

# Synthetic Gentleman

By Channing Pollock

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## SYNOPSIS

The Duke, Barry Gilbert, likable youth of twenty-three, jobless and broke, enters an unoccupied summer home in Southampton, seeking shelter from a storm. He makes himself at home. Doing at the fireplace, he is startled by the arrival of a butler, Willets; and a chauffeur, Evans. He learns that the son of the owner of the house, Jack Ridder, whom the servants had never seen, is expected. He decides to bluff it out. His supposed parents have left for Germany. Next morning he is given a letter for his "mother." He opens it and finds a message from the real Jack, saying he could not come, and returning a hundred-dollar bill. The boy's father had pensioned him into obscurity. Barry pockets the money, intending to return it later. He orders Evans to take him to Montauk, intending to disappear there. On the way he meets Judge Hambridge and his daughter, Patricia. Believing he is Jack Ridder, she invites him to dinner the following Thursday. Barry returns to Southampton, deciding to stay a bit longer. Mr. Ridder, Sr., through his newspaper, the Globe, accuses Judge Hambridge of taking orders from Tammany Hall in a condemnation proceeding. Barry meets Peter Winslow, prominent attorney. Winslow tells Barry that Judge Hambridge had seen an accident in which a woman was killed by a taxicab. At home Barry finds the wife of the real Jack Ridder awaiting him. Her husband is in jail in New York, charged with the murder of Mike Kelly. Tammany boss, The girl, Peggy, tells Barry how she had met Jack in Florida and married him, as Jay Rogers. Jack lost his job, and they went to New York, where she got work at the Cocoanut Bar. There she was accused of trying to pick the pocket of Mike Kelly, and was arrested. Her husband went to Kelly's to induce him to drop the charge. Later Kelly was found dead, his skull crushed by a decanter. Barry suggests he can help Jack Ridder, and Mrs. Rogers agrees. Judge Hambridge delivers a decision in the condemnation suit in which Kelly had been interested. Barry cables Mrs. Ridder for \$2,000. Winslow takes Rogers' case. Barry gets a job on the Globe under his true name. The editor, Ernie Harwood, assigns him to cover the Kelly murder. Barry suspects the Filipino servant of Kelly.

## CHAPTER IV—Continued

—10—

"Yes, sir."  
"I've been a loafer most of my life—and this is the beginning of a new chapter."  
"Thank you, sir," Willets said. "I'm very pleased, sir. If you don't mind my saying so, very pleased."

There were three memos of telephone messages from Pat.

Looking at them, on the library table, Barry went on grinning. He called her immediately, and she asked where he'd been all week. When he told her, she seemed almost annoyed. "So you've deserted me for a chorus girl," she said.

Could Pat be jealous?  
"How soon can you come over?" she inquired. "Marian's not here yet, and dinner'll be late, but I simply can't wait to hear your adventures in sleuthing."

As he dressed, Barry kept thinking of this conversation. Absurd that Patricia Hambridge could be worried by his attachment to the "glittery lady." "Willets and Pat both oozing disapproval. Or do I merely imagine it?"

But Pat's disapproval, at least, was depressingly evident from the moment he saw her.

She met him at the door, looking lovelier than ever.

"The one girl in the world for me," Barry thought.

"Let's sit on the sun porch," Pat greeted him. "Father'll be down in a minute. Marian came over by ferry from New London. She's dressing. Fancy your being concerned with this Kelly murder. A true motion-picture hero. Go on; I want all the details."

And, as Barry related them, the girl's irritation began to show in her face. It wasn't fair, she said, to "drag poor old Peter into it." Just because they'd met in this house at dinner. Nor could she see why he wanted to go into his father's office under the name of Barry Gilbert. "Frankly, I'm disappointed in you," she concluded, and obviously meant it.

Before Barry could reply, the Judge appeared, looking tired and haggard. That changed the subject, and Patricia's voice, which had been a little strident, softened again. She was plainly disturbed about the old gentleman, and kept glancing at him anxiously. "Father's been ill all week," she said.

"You ought've called off this dinner."  
"I wanted you to meet Marian. But I do hope she comes down soon. Father's got to get to bed early."

The Judge patted her hand.

"Nonsense!"  
"The doctor warned you against late hours," Pat reminded him. "But you would go to that banquet last Friday."

