type. She seemed to be exuberant with health, as though nursing had taught her not merely how to take care of others, but had given her the secret of caring, first of all, for herself.

I could see, as Doctor Burr introduced us to his patient, that Mrs. Cranston instantly recognized Kennedy's interest in her case. She received us with a graceful courtesy, but she betrayed no undue interest that might excite suspicion, nor was there any hint given of the note of appeal. I wondered whether that might not be an instance of the cunning for which I had heard that the insane are noted. She showed no sign of insanity, however.

I looked about curiously to see if there were evidences of the treatment which she was receiving. On a table stood a bottle and a glass, as well as a teaspoon, and I recalled the doctor's remark about the tonic.

"You look tired, Mrs. Cranston," remarked Kennedy, thoughtfully. "Why not rest while we are here, and then I will be sure my visit has had no ill-effects."

II.—The Soul-Analysis

afraid in my anger and anxiety I accused him. He retreated by slamming the door, and I did not see him for two or three days. I realized my nervous condition, and one day a mutual friend of ours introduced me to Doctor Burr and advised me to take a rest-cure at his sanatorium. By this time Roger and I were on speaking-terms again. But the death of the baby and the quarrel left me still as nervous as before. He seemed anxious to help me do something, and so I came here.

"Do you remember anything that happened after that?" asked Craig, for the first time asking a mildly leading question.

"Yes; I recall everything that happened when I came here," she went on. "Roger came up with me to complete the necessary arrangements. We were met at the

"Read it—when you are absolutely alone," he whispered, just as Miss Giles shut the door and turned to us.

"The excitement subsided almost as quickly as it had taken, but it had been sufficient to put a stop to any further study of the case along these lines. Miss Giles's keen eyes missed no action or movement of her patient."

Doctor Burr returned shortly. It was evident from his manner that he wished to have the visit terminated, and Kennedy seemed quite willing to take the hint. He thanked Mrs. Cranston, and we withdrew quietly, after bidding her goodbye in a manner as reassuring as we could make it under the circumstances.

"Yes; I recall everything that happened when I came here," she went on. "Roger came up with me to complete the necessary arrangements. We were met at the

in a sense, may be said to be desirable. The great point about the psychanalytic method, as discovered by Breuer and Freud, is that certain symptoms of hysteria disappear when the hidden causes are brought to light and the repressed desires are gratified."

"How does that apply to Mrs. Cranston?" I queried.

"Mrs. Cranston," he replied, "is suffering from what the psychanalysts call a psychic trauma—a soul-wound, as it were. It is the neglect, in this case, of her husband, which she deeply loves. That, in itself, is sufficient to explain her experience wandering through the country. It was the region which she associated with her first love-affair, as she told us. The wave of recollection that swept over her engulfed her mind. In other words, reason could no longer dominate



"Are you going to take it up?"

station by Doctor Burr and this woman, who has since been my nurse and companion. On the way up from the station to the sanatorium Doctor Burr was very considerate of me, and I noticed that my husband seemed interested in Miss Giles and the care she was to take of me."

Kennedy flashed a glance at me from a note-book in which he was apparently busily engaged in jotting down her answers. He did not know just what letter-pretention to put on it, but supposed that it meant that he had struck what the new psychologists call a "complex" in the entrance of Miss Giles into the case.

Before we realized it, there came a sudden outbreak of feeling. "And now—they are keeping me here by force!" she cried.

Doctor Burr looked at us significantly, as much as to say, "Just what might be expected, you see." Kennedy nodded, but made no effort to stop Mrs. Cranston.

"They have told Roger that I am insane, and I know he must believe it, or else he would not have me here. But their real motive, I can guess, is mercenary. I can't complain about my treatment here—it costs enough."

By this time she was sitting bolt upright, staring straight ahead, as though amazed at her boldness in speaking so frankly before them.

"I feel all right at times—then—it is as though I had a paralysis of the body, but not of the mind—not of the mind," she repeated, tensely. There was a frightened look on her face, and her voice was now wildly appealing.

after these visits she is, if anything, less nervous. Then, when she saw, or imagined she saw, one who looked like her lover the strain was too great."