"That wasn't late hours," the Judge argued. "We were all through before midnight."

"But then you went for a walk," Barry said.

He said it quite innocently, but he was startled at seeing Hambridge's hand close spasmodically over Patricia's.

"Who told you that?" the Judge asked.

"Mr. Winslow."  
Hambridge relaxed again.

"So I did," he recollected. "But only a couple of blocks."

"Nearer a couple of miles, wasn't it?"

Barry was still making conversation,

but there was nothing casual in the Judge's "Why do you say that?"  
"Mr. Winslow says you saw that taxi accident at Sixteenth street and Fifth avenue."  
The Judge raised his eyes to Barry's, almost defiantly.  
"The taxi accident I saw was in Times square," he declared. "I don't know where you got the idea that it was at Sixteenth street. I certainly didn't say that to Peter."

"What does it matter?" Pat asked.  
"Here we are, gossiping, when I'm supposed to be preparing you for a reunion."

"A what?"  
"A reunion. With an old friend. That's the reason Marian was so anxious that I should have you here. I didn't know myself until half an hour ago. Marian Lorn. Do you remember? She knew you at Harvard."

Well, it was bound to come, Barry thought.

"Are you surprised? Marian wanted you to be—terribly."

"I am—terribly."  
This was the pay-off. What would Patricia say?

Patricia was saying, "Well, you must be delighted, too. Marian was going to surprise all of us, and then she lost her nerve. 'Wouldn't it be too catastrophic,' she said, 'if he didn't remember me?'"

Miss Lorn was on her way down the stairs.

Barry braced himself.  
"Come on, you!" Pat called. "Dinner's waiting, and so's Mr. Ridder."

Marian raced down the steps, and halted, looking at him across the balustrade.

"Mr. Ridder?"  
Now for it!

"Well," she continued, "the joke's on me. I should never have known you."

"I'd've known you anywhere."  
"Of course, you had to say that. But didn't your hair used to be dark?"

"Sure; I hennaed it."  
"No foolin'! I thought you were slighter, too. But, of course, there was only that one evening."

Thank God for that!  
"Don't tell me we met only once?"  
"Don't you remember?"  
"It doesn't seem possible that I let you slip through my fingers."

"Come on," Patricia urged. "Everything's getting cold."  
Not Barry. He was warming up.

CHAPTER V

Pat knew of his imposture.  
That was clear. And what else?

For hours after her car had left him at the door, Barry sat in the library of the big house where he had no right to be, thinking, thinking. And the more he thought, the more complete was his mystification.

Every word Pat had spoken, every intonation, was impressed on his mind. "And, Mr. Gilbert—" she had said. "You've got courage. And a grand sense of melodrama. I suppose you picked that up in Hollywood."

How did she know?  
Obviously, the crushed finger had not deceived her. No question about it; the girl had seen through his desperate ruse, and realized that he had closed the doors on his hand deliberately to avoid the discovery that he was not John Clarke Ridder, Jr. She must have had some hint of his brief career in the movies.

After all, that would have been simple. The vague recollection of his appearance in a picture; an old circular, with his photograph. Not without pride, Barry reflected that he had won mention in advertising before he left Hollywood. What did it matter, anyway? She knew. And she had advised him to watch his step. "You're being a little bit reckless, I think," she had warned him.

Was that a warning—or a threat? And why should Pat threaten? The answer to that was apparent. "She doesn't want me to ask questions about her father. But why not? What is she trying to conceal?"

That, too, was easily answered.  
Of course, there had been no taxi accident in Times square. It was absurd to suppose that two cabs had mounted the pavement and killed two women almost simultaneously. The Judge's accident had been at Sixteenth street. What was he doing down there—a hundred yards from Mike Kelly's—at two in the morning? The same morning Kelly was murdered? A few hours before the filing of a decision alleged to have been dictated by Kelly. "None of my business!" Barry snapped at himself. "I'm not a detective. But why should Pat be afraid of investigation?"

Why "afraid"? She was worried about her father's condition, and did not want him harassed needlessly. Under the circumstances, of course, she resented Barry's proddings. "But, damn it," Barry exclaimed, "she began resenting before I even mentioned her father!"

He made an effort to marshal his facts.