It was the middle of the afternoon when we reached the laboratory. Kennedy at once set to work studying the drops of tonic which had been absorbed in the handkerchief. As Kennedy worked, I began thinking over again of what we had seen at the Belleclaire Sanatorium. Somehow or other, I could not get out of my mind the recollection of the man rolled in the blanket and trussed up as helpless as a mummy. I wondered whether that alone was sufficient to account for the quickness with which he had been pacified. Then I recalled Mrs. Cranston's remark about her mental alertness and physical weakness. Had it anything to do with the tonic?

"Suppose, while I am waiting," I finally suggested to Craig, "I try to find out what Cranston does with his time since his wife has been shut out from the world."

"That's a very good idea," acquiesced Kennedy. "Don't take too long, however, for I may strike something important here any minute."

After several inquiries over the telephone, I found that since his wife had been in Montrose Cranston had closed his apartment and was living at one of his clubs. Having two or three friends who were members, I did not hesitate to drop around.

Unfortunately, none of my friends happened to be there, and I was forced, finally, to ask for Cranston himself, although all that I really wanted to know was whether he was there or not. One of the clerks told me that he had been in, but had left in a taxicab only a short time before.

As there was a cab-stand outside the club, I determined to make an inquiry and perhaps discover the driver who had had him. The starter knew him, and when I said it was very important business on which I wanted to see him he motioned to a driver who had just pulled up.

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train after we did, but, at any rate, it took as though she had lost no time in seeking out Cranston after our visit. I took a seat at a table next them.

"It seems talking about Kennedy, and I'm sure he's in the middle of overheard him asking her just what Craig had done."

"It was certainly very clever in him to play both you and Doctor Burr the way he did," I told Doctor Burr that you had sent him, and told you that Doctor Burr had sent him. By whom do you suppose he really was sent?"

"Could it have been my wife?" "I'm sure he's not rather than she did it is more than I can imagine."

"How is she, anyway?" he asked. "Sometimes she seems to be getting along all right, and then other days, I feel quite discouraged about her. Her case is very obstinate."

"Perhaps I had better go and see Burr," he considered. "It is early in the evening. I'll drive you out in my car. I'll stay at the sanatorium tonight, and then, perhaps, I'll know a little better what we can do."

It was his tone rather than his words which gave me the impression that he was more interested in being with Miss Giles than with Mrs. Cranston. I wondered whether it was a plot of Cranston's to get Miss Giles's head been posing before Kennedy, and were they really trying to put Mrs. Cranston out of the way?"

"As the music started up again, I heard her say, 'Can't we have just one more dance?'"

A moment later they were lost in the gay whirl on the dancing floor. They made a handsome couple, and it was evident that it was not the first time that they had danced and danced together. The music ceased, and they returned to their places, but Mrs. Cranston was no longer phoned for his car to be brought around to the cabaret.

I hastened back to the laboratory to inform Craig what I had seen. As I told my story he looked up at me with a sudden flash of comprehension.

"I am glad to know where they will all be tonight," he said. "Some one has been coming here to see her, and I have just discovered it in the tonic."

"What's her name?" I asked. "It is a drug derived from the hyoscyamus plant, much like belladonna, though more distinctly sedative. It is a hypnotic used often in mania and mental excitation. The feeling which Mrs. Cranston described is one of its effects. You recall the brightness of her eyes, and the condition of paralysis of the body without the corresponding paralysis of the mind."

"And it's this stuff that somebody has been putting in the tonic?" "I'm sure," he started. "Do you suppose that is part of Burr's system, or did Miss Giles lighten her work by putting it into the tonic?"

"Kennedy did not betray his suspicion, but went on describing the drug which was having such a serious effect on Mrs. Cranston."

"The victim lies in an absolutely helpless condition, sometimes with his muscles so completely paralyzed that he cannot so much as move a finger, cannot close his lips or move his tongue to moisten them. This feeling is, however, very brief. This condition is absolutely unlike any other feeling imaginable, if I may judge from the accounts of those who have experienced it. Other sensations, such as pain, may be judged in a momentary way, but in comparison with other painful sensations, the sensation produced by hyoscyamin in large doses seems to have no basis for comparison. There is no biting, stinging, or prickling every part of the insano used it a few years ago for controlling patients, but now better methods have been devised."

"In large enough doses and repeated often enough," continued Kennedy, "I suppose the toxic effect of the drug might be to produce insanity. At any rate, if we are going to do anything, it might be better to look up the doctor who is out there now. If we act tonight, surely we shall have the best chance of making the guilty person betray himself."