"Three things are clear," he began. "Kelly was expecting someone when Jack left. . . . Or was he? Winslow doubted that, too. Anyway, Kelly told Jack someone telephoned. And then Hambridge arrived at Sixteenth street. Hambridge denies that he did so. And then Hambridge's daughter warns me—"

He had begun pacing the floor.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"and I've brought the Liebestod."

"That's great," Barry said, "but I warn you—"

Patricia was opening the piano. "I warn you," Barry said. "I'm going to make the most awful sounds human ears ever heard."

And, with that, he pulled together the double doors.

"Ouch!" he exclaimed. They all turned to him.

"What's the matter?" Pat asked. "Nothing serious," Barry replied, calmly. "I've slammed the doors on my fingers."

He held up his right hand. It was crushed badly.

Everybody was extremely solicitous, and Pat wanted to send for the doctor.

"Certainly not," Barry declared. "It's only broken the skin."

"I'll take care of it now," Patricia said, dispatching the butler for witch-hazel and bandages.

"Well, that's the end of the violin playing," Marian remarked.

"I'm afraid so. Wasn't I stupid?"  
"Not at all," Patricia answered, manipulating the gauze deftly.

"The Judge wanted to go to bed early, anyway. I wonder whether you'd mind telephoning for Evans."

"I'll run you home in the roadster," Pat volunteered, touching the bell again.

"It's been a swell evening," Barry insisted, giving Marian his left hand. "Pleasant surprise, meeting you here. This isn't good-by, is it?"

"That's up to you. I'll be around until Monday."

"Good night, Judge, and I hope you feel better tomorrow."

The roadster had been brought to the door, and Patricia climbed into it. "I'll be back soon," she promised.

Five minutes later, the car halted in front of the Ridder house.

"Thanks awfully," Barry said. "Don't mention it."

There was something very like mockery in her voice.

"And, Mr. Gilbert—"

For an instant, Barry wasn't certain he had heard aright.

"You've got courage," Patricia went on. "I'll say that for you. And a grand sense of melodrama. I suppose you picked that up in Hollywood."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Barry floundered, helplessly. "No? Well, maybe I'll tell you sometime."

She laughed.

"Meanwhile"—as he alighted from the car—"I'd watch my step, if I were you."

"I'm all right," Barry rejoined.

"That depends," Patricia said. "You're being a little bit reckless, I think."

She put her foot on the accelerator, and the car moved away.

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## STAR DUST

Movie • Radio

\*\*\*By VIRGINIA VALE\*\*\*

IF YOU'RE interested in watching a career grow, keep your eye on young Larry Blake, who has been giving character interpretations of Charles Laughton, John Barrymore, Edward Robinson and Clark Gable at the Rainbow Room of Rockefeller Center.

First thing you know he'll be on the air and in the movies; though he is in his early twenties now, he has made a good start.

He went to Brooklyn college, and has appeared in vaudeville and at smart hotels and night clubs here and there about the country; the Congress and the Stevens hotels in Chicago featured him not long ago.

Landing in the Rainbow Room crowns him with success; talent scouts make it one of their first stops in New York, and no visitor wants to leave town till he's been there.

Four members of the Abbey Players of Dublin, one of the most famous theatrical organizations in the world, arrived in the United States recently to appear in RKO's screen version of "The Plough and the Stars," which they've often performed on the stage. One of them, Barry Fitzgerald, was a thrill to death—because he'd met James Cagney.

Barbara Stanwyck will be starred in this new Irish picture, which is being made because all of us liked "The Informer" so well. And it will be made by the producers, director and scenarist who were responsible for "The Informer," so it's going to be good.

Seems there's a rumor around that Major Bowes isn't so popular as he once was; people have heard that performers on his programs don't get paid much, but that he gets plenty. And some of the people who go to the broadcasts feel that he isn't dignified enough.

All that may or may not be true—but a high-powered publicity organization has been engaged to change public opinion regarding the genial Major; his new sponsors feel that the public must go on liking him, or else!

Want to know the low-down on how to play bad man on the screen? Noah Beery, brother of Wallace, can give it to you. He's now playing a hired killer in "Strangers on a Honeymoon," at the Gaumont British studios, along with Constance Cummings and Hugh Sinclair—he's been appearing as various kinds of murderers for years and years.

He says that, if a criminal is to seem to be a real man, he must show a streak of human kindness—"A screen killer can mow a guy down with a shot-gun, but he's got to stoop and pat a kid on the head on the way out"—otherwise he's a madman, not a human being.

Columbia Broadcasting System is going to give a lot of young men a chance this summer. With regular announcers going on vacations, others who have been auditioned in the past and are working here and there on the network will be brought in and given a chance to show what they can do in more important spots on the air.

The most important arm in the movies at present is Margaret Sullivan's. She broke it a while ago, you'll recall. It wasn't healing properly, so she hid her to New York for special treatments. Now she's back again in Hollywood and hopes to go to work soon. But friends have cautioned her to be careful of that arm. Only the other day she was reported as whizzing to the west side tennis matches on a motorcycle with Willie Wyler.

ODDS AND ENDS. . . . Kay Francis played the role of a famous nurse in her Florence Nightingale picture, and now she needs one; has two impacted wisdom teeth. . . . Seems that that story about Clark Gable's knocking out his sparring partner was just a fake-up publicity yarn. . . . Joan Blondell and Dick Powell seem to be getting all set for that long-haired teedding. Have you joined one of the flourishing Lanny Ross clubs? . . . Shirley Temple is cuter than ever in "Poor Little Rich Girl." . . . You'll want to see "San Francisco" because of the earthquake scenes if for no other reason. . . . Though Jeanette MacDonald's singing should be reason enough. . . . Carole Lombard's illness is holding up "Queen of the North" indefinitely.

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## Pinafore for Little Girl



Pattern No. 1910-B

The clever cutting of this useful pinafore is shown in the small diagram beside the little girl. You will see at once that this frock requires no sewing and of course the feature which so greatly intrigues children is the

butterfly which forms the pocket. Notice how simple it is to put on, merely slipped over the head and tied at each side. Mothers find it a great help because it can be used as an apron over a frock, which must be kept clean, or worn instead of a frock. The panties to match are an asset—they have the comfortable French yoke top and stay snug but never bind. This attractive design made in cotton, percale, gingham, calico, or lawn would be effective with contrasting binding and colorful embroidery on the butterfly pocket.

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## Foreign Words and Phrases

Affaire du coeur. (F.) Affair of the heart.

A mensa et thoro. (L.) From bed and board.

Ben trovato. (It.) Well invented. Chacun a son gout. (F.) Every man to his taste.

Contretemps. (F.) An awkward incident; mishap.

Delenda est Carthago. (L.) Carthage must be destroyed.

Ecco homo! (L.) Behold the man.

Garde du corps. (F.) Body-guard.

Je ne sais quoi. (F.) I know not what.

## SUMMER RECIPES CALLING FOR USE OF FRESH FRUITS

Now that summer days are at hand, the alert woman is interested in successful recipes calling for the use of fresh fruits. Here are three that have been thoroughly tested:

### Fresh Fruit Pies

For rhubarb, plum, grape, strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, blueberry or huckleberry pie: Combine 3/4 cups prepared fruit, 1 1/4 to 2 1/4 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca and 1 to 1 1/4 cups sugar. Let stand 15 minutes, or while pastry is being made. Use as filling for 9-inch pie.

### Fresh Peach and Banana Mold

1 package lime flavored gelatin  
1 pint warm water  
1/4 cup fresh peaches, sliced  
1 banana, sliced  
Dissolve lime flavored gelatin in warm water. Arrange sliced peaches on bottom of mold. Pour on warm gelatin, being careful not to disarrange peaches. Add banana. Chill until firm. Unmold. Garnish with whipped cream, if desired. Serves six.

### Ripe Pear Jam

4 cups (2 lbs.) prepared fruit  
1 1/2 cups (3 1/4 lbs.) sugar  
1 bottle pectin  
Peel, core, and crush completely, or grind, about 3 pounds fully ripe pears. If desired, about 3 teaspoons spice may be added.

Measure sugar and prepared fruit into large kettle, mix well, and bring to a full rolling boil over hottest fire. Stir constantly before and while boiling. Boil hard one minute. Remove from fire and stir in pectin. Then stir and skim by turns for just five minutes to cool slightly, to prevent floating fruit. Pour quickly. Paraffin and cover as above. Makes about 11 glasses (8 fluid oz. each.)

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