"Kennedy looked at me for a moment, and in half an hour, while he gathered some apparatus together, the car was before the door. In it he placed a couple of light silk-ropes ladders, some of which he had brought with him, and a transit which resembled a surveyor's transit with two conical horns sticking out at the ends.

"We made a trip out of New York and over the Boston post-road, following the route which Cranston and Miss Giles must have taken some hours before us. In the town of Montrose, Kennedy stopped only long enough to get a bite of eat and to study up in the roads of the vicinity."

the desperation to the ladder, while we did our best to steady it, she managed to reach the ground. She turned from the building with a shudder, and whispered thank you for just what I am making."

"This terrible place! How can I ever thank you for just what I am making?" Kennedy did not pause long enough to say a word, but hurried her across to the final barrier, the wall.

Suddenly there was a shout of alarm from the front of the house under the columns. It was the night watchman, who had discovered us.

Instantly Kennedy seized a chair from the summer-hospital and ran across the wall with Mrs. Cranston, while I held the ladder. Then I threw the ladder back on its side. I'll join you in a moment, as soon as you get her safely over the wall."

"A chair is all one can think of using, if that is all one can think of using it for," Kennedy ran squarely at the watchman, holding it out straight before him. Once once I cast a hasty glance back. There was the man pinned to the wall by the chair, with Kennedy at the other end of it and safely out of reach. Mrs. Cranston and I managed to scramble over the wall, although she tore her dress on the pickets before we reached the other side. I hustled her into the car and made every effort to start it. There was only a couple of minutes after I threw the ladder back before Craig rejoined us.

"How did you get away from the watchman?" I demanded, breathlessly, as we shot away.

"I forced him back with the chair into the hall and slammed the door when I jammed a wedge under it," chuckled Kennedy. "That will hold it better than any lock. Every push will jam it tighter."

Above the hubbub, inside now, we could hear a loud creaking sound, unmistakably. All about were lights flashing up at the windows and moving through the passages. Shouts came from the back of the house as a door was finally opened there. But we were off now, with a good start.

I could imagine the frantic telephonists that was going on in the sanatorium. And I knew that the local police of Montrose and every other town about us were being informed of the escape. They were required by the law to render all possible assistance, and as the country boasted several institutions quite on a par with Belleclaire, an attempt at an escape was not a unusual occurrence.

"The post-road by which we had come was therefore a door was swung open, and a heavy door swung up into the country, in the hope of throwing off pursuit long enough to give us a better chance."

"Take the wheel, Roger," he muttered. "I'll tell you what turns to make. We must get to the State line of New York without being stopped. We can beat almost any car. But that is not enough; telephone messages will be sent out, unless we can keep from being seen."

I took the wheel, and did not stop the car as Kennedy climbed over the seat. In the back of the car Mrs. Cranston was sitting, he hastily adjusted the peculiar apparatus.

"Sounds at night are very hard to locate," he explained. "I know that there is some one coming ahead of us."

I turned and shot up the detour, stopping in the shadow of some trees, where we switched off every light and started the engine. Kennedy continued to watch the instrument before him.

"What is it?" I whispered. "It was in less than a minute that I had a faint idea of the intensity of sound, but it is much more valuable, as an instrument that tells with precision from what direction a sound comes. It needs only a small dial, which may be carried around easily. The sound enters the two horns of the phonometer, is focused at the neck, and strikes on a delicate diaphragm, behind which is a needle. The diaphragm vibrates and the needle moves. The louder the sound the greater the movement of this needle."

"At this end, where it looks as though I were sighting like a surveyor, I am gazing into lens, with tiny electric bulbs reflected in a mirror which is moved by the moving needle. When the sound is loudest the electric light shines to the direction whence it comes. So it is only necessary to twist the phonometer about on its pivot until the sound is received most loudly, and the tiny electric band of light is gazed upon. Kennedy, a blowout always when you least expect it."

"We climbed out of the car and had the shoe off in short order. "Look!" cried Cranston, in a frightened voice, from the back of the car. The light of the phonometer had flashed up. "There's just one coming us," cried Kennedy, springing to the wheel. "We might make it on the rim."

"Banging and pounding," he forged ahead, straining our eyes to watch the road, the distance, the time, and the phonometer all at once. It was no use. A big gray roadster was overtaking us. The driver crowded us over to the very edge of the road, then shot ahead, and where the road narrowed down, deliberately pulled up across the road in such a way that we had to run into him or stop.

